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# SOUTH PARK COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICT

Sonoma Water and the City of Santa Rosa (City) are in the process of a multi-year transition period that will result in the City taking over operation and management of the South Park County Sanitation District (District) within the next several years. Currently, Sonoma Water manages and operates the District, which provides sewer services for customers in south Santa Rosa. The District includes the Roseland area, which was annexed into the City in 2017.

During the transition period, Sonoma Water has been implementing a new rate structure that sets sewer rates based partially on the District's fixed costs and partially on an estimate of the amount of sewage generated by each household, which is based on water usage during winter months. Each year, the fixed-costs portion of the sewer bill will decrease, and the portion based on water usage during winter months (volumetric) will increase.

**FY2022-23 rates are 40% Fixed cost, 60% Volumetric.**

**FY2023-24 rates will be 20% Fixed cost, 80% Volumetric.**

The rate structure in the final year of the transition period is consistent with the City's billing method. This change provides customers greater control over their sewer bill as it is based on water usage during winter months. Given that winter is a time when outdoor irrigation should not be in use, this method provides a more accurate estimate of average usage. Sewer service charges for District customers will continue to be reflected on their annual property tax statements until FY 2022-23 when the District plans to contract with the City to facilitate implementation of monthly customer billing.

During the transition period the District is also evaluating the potential cost of long-term capital projects and using that information to calculate and update the capacity charges that customers pay to connect to the sewer system.

The District's sewer collection system serves approximately 4,352 Equivalent Single-Family Dwellings within a 1,460-acre service area. Wastewater collected by the District is treated at the Laguna Subregional Wastewater Treatment Plant. Most of the treated water is reused for power generation and irrigation.



# About Your District

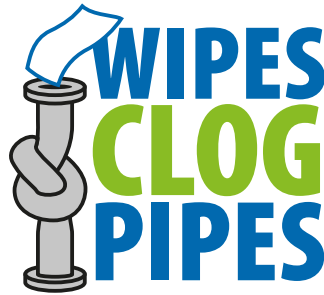
In 1995 Sonoma Water assumed responsibility from the County of Sonoma for managing the county sanitation zones and districts, including your District.

The collection system serves approximately 4,352 Equivalent Single- Family Dwellings within a 1,460-acre service area. Wastewater collected by the District is treated at the Laguna Wastewater Treatment Plant. Most of the treated water is reused for power generation and irrigation.

# Fats, Oils, and Grease (F.O.G.s) Cause Clogs

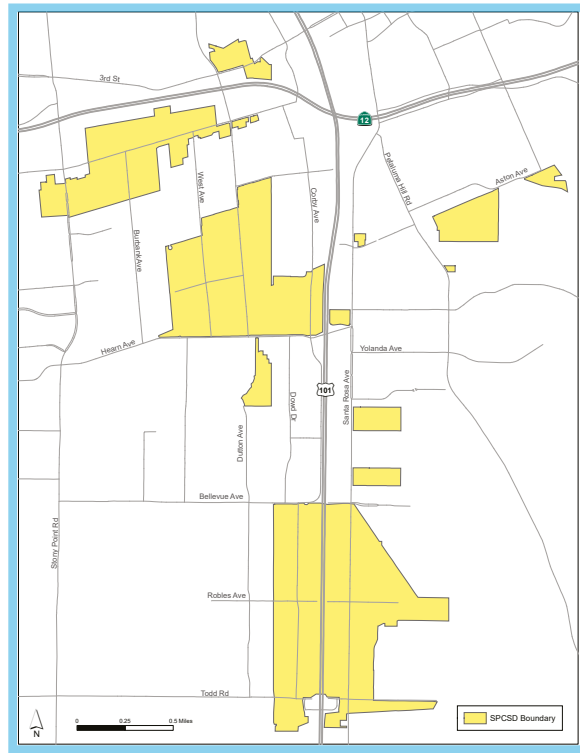
Wipes can catch on tree roots and accumulate with fats, oils and grease becoming large obstructions in the pipes. Further down the line, they weave together and create giant rags which get stuck in pumps, collection systems, and motors, causing backups and equipment failures.

We are asking residents not to discard wipes in the toilet, but instead to throw them in the trash to avoid backups and overflow. Protect your sewer pipes by disposing of fats, oils, and grease in the trash, not down the drain.



For More information, please visit:

[www.sonomawater.org/pollutionprevention](http://www.sonomawater.org/pollutionprevention).



# Virtual Tours Spring 2022

Sonoma Water is pleased to invite community members to enjoy a free virtual tour of a sanitation district. Go to [www.sonomawater.org/sanitation-districts-and-zones](http://www.sonomawater.org/sanitation-districts-and-zones) or scan the QR code to take a tour.



At this time, no in-person public tours are scheduled due to COVID-19. Please visit our web page to stay up to date with the latest offerings, [www.sonomawater.org/tours](http://www.sonomawater.org/tours). You can also sign up for Sonoma Water's E-News to learn about current projects and future events.

# Water Rebates In Your District

## Water Saving Rebate Programs Available:

As a sanitation customer, you have some water saving tools at your fingertips! Please take advantage of water saving programs which are offered on a first-come, first-served basis through the City of Santa Rosa.

## Receive Rebates For:

High-Efficiency Clothes Washers, Recirculating Hot Water Pumps, Cash for Grass Program, Irrigation Upgrades, Graywater Reuse, Rainwater Harvesting, and Sustained Water Reduction.

## For more information:

Visit: <https://srcity.org/834/Rebates-Free-Services> E-mail: [wue@srcity.org](mailto:wue@srcity.org) Call: 707-543-3985



# Maintaining and Repairing Aging Infrastructure

Sonoma Water has managed eight wastewater districts and zones throughout Sonoma County since 1995 when it took over management and operations from the Sonoma County Public Works Department. The districts and zones range in age from 70-plus years (Sonoma Valley, Occidental) to 40 years (Russian River, Airport/Larkfield/Wikiup) and they all face financial challenges. Given the facilities life span, the aging infrastructure of collection and treatment systems require ongoing replacement and maintenance projects.

Each of the districts and zones face more stringent water quality regulations, which increases operational and capital costs. Most of the districts and zones are relatively small and that means a smaller ratepayer base is responsible for these increasing costs.

This year the proposed rate increases for many of the districts and zones are larger than they have been in recent years. Sonoma Water recognizes the rate increases can present a financial hardship for ratepayers, and every effort is being made to seek out grants and loans to offset some of the costs for capital projects. Rate increases are needed for the maintenance and replacement of aging infrastructure, deferred maintenance in some cases, and an effort to maintain the integrity of these publicly owned assets and responsibly manage the systems in a way that protects public health and the environment.

The information below details the proposed rate increase for your district or zone and a breakdown of how funds are collected and how they are spent. There is also a list of projects planned for the coming year.

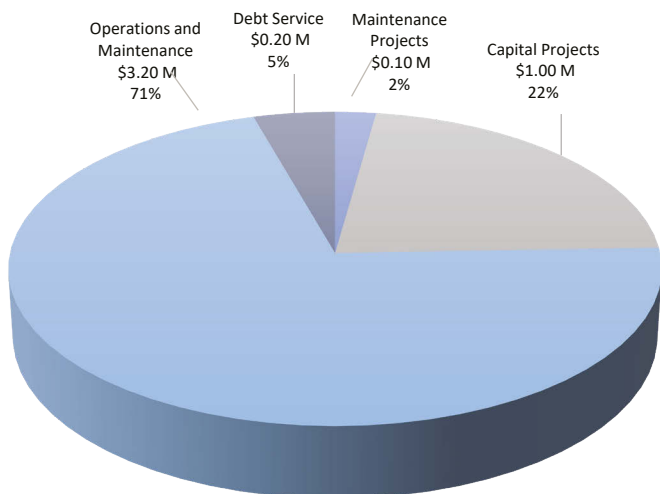
|                               | FY21-22   | FY22-23 Proposed |
|-------------------------------|-----------|------------------|
| ESDs*                         | 4,352     | 4,371            |
| Annual Rate Per ESD (Average) | \$1,074   | \$1,112          |
| Annual Increase               | \$37      | \$38             |
| Monthly Rate per ESD          | \$89.50   | \$92.67          |
| Monthly Increase              | \$3.08    | \$3.13           |
| Rate Increase                 | 3.5%      | 3.5%             |
| Increased Revenue             | \$161,000 | \$164,300        |

\*Fixed Rate sewer bills are calculated based on usage of an Equivalent Standard Dwelling ("ESD"). An ESD is defined as what an average single family home would use in a given year.

## Budget Approval

After the proposed budgets and rates are developed, the budgets are available for public review at the end of March. The draft proposed budgets for all sanitation districts and zones will be available for review at Sonoma Water's office located at 404 Aviation Boulevard, Santa Rosa, California 95403, and on Sonoma Water's website at [sonomawater.org/currentbudget](http://sonomawater.org/currentbudget). In addition, notices of the proposed rates are mailed to the owners of the properties in the districts and zones at that time. The public can protest rate increases up to the date of the rate hearings, which this year are scheduled for May 17 at the Board of Supervisors chambers. (A protest form and rate hearing information are available on pages 5-7 of this notice).

## FY 22-23 Budgeted Expenditures - \$4.5 Million



### Capital Projects - \$1 M

- Santa Rosa Avenue Sewer Improvements Conceptual Design

### Maintenance Projects - \$0.1 M

- Agreement with City of Santa Rosa for Future Sewer Billing
- Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Update
- Manhole Realignments during Road Repavement Projects

# **PROPOSITION 218**

## **South Park County Sanitation District**

### **Notice of Public Hearing Regarding Proposed Sewer Service Rate Increase**

#### **Date, Time, and Place of Public Hearing**

On **May 17, 2022 at 2:30 p.m.** or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard, the Board of Directors (Board) of the South Park County Sanitation District (District) will conduct a public hearing to consider increasing the annual sewer service charge (Sewer Charge) and make rate structure modifications. If approved, the increased Sewer Charge will become effective on July 1, 2022.

**Please note:** The public hearing will be held in the Board Meeting Room, 575 Administration Drive, Room 102A, Santa Rosa, California. However, it may be held virtually if required by COVID-19 pandemic conditions. If the meeting is held virtually, then information regarding public online participation will be available on the Board's agenda 72 hours prior to the meeting at <https://sonoma-county.legistar.com/calendar.aspx>.

The Sewer Charge will be imposed on each parcel with one or more structures that are connected to the system. The Sewer Charge will be collected on the general property tax bill administered by Sonoma County. Payment of the Sewer Charge will be the responsibility of the owner of the parcel.

#### **Reasons for the Sewer Charge and Use of the Funds Collected**

The Sewer Charge is imposed to pay for the cost of providing safe and reliable sewer service to your property in conformance with legal requirements, and is necessary: (a) to finance the ongoing operation and maintenance costs of the system; (b) to pay the capital replacement program costs of the system, which provides for the long-term replacement of system facilities as they wear out; and (c) to maintain sufficient reserves.

#### **Calculation of the Sewer Rate Increase**

The District is working with the City of Santa Rosa on a multi-year transition process to turn over the operation and management of the District to the City. The District's rate structure historically included only fixed charges. The District has moved to a new rate structure that includes both (A) fixed charges; and (B) volumetric charges that are based on the amount of water used by the customer. This rate structure is designed to fund the cost of District services and it also provides customers greater control over their sewer bill. It is also consistent with industry best practices and is similar to the City's rate structure. The proposed rate increase is 3.5% compared to the current year.

##### **A. Fixed Charge Calculation**

The fixed charge is calculated based on usage of a standard "equivalent single-family dwelling" (ESD). A standard single-family home constitutes one ESD which is defined as what an average single family home would use in a given year. Properties that are not single family homes are converted to ESDs based on industry standard methods and more information about this conversion is available from the District. The fixed charge funds 40 percent of the District's costs to provide sewer services, including costs associated with the sewage treatment and collection system that are incurred regardless of increased or decreased sewage flow into the system.

Effective July 1, 2022, the District proposes a fixed charge of \$424.62 per ESD per year. The fixed charge has decreased relative to the volumetric charge this year but the overall rate increase will be 3.5%. All District customers will pay the fixed charge.

The proposed fixed charge component of the Sewer Charge will be calculated as follows:

$$\text{\$424.62 per ESD} \times \text{Number of ESD's} = \text{Fixed Charge Component of the Sewer Charge}$$

The number of ESDs for your parcel is included in this newsletter in the box to the left of your mailing address.

## B. Volumetric Charge Calculation

The volume-based charge recovers 60 percent of the District’s costs to provide sewer services, including the costs associated with the sewage treatment and collection system that vary with the amount of sewage conveyed and treated. The District will use City of Santa Rosa water usage data to calculate the annual volumetric charge portion of the Sewer Charge. The volume-based charge has increased relative to the fixed charge this year but the overall rate increase will be 3.5%. All District customers will pay an annual volumetric charge.

The Volume-Based Component of the Sewer Charge has two parts, which are multiplied together:

$$\text{Annual Water Usage} \times \text{Charge per thousand gallons} = \text{Volume-Based Component of Sewer Charge}$$

The District has four categories of customers for the volumetric charge calculation:

1. Residential Customers with a City of Santa Rosa Water Connection
2. Residential Customers with No City of Santa Rosa Water Connection
3. Non-Residential Customers with a City of Santa Rosa Water Connection
4. Non-Residential Customers with No City of Santa Rosa Water Connection

The calculations for each are described below. Annual Water Usage calculations will be based on water consumption from the prior year. For Residential Customers, average winter water usage will be used because it provides the best available estimate of indoor water usage since outdoor irrigation is minimal during the winter months. For Non-Residential Customers, annual water usage is based on actual water usage.

**Table 1: Residential Customers: Annual Water Usage and Charge Per Thousand Gallon Calculation**

| Sewer Customers   | Calculation of Annual Water Usage   | Charge Per Thousand Gallons |
|---|---|-----------------------------|
| With a City of Santa Rosa Water Connection                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District will calculate Customer’s average monthly water usage during the billing periods of November through March.</li> <li>• For each month of the prior fiscal year, the District will select either the customer’s winter average water usage or the customer’s actual water used, whichever is lower.</li> <li>• District will add up the customer’s monthly water usage to arrive at the total annual water usage.</li> </ul> | \$12.42                     |
| With No City of Santa Rosa Water Connection part or all of the time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District will average the winter water usage during the billing periods of November through March of similar residential customers that have a City of Santa Rosa water connection.</li> <li>• Water use will be estimated based on household size and water use data from comparable metered customers.</li> <li>• Average winter water usage will be multiplied by 12 to determine annual water usage.</li> </ul>                  | \$12.42                     |

**Table 2a: Non-Residential Customers: Annual Water Usage Calculation**

| Sewer Customers   | Calculation of Annual Water Usage   | Charge Per Thousand Gallons                                     |
|---|---|---|
| With a City of Santa Rosa Water Connection                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For each month of the prior fiscal year, District will add up the customer’s actual monthly water usage to arrive at the total annual water usage.</li> </ul>  | Based on estimated wastewater strength, shown in Table 2b below |
| With No City of Santa Rosa Water Connection part or all of the time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District will average annual water usage from similar customers based on City of Santa Rosa water usage data.</li> <li>• Water use will be estimated based on household size, if applicable, or on the type and size of use. Additional information on estimation methodologies is available from the District.</li> </ul> | Based on estimated wastewater strength, shown in Table 2b below |

**Table 2b: Non-Residential Customers: Examples of Charge Per Thousand Gallon Calculation**

| <b>Categories of Wastewater Strength and Examples of Types of Uses</b>  | <b>Charge per Thousand Gallons</b> |
|---|------------------------------------|
| <b>Low Strength</b> - car wash, glass products  | \$10.68                            |
| <b>Standard Strength</b> – multi-family (except duplex) complexes, condominium complexes, mobile home parks, warehouses, general commercial/industrial including retail, schools, churches, auto sales, dental and medical offices. | \$12.42                            |
| <b>Medium Strength</b> – mixed use commercial; hotel/motel, convenience store, bar, winery, brewery, auto repair.   | \$14.28                            |
| <b>High Strength</b> – bakery, restaurant, coffee shop, meat and food processing, miller, hospital, veterinary clinic.  | \$17.62                            |

**C. Fixed Charge and Volumetric Charge Calculation Combined for Total Sewer Charge**

Each Residential Customer with a sewer connection will be charged an annual Sewer Charge calculated as follows:

$$\text{\$424.62 per ESD} \times \text{Number of ESDs (Fixed Charge Component)} + \text{\$12.42 per thousand gallons} \times \text{Annual Water Usage in thousand gallons (Volumetric Charge Component)}$$

Each Non-Residential Customer with a sewer connection will be charged an annual Sewer Charge calculated as follows:

$$\text{\$424.62 per ESD} \times \text{Number of ESDs (Fixed Charge Component)} + \text{Annual Water Usage} \times \text{Applicable Charge per thousand gallons shown in Table 2b (Volumetric Charge Component)}$$

The draft proposed budget for fiscal year 2022-23 describes the total annual expenses in detail and is available for review at the South Park County Sanitation District, c/o the Sonoma County Water Agency, 404 Aviation Boulevard, Santa Rosa, California 95403, and on Sonoma Water’s website at [www.sonomawater.org/current-budget](http://www.sonomawater.org/current-budget).

**Further Information Available Prior to the Hearing**

At the hearing, the Board will consider adoption of an ordinance that will establish the increased Sewer Charge. A copy of the ordinance is on file and available for review at the Sonoma County Water Agency, 404 Aviation Boulevard, Santa Rosa, CA 95403. In addition, the following person may be contacted at the Agency at (707) 526-5370 for further information and/or obtaining copies of the draft proposed budget for fiscal year 2022-23: Kathy Badger, Administrative Aide.

**Protest Procedure**

This notice has been mailed to you because records of the Sonoma County Assessor list you as an owner of one or more parcels within the District that will be subject to the Sewer Charge while connected to the system. In the event you have sold property you may have owned within the District, please send this notice to the new owner. This document can be found in the spring newsletter online at: [www.sonomawater.org/spcsd](http://www.sonomawater.org/spcsd).

Prior to the public hearing, property owners, or tenants who are directly liable for the payment of the Sewer Charges, may submit written protests respecting the Sewer Charge. At the public hearing, the Board will consider all written protests that have been received by the prescribed deadline. In order to be considered, a written protest must be made on the attached form. Only one protest will be counted per parcel. Only protests signed by the current owner(s), or tenant(s) directly liable for paying the Sewer Charge, will be allowed and protests must be received no later than the following deadlines:

*If submitted by mail, the protest must be received (NOT postmarked) no later than 5:00 p.m. on Monday, May 16, 2022 at the mailing address on the form.*

*If hand delivered, the protest must be delivered no later than 5:00 p.m. on Monday, May 16, 2022 at the mailing address on the form.*

Sonoma Water  
404 Aviation Blvd.  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

There is a 120-day statute of limitations for challenging any new, increased, or extended fee or charge.

# RATE PROTEST FORM

**NOTE: IN ORDER TO BE CONSIDERED, ANY PROTEST MUST BE ON THIS FORM**

## WRITTEN PROTEST

I am the parcel owner of the property located at the address on the back of this form, or a tenant that is directly liable for paying the Sewer Charge for the property. I am submitting this form to protest the proposed Sewer Charge increase.

Additional Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Use opposite side or attach additional sheets if needed.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Property Owner Required

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

*Fold Here First*

Place  
Postage  
Here

South Park County Sanitation District  
c/o Sonoma Water  
404 Aviation Blvd  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

*Fold Here Second*

South Park County Sanitation District  
c/o Sonoma Water  
404 Aviation Blvd.  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

## **IMPORTANT Sewer Service Fee Notice**

(Prop 218) enclosed for  
South Park County  
Sanitation District



### **HEARING DATE**

May 17, 2022 at 2:30 p.m.

### **HEARING DETAILS**

Hearing details can be found  
72 hours prior to the meeting at

<https://sonoma-county.legistar.com/calendar.aspx>

## **ATTENTION IMPORTANT SEWER RATE INFORMATION INSIDE**



## Included In This Issue

Proposition 218 Notice for proposed  
Fiscal Year 2021-2022 sewer rates.

The Notice with information about the proposed rates  
is included on pages 5-6 of this newsletter.  
The return protest form is located on page 7.



**Sonoma  
Water**

Clean. Reliable. Essential. Every day.

[www.sonomawater.org/SPCSD](http://www.sonomawater.org/SPCSD)