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# SONOMA VALLEY COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICT SEWER TRUNK MAIN REPLACEMENT PROJECT COMING THIS SUMMER

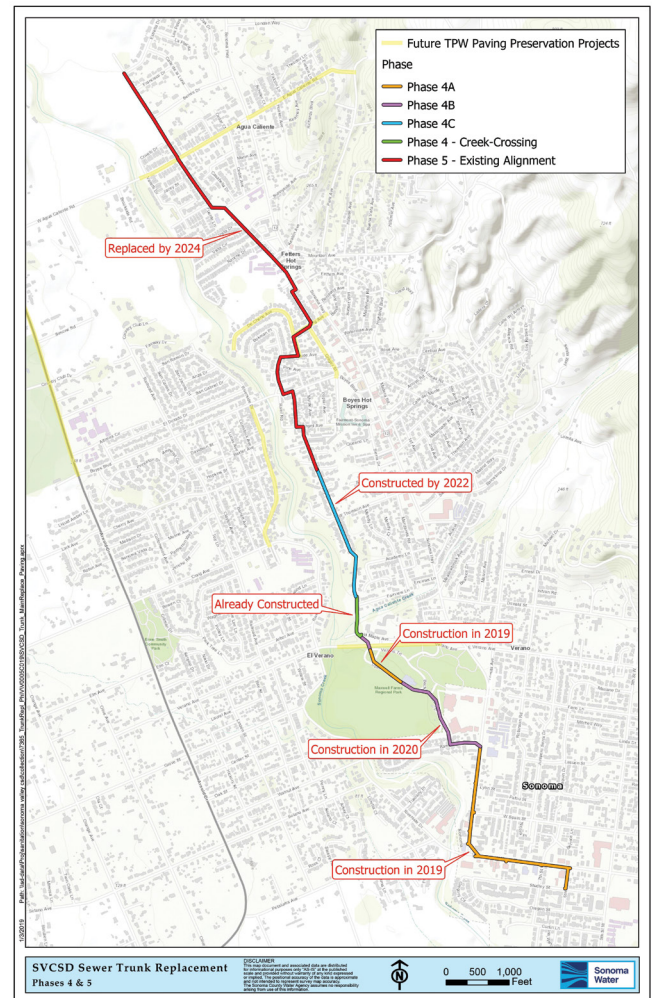
A long-overdue \$6-million project to replace the Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District (District) sewer trunk main that is more than 60 years old is expected to get started this summer and continue into the fall of 2020. The first phase, is known as Reach 4A. The multi-year project would replace about 1.8 miles of the existing sewer trunk main alignment in three phases:

- 2019 – Reach 4A: From the intersection of 6th Street West and Studley Street, continue north to Highway 12, continue north along Highway 12, and continue west and north along Highway 12, ending in Ramon Street. Construction of this phase is estimated to be \$6 million.
- 2020 – Reach 4B: At Ramon Street, west into the Sonoma Oaks Mobile Home Park, continue north through Maxwell Farms Regional Park and across Verano Ave., ending south of Old Maple Avenue. The cost of this phase has yet to be determined.
- 2021 – Reach 4C: From the south end of Buena Vida Drive, continue north through private easements, continue north along Happy Lane, ending approximately 300 feet north of Anthony Court. The cost of this phase has yet to be determined.

### Why is the Project needed?

The project is part of a larger replacement project, that since 1994, has replaced 9.7 miles of pipeline at a cost of \$14.9 million. The purpose of the project is to improve the sewer trunk main's ability to reliably handle dry and wet weather flows. The project will also help to prevent leaks in the system and reduce sanitary sewer overflows, which occur during heavy rains and can allow wastewater to enter creeks.

The sewer trunk main replacement is also a requirement of a settlement agreement with the San Francisco Regional Water Quality Control Board aimed at improving water quality



and minimizing impacts to the environment. The District was fined \$732,000 in 2015 for a series of sanitary sewer overflows. The project will allow the District to comply with its settlement agreement.

# HOW YOUR SEWER SERVICE FEES ARE SPENT

Service fees collected from property owners are used to operate and maintain the sanitation facilities that are managed by Sonoma Water. This graphic depiction provides a snapshot of types of activities that are required to operate our facilities in an environmentally responsible and fiscally prudent manner, to replace worn out equipment before it fails.

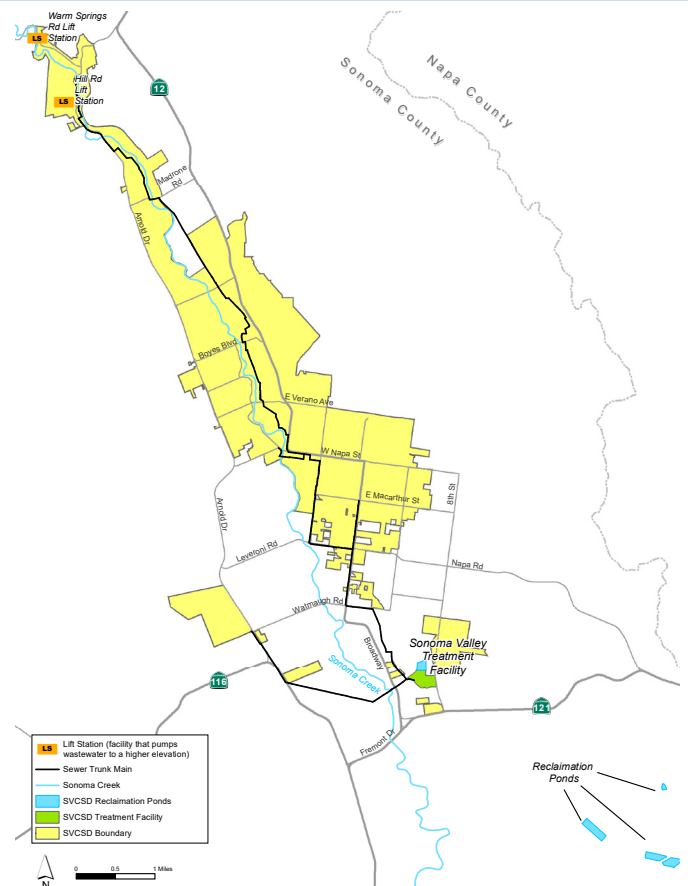


## BUDGET APPROVAL

After the proposed budgets and rates are developed, the budgets are available for public review at libraries throughout the county and at Sonoma Water's office located at 404 Aviation Boulevard, Santa Rosa. They are also available online. Typically, this happens at the end of March. 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 are typically held in mid-May at the Board of Supervisors chambers. (A protest form and rate hearing information are available on pages 6-7 of this notice).

## 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 District began operation in 1953. Currently, it serves 17,548 Equivalent Single-Family Dwellings within a 4,500-acre service area. The treatment plant has a design capacity of 3 million gallons per day (average daily dry weather flow) and treats wastewater to tertiary treatment levels (also referred to as advanced water treatment). High-quality recycled water is an important resource and its use offsets potable water demands and enhances the environment. Between May 1 and October 31, the recycled water is used for irrigation and wetland/salt marsh enhancement. Between November 1 and April 30, recycled water is discharged into Schell Slough or Hudeman Slough.





## SPRING 2019 PUBLIC TOURS

### WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT TOURS

Sonoma Water will host free public tours of the Russian River (in Guerneville) and Sonoma Valley Wastewater Treatment Plants. Come learn where wastewater goes after it leaves your home and how it is treated, recycled and reused as a new resource.

#### **Sonoma Valley Wastewater Treatment Plant Tour**

Saturday, May 11, 2019– 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (ENGLISH)

#### **Russian River Wastewater Treatment Plant Tour**

Saturday, May 18, 2019– 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (ENGLISH)

Tour registration is required. To learn more and to register, please visit [www.sonomawater.org/tours](http://www.sonomawater.org/tours). Registration will be confirmed via email. Children must be 12 years old to attend a tour and must be accompanied by an adult.

Russian River water supply walking tours, as well as tours of flood protection facilities will be announced on the website, check [www.sonomawater.org/tours](http://www.sonomawater.org/tours) for dates and sign-up.

**Questions?** Please contact Emma Sharpe at (707) 521-6200 or [emma.sharpe@scwa.ca.gov](mailto:emma.sharpe@scwa.ca.gov).

## EQUALIZATION BASINS RELINING PROJECT

The District's wastewater treatment plant receives and treats wastewater generated from service area of 4,500 acres and about 17,027 equivalent single family dwelling units. The sewer collection system can experience high rates of inflow and infiltration during heavy rains, sending flows to the plant up to 10 times greater than dry weather flows. During these times, treatment capacity at the plant can be limited and it is necessary to store flows for later treatment.

To accommodate these variable inflows, the plant has a series of four equalization basins that capture and store raw sewage when inflows the plant's treatment capacity. The equalization basins provide a total of 35 million gallons of storage for raw wastewater. Flows are stored in the equalization basins until inflows to the plant have reduced and treatment capacity becomes available.

The equalization basins are lined to prevent groundwater contamination. The basins were last lined in 1998 and need to be replaced. The basins will be relined with a new geomembrane liner this summer, extending their life and serving a critical role within the SVCS treatment plant.

## WATER REBATES IN YOUR DISTRICT

### SANITATION DISTRICT WATER SAVING REBATE PROGRAMS AVAILABLE

If you are a City of Sonoma or Valley of the Moon Water District customer, you have some water saving tools at your fingertips! Please take advantage of the following water saving programs which are offered on a first-come, first-served basis while funding lasts:

**Clothes Washers:** Receive up to \$50 back on the purchase and installation of a new, qualifying high-efficiency clothes washer (HEW). Rebates are available for all Energy Star Most Efficient listed clothes washers except those containing silver ion technology.

For more information, go to [www.savingwaterpartnership.org/washer-rebate/](http://www.savingwaterpartnership.org/washer-rebate/).

# “Wastewater Woman” Joins the Fight Against Grease, Wipes and Unwanted Meds

Something as simple as flushing the toilet can cause big problems. Staff at the wastewater treatment plants managed by Sonoma Water face a continuous battle against fats, oil and grease, so-called flushable wipes, and unwanted medications – all things that should never be flushed down the toilet or washed down the drain. When these items are improperly disposed of, they cause sewer backups, damage equipment, and pollute our water.

Who better to come to their aid than a cartoon super-hero armed with a hard hat, cape and compelling message? Enter, Wastewater Woman, whose mission is “fighting the good fight for proper disposal.” Wastewater Woman’s image will be featured in a series of social media and newspaper ads with three main messages:

**Grease Down the Drain? What a Pain!**

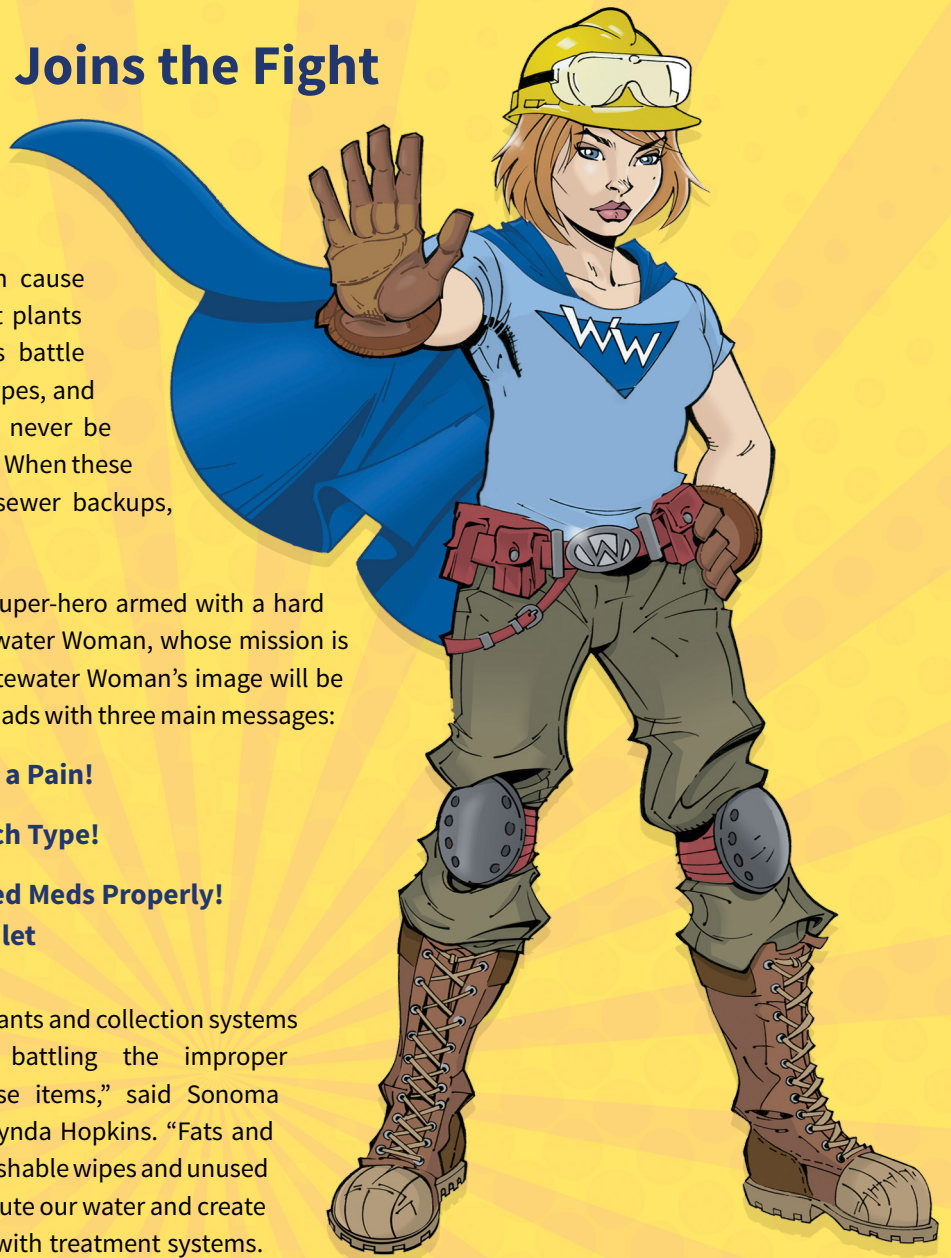
**Flushable Wipe? No Such Type!**

**Dispose of Unwanted Meds Properly!  
Not Down the Toilet**

“Our treatment plants and collection systems are constantly battling the improper disposal of these items,” said Sonoma Water Director Lynda Hopkins. “Fats and oils, so-called flushable wipes and unused medications pollute our water and create costly problems with treatment systems. We should all pay attention to Wastewater Woman’s messages.”

“We hope that by highlighting a serious problem in a playful way we can convey a message that connects with a larger audience,” Sonoma Water Director Susan Gorin. “Wastewater treatment is not the most glamorous of services, but it is essential and critical to the health of our communities. We all need to pitch in to keep the systems working efficiently.”

*We thank you for your help!*



# PROPOSITION 218

## Sonoma Water

### Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING PROPOSED SEWER SERVICE RATE INCREASE

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

On May 21, 2019, at 1:50 p.m. or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard, in the Board Meeting Room, 575 Administration Drive, Room 102A, Santa Rosa, California, the Board of Directors (Board) of the Sonoma Valley 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, 2019.

The Sewer Charge will be imposed on each parcel upon which is located one or more structures that are connected to the system and 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 Service 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. The District's Sewer Charge is reviewed annually to determine if adequate revenues are being collected for these purposes.

The draft proposed budget for fiscal year 2019-20 describes the District's total annual expenses in detail and is available for review at the Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District, c/o the Sonoma County Water Agency, 404 Aviation Boulevard, Santa Rosa, California 95403, and the Sonoma County Regional Libraries in Santa Rosa (Main & Northwest), Windsor, Healdsburg, Cloverdale, Guerneville, Sebastopol, Petaluma, Rohnert Park, Rincon Valley, Sonoma, and Forestville (El Molino High School)..

#### Calculation of the Sewer Rate Increase

The District has two categories of users:

A) Non-Residential Users and Residential Users with No Public Water Connection. This category of users has a Sewer Charge that is fixed. NOTE: Residential Users that have a Public Water Connection but have no water usage in winter months and multi-family complexes including condominiums with only one Public Water

Connection for all of the units are also included in this category.

B) Residential Users with a Public Water Connection. This category of users has a Sewer Charge that has both a fixed charge component and a volume-based component.

The method for calculating the Sewer Charge for each category of user is described in more detail below.

A) Amount of Proposed Sewer Rate Increase for Non-Residential Users and Residential Users with No Public Water Connection.

Effective July 1, 2019, the District proposes to increase the charge per Equivalent Single-Family Dwelling (ESD) from \$1,016 per ESD per year to \$1,057 per ESD per year for users in this category. This represents an increase of \$41 or 4% compared to the current year. This increase to the ESD charge has been calculated by dividing the annual costs of providing wastewater treatment and collection service by the total estimated number of ESDs in the District.

A standard single-family home constitutes one ESD. 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. Parcels which have other uses (for example, apartments and commercial buildings) will be assigned a number of ESDs using standard equivalency factors which estimate the probable quantity and quality of sewage effluent normally generated by such uses in comparison to a single-family home.

The Sewer Charge for Non-Residential Users and Residential Users with No Public Water Connection is calculated as follows:

$$\text{\$1,057 per ESD} \times \text{Assigned Number of ESD's} = \text{Annual Sewer Charge}$$

B) Sewer Rate Increase Proposed For Residential Users With a Public Water Connection

All residential sewer customers with a public water connection must pay a Sewer Charge with two components: a fixed charge and a volume-based charge. The Residential Users with a Public Water Connection category includes single-family dwellings, multiple-family units, apartments, and mobile home parks. A multi-family complex or condominium complex will also fall within this category if each unit in the complex has its own public water connection.

1. **Fixed Charge Component:** The fixed charge component of the Sewer Charge funds 70% of the District's costs to provide sewer services, including costs that the sewage treatment and collection system incurs regardless of increased or decreased sewage flow into the system.

Effective July 1, 2019 the District proposes to increase the fixed charge to \$740 per ESD per year for residential users with a public water connection. This represents an increase of \$29 (4% above the current year).

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

$$\text{\$740 per ESD} \times \text{Number of ESD's} = \text{Fixed Charge Component of the Sewer Charge}$$

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

2. **Volume-Based Component:** The volume-based component funds approximately 30% of the District's costs to provide sewer service, including costs to the sewage treatment and collection system that vary with the amount of sewage conveyed and treated. The District's volume-based component uses a customer's lowest winter water use (November– March) as the basis for the calculation. Winter water use is used because it generally provides the best available estimate of indoor water use and its impact to the District's treatment facilities because outdoor irrigation is usually minimal during the winter months.

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

$$\begin{aligned} &\text{Winter Water Usage} \times \text{Number of Billing Periods} \\ &\text{Annually from your Water District} \times \text{per thousand gallon} \\ &= \text{Volume-Based Component of Sewer Charge} \end{aligned}$$

Effective July 1, 2019, the District proposes to increase the volume-based component charge from \$5.76 per thousand gallons to \$5.99 per thousand gallons for residential users with a public water connection. This represents an increase of \$0.23 per thousand gallons (4.0% compared to current year). Each residential user with a sewer connection and a public water connection with winter water use greater than zero will be charged as follows::

**Total Sewer Charge (fixed charge + volumetric charge) for Residential Customers with a Public Water Connection**

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*For Customers with a Valley of the Moon Water District bill:*  
\$740 per ESD x Number of ESD's (*Fixed Charge Component*) +  
\$5.99 per thousand gallons x Lowest Winter Water Usage in thousand gallons  
x 6 billing periods annually (*Volumetric Charge Component*)

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*For Customers with a City of Sonoma Water District water bill:*  
\$740 per ESD x Number of ESD's (*Fixed Charge Component*) +  
\$5.99 per thousand gallons x Lowest Winter Water Usage in thousand gallons  
x 12 billing periods annually (*Volumetric Charge Component*)

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**Further Information Available Prior to the Hearing**

At the hearing, the Board will consider adoption of an ordinance which 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 persons 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 2019-20:

Kathy Badger, Administrative Aide  
Lynne Rosselli, Administrative Service Officer II

**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.

Either prior to or at 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, they must be received (NOT postmarked) no later than 5:00 p.m. on Monday, May 20, 2019, at the mailing address on the attached Written Protest form.
- If hand delivered, they must be delivered no later than the close of the public hearing on May 21, 2019 to: Clerk of the Board, Board Meeting Room, as set forth in the opening paragraph

**Date of this Notice: March 29, 2019**

# 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

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

*Fold Here Second*

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

## **IMPORTANT Sewer service fee NOTICE**

(Prop 218) enclosed for  
Sonoma Valley County  
Sanitation District



### **HEARING DATE**

May 21, 2019, 1:50 p.m.

### **HEARING LOCATION**

575 Administration Drive  
Room 102A, Santa Rosa, CA

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



## INCLUDED IN THIS ISSUE

Proposition 218 Notice for proposed  
Fiscal Year 2019-2020 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/SVCSD](http://www.sonomawater.org/SVCSD)