



**Sonoma
Water**

SPRING 2024 NEWS

Vol. 12, Issue #1

South Park County Sanitation District

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Infrastructure Improvements

The South Park County Sanitation District is planning several infrastructure improvement projects to enhance the reliability, efficiency, and safety of the sanitation system for all ratepayers.

One of the significant projects currently underway involves the removal and replacement of 6,600 linear feet of sewer pipes along Santa Rosa Avenue, stretching from East Robles to Todd Road. This area is mostly industrial and commercial zones, making it crucial to maintain robust sanitation infrastructure to support local businesses and ensure environmental protection.

Here are some key highlights:

Replacing Outdated Infrastructure The existing sewer pipes, dating back to the 1950s-1960s, consist of vitrified clay and asbestos materials, which are no longer considered safe or efficient. The new pipes, most likely PVC, offer durability and cost-effectiveness, while ensuring longevity and improved performance.

Addressing Environmental Concerns Given the history of industrial activity in the area, there are concerns about potential contamination in the ground. To mitigate this risk, district staff are working with consultants to conduct thorough testing and, if necessary, take corrective actions, prioritizing environmental stewardship throughout the project.

Enhancing System Capacity As part of the district's forward-looking approach, staff are considering the possibility of enlarging the pipes to accommodate future development in the area. This proactive measure aligns with the Draft City of Santa Rosa General Plan and may involve additional environmental assessments to ensure compliance and sustainability.

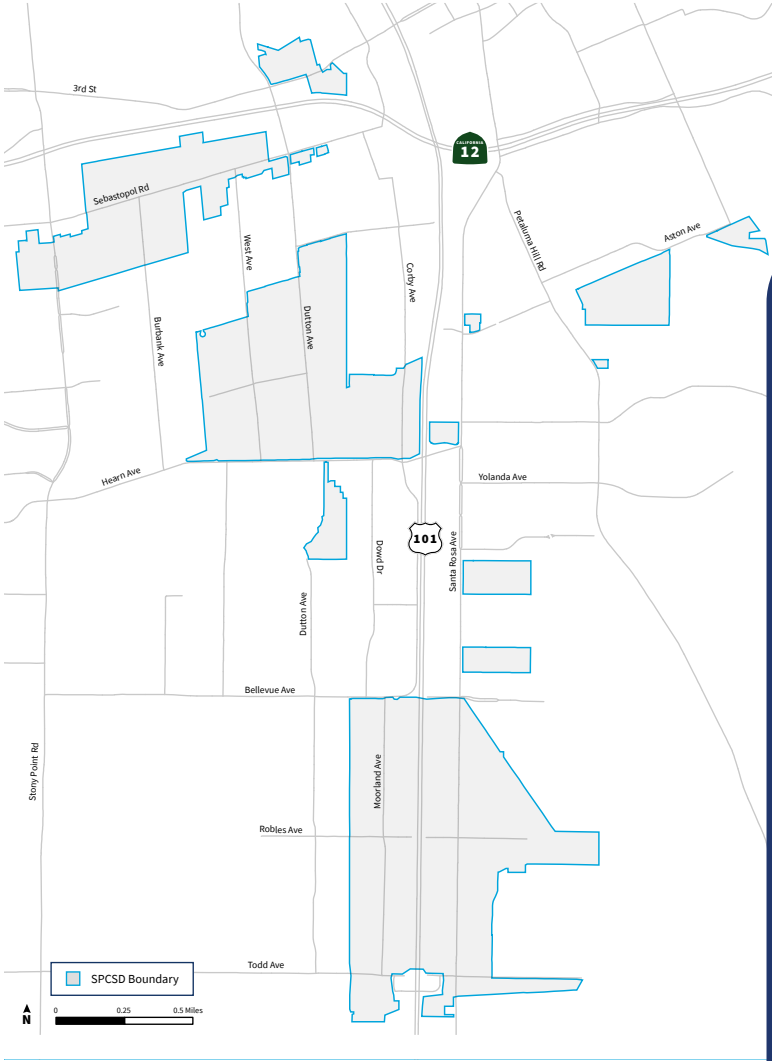
Streamlined Design and Construction Despite the complexity of the project, staff are making steady progress in the early design phase, with the survey of the project area now complete. While design and construction are slated for completion by 2026 or 2027, staff remain committed to delivering efficient and timely outcomes.

Community Partnership and Funding The district is grateful for the collaboration of key stakeholders, including the City of Santa Rosa and Sonoma County Water Agency, in facilitating this vital infrastructure upgrade. Funding for the \$7.2 million construction project is primarily sourced from district ratepayers, underscoring the district's collective investment in safeguarding the sanitation system's integrity.

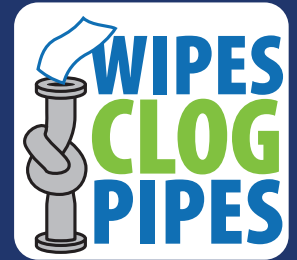


About Your District

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 4,353 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.



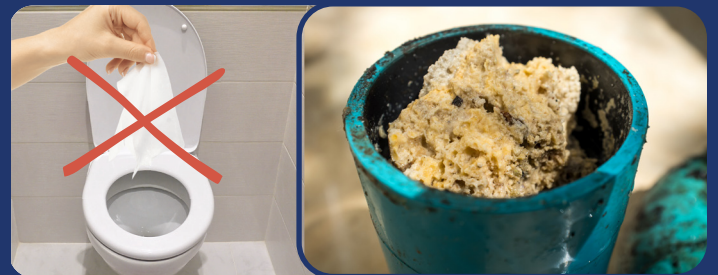
Fats, Oils, and Grease (F.O.G.s) Cause Clogs



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: SonomaWater.org/PollutionPrevention.



Sanitation Rate Relief Program

Save money on your annual sewage bill

Sonoma Water is proposing to our Board of Directors to approve discounts on sewer service bills are to low-income homeowners who live within the districts and zones managed by Sonoma Water. The discounts, which can cut the sewage charge on your annual property tax bill in half, would also be available to nonprofit organizations that provide housing to low-income renters. Upon approval by our Board of Directors, Sonoma Water will begin accepting applications on May 22, 2024. Applications are due by no later than July 10. Learn more and apply at SonomaWater.org/SRRP.

Water Rebates in Your District

Water-Saving rebate programs available

If you are a City of Santa Rosa Water 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 is available.

Receive Rebates For

High-Efficiency Toilets, High-Efficiency Clothes Washers, Cash for Grass Program, Irrigation Upgrades, Graywater Reuse, Rainwater Harvesting, Sustained Water Reduction, and much more.

For more information

Visit: <https://www.srcity.org/834/Rebates-Services> E-mail: 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. The aging collection and treatment systems require ongoing maintenance and replacement projects.

As water quality regulations become more stringent, operational and capital costs of compliance increase. The small size of most of the districts and zones means there are relatively few ratepayers to share these new 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, to maintain the integrity of these publicly owned assets and to responsibly manage the systems to protect public health and the environment.

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

	FY 23-24	FY 24-25 Proposed
ESDs*	4,353	4,476
Annual Rate Per ESD	\$1,150	\$1,190
Annual Increase	\$38	\$40
Monthly Rate per ESD	\$95.83	\$99.17
Monthly Increase	\$3.20	\$3.33
Rate Increase	3.5%	3.5%
Increased Revenue	\$167,199	\$179,037

*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/Current-Budget.

In addition, owners of the properties in district and zones receive notice of the proposed rates in this newsletter. The public can protest rate increases up to the date of the rate hearings, which this year are scheduled for May 21, 2024 at the Board of Supervisors chambers. (A protest form and rate hearing information are available on pages 5-7 of this notice).

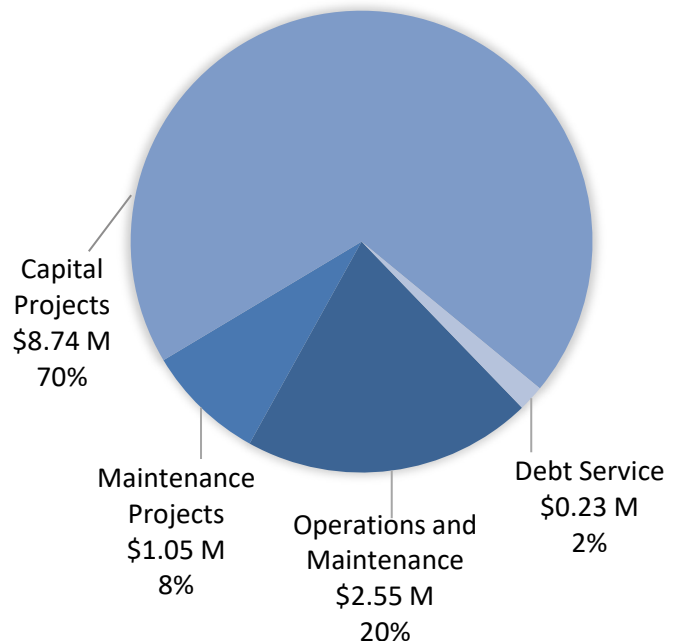
FY 2024-2025 Budgeted Expenditures \$12.56 Million

Capital Projects – \$8.74 Million

- Barbara-Winston Collection System Replacement Project
- Santa Rosa Avenue Sewer Improvements Conceptual Design

Maintenance Projects – \$1.05 Million

- Agreement with City of Santa Rosa for Future Sewer Billing
- Rate Study for Transfer to City of Santa Rosa
- Sanitation Code & Standard Update



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 21, 2024 at 9:45 a.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, 2024.

The public hearing will be held in the Board Meeting Room, 575 Administration Drive, Room 102A, Santa Rosa, California. The Board is currently not having virtual meetings with virtual participation from the public. If a virtual meeting is required by unforeseen emergency circumstances, information regarding virtual 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.

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, 2024, the District proposes a fixed charge of \$454.86 per ESD per year. This represents an annual increase of \$15.38 or \$1.28 per month. All District customers will pay the fixed charge.

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

$$\$454.86 \text{ per ESD} \times \text{Number of ESD's} = \text{Fixed Charge Component of the Sewer Charge}$$

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. 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

Residential customers include single-family dwellings, duplexes, and condominium complexes. Non-residential customers include multiple-family units, apartments, mobile home parks, commercial, industrial, and institutional properties. The calculations for each are described below. Annual Water Usage calculations will be based on customer water consumption. 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"> • District will calculate Customer’s average monthly winter water usage. • Average winter water usage will be multiplied by 12 to determine annual water usage. 	\$13.28
With No City of Santa Rosa Water Connection part or all of the time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District will calculate Customer’s average monthly winter water usage of similar residential customers that have a City of Santa Rosa water connection. • Water use will be estimated based on household size and water use data from comparable metered customers. • Average winter water usage will be multiplied by 12 to determine annual water usage. 	\$13.28

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"> • District will add up the customer’s actual monthly water usage for 12 months to arrive at the total annual water usage. 	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"> • District will average annual water usage from similar customers based on City of Santa Rosa water usage data. • 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. • Average winter water usage will be multiplied by 12 to determine annual water usage. 	Based on estimated wastewater strength, shown in Table 2b below

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

Categories of Wastewater Strength and Examples of Types of Uses	Charge per Thousand Gallons
Low Strength - car wash, glass products	\$11.42
Standard Strength – residential, condominium complexes, multi-family complexes, mobile home parks, warehouses, general commercial/industrial including retail, schools, churches, auto sales, dental and medical offices.	\$13.28
Medium Strength – mixed use commercial; hotel/motel, convenience store, bar, winery, brewery, auto repair.	\$15.26
High Strength – bakery, restaurant, coffee shop, meat and food processing, miller, hospital, veterinary clinic.	\$18.86

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:

**\$454.86 per ESD X Number of ESDs (Fixed Charge Component) +
\$13.28 per thousand gallons x 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:

\$454.86 per ESD X Number of ESDs (Fixed Charge Component) + Annual Water Usage x Applicable Charge per thousand gallons shown in Table 2b (Volumetric Charge Component)

The draft proposed budget for fiscal year 2024-25 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 <https://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 will be 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 to obtain copies of the draft proposed budget for fiscal year 2024-25: 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: <https://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 the protest 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 20, 2024 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 20, 2024 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.

Date of this Notice: March 26, 2024

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 21, 2024 at 9:45 a.m.

HEARING DETAILS

Hearing details can be found
72 hours prior to the meeting at
<https://sonoma-county.legistar.com/calendar.aspx>



Included In This Issue

Proposition 218 Notice for proposed Fiscal Year 2024-2025 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.



Importante

Aviso De Tarifa De Servicio De Aguas Negras
Aviso de la Proposición 218 respecto a las tarifas
propuestas para el año fiscal 2024-2025.

FECHA DE LA AUDIENCIA

21 de mayo de 2024 a las 9:45 a.m.

DETALLES DE LA AUDIENCIA

Los detalles de la audiencia estarán disponibles 72 horas
antes de la reunión en

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

Incluido en esta Edición

El aviso con información sobre las tarifas propuestas se
incluye en las páginas 5-6 de este boletín. El formulario de
protesta se encuentra en la página 7.

Este boletín y otros materiales sobre saneamiento de
aguas negras están disponibles en español en
SonomaWater.org/espanol.



**Sonoma
Water**

Clean. Reliable. Essential. Every day.
SonomaWater.org/SPCSD