



## **Wastewater (Sewer) Proposed Rate Adjustments Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1) What rates is the City proposing to increase?**

The City of Stockton is proposing adjustments to the monthly rates for wastewater (sewer) service fees. These rates allow the City to properly operate and maintain the wastewater treatment system, including:

- 900 miles of gravity sewer main,
- 554 miles of lower lateral pipe,
- 27 pump stations, and
- 30 miles of pressurized force main.

Additionally, rate adjustments ensure the City will meet or exceed all legal, Federal, and State Clean Water regulatory requirements and maintain the long-term financial stability of the wastewater operations.

### **2) Why are wastewater rate adjustments necessary?**

The City of Stockton Municipal Utilities Department is responsible for the collection, treatment, and disposal of wastewater, commonly referred to as sewer. This is a vital service that supports public health.

The City is committed to providing high-quality, safe and reliable wastewater treatment services at the lowest possible cost. It must also meet legal requirements, along with increasingly strict State and Federal Clean Water Standards and regulatory requirements.

### **3) When was the last wastewater service charge increase?**

Periodic wastewater utility rate studies are required by law and necessary to maintain a sound fiscal base to deliver service. A Wastewater Utility rate study was last completed in 2010 and included the adoption of phased rates increases over a 5-year period and provided annual cost of living adjustments for a specific period. The last cost of living rate adjustments went into effect July 1, 2016.

### **4) I have a small household/live alone. Why do I pay the same rates as larger households?**

The wastewater treatment system operates the same way regardless of household size and volume of sewage produced; every service address has a dedicated connection to the wastewater system that is available 24/7, 365 days per year.

When flushing a toilet, taking a shower and using appliances such as washing machines and dishwashers, the sewage leaves a home through a series of underground pipes ending at the Regional Wastewater Control Facility, where it is treated before being discharged into local waterways.



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The proposed wastewater rate adjustments for residential customers are a flat monthly service charge and support the proper operation, improvement and maintenance of these underground services.

### **5) When will the new rates take effect?**

If approved, the proposed rates will go into effect on July 1, 2019, and be adjusted each July 1 thereafter, through and including July 1, 2023.

There is a very public process for implementing new rates. The City invites and encourages members of the public to participate in the process.

The City Council will hold a public hearing at **5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 21, 2019**, in the City Council Chamber, at **425 N. El Dorado Street**. At the public hearing, they will consider all testimony and written protests to the adoption of the proposed rate adjustments of wastewater service fees.

At the public hearing, all interested persons will be provided an opportunity to express comments or concerns to the proposed rate adjustments. At the conclusion of the hearing, the City Council will consider the adoption of a maximum proposed annual rate increases.

Comments made at the public hearing will not qualify as written protests, unless accompanied by a written protest. If qualified written protests are submitted by a majority of the record property owner(s) or customer(s) of record, the Council may not approve the proposed rate adjustments.

### **6) I don't have water services with the City of Stockton. Will the wastewater rate adjustments affect me?**

The City of Stockton's Municipal Utilities Department maintains and repairs wastewater lines throughout the entire City and some closely related areas of San Joaquin County serving residential and commercial customers, including those in water service areas not served by the City. All fees and charges are set based on the cost of maintaining, improving and repairing the wastewater system.

