FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROPOSED WATER RATE ADJUSTMENT

Proposed Water Rates

Q: Why are my rates increasing?
The City of Monrovia draws its water from the Main San Gabriel Basin, which is experiencing unprecedented drought conditions that require drastic measures be taken to replenish the water supply and raise groundwater levels in our region. In response to the extended drought, the Watermaster recently purchased $100 million of imported water to help replenish the Basin. The Watermaster established a new Water Resources Development Fee that is being levied onto all water purveyors in the San Gabriel Valley, including Monrovia. As a result, these pass-through costs are being built into the proposed water rates.

Q: Who is the Watermaster and why does the City have to pay them fees?
The Main San Gabriel Basin Watermaster (“Watermaster”) is an agency established by the California Superior Court of Los Angeles County to manage groundwater resources in our county and administer adjudicated water rights within the watershed and groundwater basin known as the Main San Gabriel Groundwater Basin (“Basin”). The Watermaster is authorized to levy and collect pass-through assessments onto water purveyors, including the City. To learn more, visit www.watermaster.org/about-us.

Q: How much will my monthly bill increase?
For the typical single-family residential customer, the monthly water bill will increase by $16.87, effective March 8, 2018, for a total monthly cost of $57.71. Additionally, if approved, the City’s water rates would continue to increase at the beginning of each year through January 1, 2022. At that time, it is estimated that the typical residential bill will be $77.70/month, which is $36.86/month more than what residents are paying today.

Q: When will I see the increases on my bill?
If approved, customers will see the new water rates on their April 2018 bills.

Q: Is only Monrovia being impacted?
No, this fee is being assessed on every water purveyor in the region – nearly 30 agencies – including Monrovia. The fee will be used to purchase and import water from outside our region into our aquifers.

Q: Have these new rates been approved?
No, these new rates will be considered for approval at the public hearing on January 16, 2018.

Q: If I conserve water, will my bill decrease?
Yes, your water bill is made up of a fixed standby charge based on your meter size, as well as a consumption charge based on the amount of water you use. Each unit of water is equal to 748 gallons. The typical residential customer who uses 15 units of water per month at a proposed cost of $1.81/unit will have a total monthly bill of $57.71. If that resident were to only use 10 units, their bill would decrease to $48.66.

Q: Are there any discounts available?
Yes, economically disadvantaged households, seniors, and veterans may qualify for discounts. To apply, visit www.cityofmonrovia.org/waterrates and download an application.
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Q: How can I learn more about the proposed water rate adjustment?
The City is holding five community meetings to provide information on the proposed water rate adjustment and answer questions from those who would like to attend. These meetings are scheduled on:

- Thursday, Nov. 30th @ 7:00 p.m., Library Community Room (321 S. Myrtle Avenue)
- Wednesday, Dec. 13th @ 7:00 p.m., Library Community Room
- Saturday, Dec. 16th @ 10:00 a.m., Library Community Room
- Monday, Dec. 18th @ 7:00 p.m., Monrovia Community Center (119 W. Palm Avenue)
- Wednesday, Jan. 10th @ 7:00 p.m., Library Community Room

Proposition 218 Process

Under Proposition 218, the City of Monrovia is required to hold a protest hearing for certain property-related fees, assessments, and charges prior to creation or increase. The City mailed notices of the proposed water rate adjustment to all possibly affected addresses and out-of-town property owners. The City will be holding a formal public hearing on Tuesday, January 16, 2018 at 7:30 p.m. at City Hall, prior to any adjustments taking effect.

Q: What is Proposition 218?
Proposition 218, or the “Right to Vote on Taxes Act”, was approved by California state voters in November 1996. The Act amended the California constitution to require local governments to follow certain procedures before raising property-related fees, in order to ensure that they are subject to voter approval.

Q: How can I support or vote “yes” on the proposed rate adjustments? When will a decision be made?
By not returning a protest form, you are showing your support for the rate adjustments. You may also attend the public hearing on January 16, 2018, to voice your support. Following the Public Hearing, if the proposed rates are upheld, the City Council will vote on the rate adjustments as presented. The new rates will then be adopted via a revision to the municipal code, with the first and second readings of the ordinance occurring on January 16, 2018 and February 6, 2018, respectively. If adopted, the revised ordinance with the new water rates will go into effect for all residential and business customers on March 8, 2018, following a 30-day period. The revised charges will be reflected on billing statements mailed to customers in April 2018.

Q: Can I vote “no” on the proposed rates?
Customers have the right to protest the proposed rates by submitting a signed protest mailer to the City Clerk’s Office (415 S. Ivy Avenue) before the close of the public hearing on January 16, 2018. You may mail or hand deliver your signed protest form, as long as it is received before the close of the public hearing. You have the right to submit a protest form for each water meter you pay.

Q: How many protest or “no” votes are required to stop the proposed rate adjustments from taking effect?
Proposition 218 requires a simple majority of 50 percent of the affected customers plus one.

Q: I lost my mailer or would like another copy. Where can I get additional copies?
You can download additional copies of the mailer or protest form online at www.cityofmonrovia.org/waterrates or by stopping by City Hall, the Library, or the Community Center to pick up a new mailer.

For more information, visit www.cityofmonrovia.org/waterrates or call (626) 932-5575.