

Water and Sewer Rates Increase beginning July 1, 2018

Water Rates

As provided in previous public notices, The Laurens County Water and Sewer Commission (LCWSC) implemented a 5-year capital rate plan to fund the construction of its new Lake Greenwood Water Treatment Facility. This rate plan was implemented in FY 2015 (July 2014 – June 2015), therefore FY 2019 (July 2018 – June 2019) will represent the final year of this capital rate plan. This final year, Phase V of the Water Treatment Facility Capital Rate Plan, calls for a scheduled increase in water rates of 3% beginning July 1, 2018.

In addition to this previously approved Capital Rate Plan, the Board of Commissioners approved a 3% rate increase for residential customers and a 7% increase for non-residential (industrial) customers, also effective July 1, 2018. This additional 3% was necessary to cover increases in expenses related to our water distribution department. These expenses are a result of required increases to the South Carolina Retirement System and the State Health Insurance Plan and the creation of three new staff positions. LCWSC has always strived to be efficient and employ only the number of employees it needs to maintain a highly functioning water distribution system. To this end, we found the need to add 3 new employees to help cover our large service area safely and offer an appropriate level of customer service. In addition to these increases in employee expenses, general operation and maintenance expenses increases slightly and the City of Clinton and Laurens CPW increased their wholesale rate for water sold to the LCWSC, 12% and 4.8% respectively. The Board of Commissioners and staff regret this difficult decision but as a non-profit public utility, LCWSC depends solely on your payments to cover the operation and maintenance costs of its water system.

The table below illustrates the current and future monthly bill based on these rate increases with an average usage of 4,050 gallons per month, a typical monthly usage for our customers. As the table indicates, customers can expect to see an average increase in their monthly water bill of \$1.38

Approved Water Rate Increase(s)		
	Current	July 2018
Average Bill	\$37.52	\$38.90
Water Residential Base Fee	\$15.00	\$15.00
Water Residential Volume Rate	\$5.56	\$5.90

LCWSC's decision to build a new, state-of-the-art water treatment facility on Lake Greenwood was primarily made to ensure a high quality, sustainable source of drinking water in Laurens County for generations to come. We are still on schedule to start operation of this new facility in the summer of 2021 and we anticipate that water quality, both in terms of purity and taste, will exceed our high expectations and provide a consistent level

of service to our customers. Another benefit and a significant reason the Board decided to build this new facility was the ability to better manage our cost. This project represents a tremendous investment in our community, it will allow the LCWSC to better predict our expenses, minimize future rate increases because of third party decisions, and ensure your payment, your investment in us, will be used in a cost-effective manner.

Sewer Rates

In 2016, Laurens County Water & Sewer Commission (LCWSC) adopted a 4-year Sewer Capital Rehabilitation Rate Plan. To ensure that a sustainable sewer system is available for future generations, this plan was designed to eliminate the need to use limited reserve funds for capital rehabilitation projects as required to maintain compliance with state and federal regulations. A well maintained, highly functioning wastewater collection and treatment system is required to adequately serve our customers and protect the environment. Ongoing maintenance must be performed to ensure that the LCWSC continually meets these standards. As a non-profit utility, LCWSC depends solely on your payments to cover the operation and maintenance costs of its wastewater systems.

As provided in previous public notices, our Sewer Capital Rehabilitation Rate Plan calls for scheduled increases in our sewer collection rates of 3%, and in our sewer treatment rates of 3%, both effective July 1, 2018.

The table below has been updated and illustrates each phase and the corresponding monthly bill based on 4,050 gallons per month, a typical monthly usage for our customers. Customers can expect to see an average increase in their monthly sewer bill of \$1.01.

Approved Sewer Rate Increase(s)			
	Current	July 2018	July 2019
Average Bill	\$41.93	\$42.94	\$43.95
Sewer Collection Base Fee	\$9.00	\$9.00	\$9.00
Sewer Collection Volume Rate	\$3.54	\$3.65	\$3.76
Sewer Treatment Volume Rate	\$4.59	\$4.73	\$4.87