



# El Toro Water District

## **NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED WATER, SEWER AND RECYCLED WATER RATE/CHARGE INCREASE**

Notice is hereby given that the Board of Directors of the El Toro Water District (the "District") will conduct a public hearing on September 24, 2020 at 7:30 a.m. in the District Boardroom at 24251 Los Alisos Blvd., Lake Forest, CA 92630, or virtually if not in person, to consider adopting increases to certain rates and charges. If the public hearing is conducted virtually, information to access the meeting will be listed in the hearing agenda posted on the District website. The proposed increases are the result of detailed budget analysis and an independent professional 2020-21 Water, Recycled Water and Wastewater Rate Update Study Report prepared to determine appropriateness of the amounts, and fair and equitable cost allocation among customer categories. The proposed increases impact the potable water usage rates, uniform recycled water usage rate, and the water and recycled water operations and maintenance charges. The net impact of the proposed changes in the rates for residential and commercial/public authority customers will vary based upon the actual water consumption and, where applicable, property specific water budgets. (See "**Potable Water Budget Calculation**" section).

## **BACKGROUND**

While the District continually strives for cost reductions and efficient utilization of the public's assets entrusted to us, we still must align rates and charges with the costs to deliver services. These costs include 1) electricity for operations, 2) the cost to purchase and treat water, 3) compliance with regulations governing the distribution, collection and treatment of water, wastewater and recycled water, 4) the disposal of treated wastewater & bio-solids, 5) construction of capital infrastructure improvements needed to repair, replace and update aging water, sewer and recycled water systems, 6) ongoing maintenance of vital infrastructure and 7) District labor necessary to maintain the systems and operations of the District. Each year the District's Board of Directors adopts an annual operating budget that goes into effect on July 1. Part of the budgeting process is to assess the adequacy of the District's rates and charges. Of utmost importance is the effort to minimize costs (and therefore rates and charges), while maintaining the integrity and reliability of the District's infrastructure and the District's financial stability. To assist the District in this endeavor, the District retains an independent outside financial consultant who specializes in Cost of Service analysis and rate setting.

## **POTABLE WATER USAGE RATES**

The District, given the lack of available groundwater supply, purchases 100% of its potable water (drinking water) supply to meet residential, potable irrigation, commercial/public authority and fire protection demands from its wholesale water provider, the Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWDOC). MWDOC purchases its water from its wholesale water provider Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD). Wholesale imported water (Northern California and the Colorado River) costs from MWDOC/MWD are driven by continued investment in regional water treatment and delivery system infrastructure, increased water importation costs, securing higher cost water supplies and water storage arrangements due to Northern California Bay-Delta (Bay-Delta) regulatory exportation restrictions and increased funding to aggressively pursue near term and long term Bay-Delta solutions (The Delta Conveyance Project) that will ensure a greater degree of future water supply reliability to Southern California and Orange County.

*Customers may obtain a copy of the proposed 2020/21 fiscal year budget and the Cost of Service Rate Study at the District's Administrative Office and the District's website at [www.etwd.com](http://www.etwd.com). For assistance in determining the impact of the proposed rate increase on your monthly bill you may access a Water Budget Calculator on the District's website or call our Customer Service Representatives at (949) 837-0660.*

South Orange County receives the majority of its potable water from MWDOC via the MWD Diemer Water Filtration Plant located in Yorba Linda. To diversify and improve water treatment reliability for South Orange County residences and businesses, the District and four other water agencies partnered to fund and construct the Baker Water Treatment Plant located in the City of Lake Forest. The plant provides increased water reliability by increasing local water treatment capability from multiple water supply sources, including imported untreated water from MWD and local surface water from Irvine Lake.

The cost of purchased water includes the amount paid by the District to MWDOC for wholesale imported water treated by Metropolitan Water District, the amount paid by the District to MWDOC for untreated imported water supplied to the Baker Water Treatment Plant and the amount paid to Irvine Ranch Water District for Operations and Maintenance (O&M) costs associated with the treatment and delivery of water from the Baker Water Treatment Plant. The amount paid by the District for the purchase of water delivered to its customers is the amount "passed through" to the District's customers in the form of a Potable Water Usage Charge. The indoor Tier I and Uniform Commercial Usage rates include an offsetting credit (funded by non-rate revenue) based on the 2020/21 Cost of Service Study, to recognize that the highest and best use of potable water is for indoor health, safety and sanitation purposes. Tier II rates are applied to usage outside the home for landscape irrigation. Tiers III and IV rates are applied to usage exceeding the combined calculated Tier I indoor and Tier II outdoor efficient water budgets. Tiers III and IV rates include the actual costs to purchase and deliver water from the District's wholesale water provider plus charges to fund the District's conservation and alternative supply development programs. The Potable Water Usage Rate Increase will become effective with the first full billing period after October 1, 2020.

## PROPOSED MONTHLY TIERED WATER USAGE RATES

Water Usage Charges	Current Rate \$/ccf*	Proposed Rate \$/ccf*
Tier I - Indoor Efficient	\$2.58	\$2.65
Tier II - Outdoor Efficient	\$2.97	\$3.04
Tier III - Inefficient	\$6.14	\$6.21
Tier IV - Excessive	\$7.88	\$7.95
Commercial, Institutional and Industrial ("CII")	\$2.95	\$3.02

\* 1 Billing Unit or "ccf" = 748 gallons

## RECYCLED WATER USAGE RATES

The uniform Recycled Water Usage Rate (\$2.67/ccf) is proposed to increase by \$0.07/ccf to \$2.74/ccf to recover the cost of producing and delivering recycled water for irrigation purposes. The Recycled Water Usage Rate will become effective with the first full billing period after October 1, 2020.

## WATER AND SEWER OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE CHARGE

To responsibly maintain and preserve its water, sewer and recycled water infrastructure investment, meet stringent regulatory requirements and ensure a continuous high level of service to its customers, the District administers an ongoing operations and maintenance program. To minimize financial impacts to customers and, fairly and equitably allocate that cost, the District commissioned an independent Cost of Service Study Report. Coupled with prudent utilization of reserves the District proposes to increase the water, and recycled water operations and maintenance charges to meet costs associated with operating and maintenance of the water, and recycled water systems. The Water, and Recycled Water Enterprise Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Charges increase will become effective with the first full billing period after October 1, 2020. No change in the Sewer O&M Charge is proposed in the 2020/21 fiscal year.

### WATER / RECYCLED WATER

Meter Size	Current Charge	Proposed Charge
5/8"	\$14.14	\$15.17
3/4"	\$18.99	\$20.33
1"	\$28.70	\$30.66
1-1/2"	\$52.98	\$56.48
2"	\$101.52	\$108.11

### SEWER

#### Residential

Meter Size	Current Charge	Proposed Charge
Single Family (1)	\$24.30	No Change
Multi-family Restricted (2)	\$19.28	No Change
Multi-family Unrestricted (2)	\$22.92	No Change

(1) charged per month

(2) charged per Equivalent Dwelling Unit per month

(3) per ccf of water used

### SEWER

#### Commercial(3)

	Current Charge	Proposed Charge
Animal Kennel/Hospital	\$3.99	No Change
Car Wash	\$3.97	No Change
Department/Retail Store	\$3.99	No Change
Dry Cleaner	\$3.50	No Change
Golf Course/Camp/Park	\$3.49	No Change
Health Spa	\$3.98	No Change
Hospital/Convalescence Home	\$3.50	No Change
Hotel	\$6.04	No Change
Market	\$7.92	No Change
Mortuary	\$7.89	No Change
Nursery/Greenhouse	\$3.54	No Change
Professional/Financial Office	\$3.99	No Change
Public Institution	\$3.93	No Change
Repair/Service Station	\$3.98	No Change
Restaurant	\$3.77	No Change
School	\$4.13	No Change
Theater	\$3.99	No Change
Warehouse/Storage	\$3.16	No Change
Basic Commercial	\$3.50	No Change

## CAPITAL REPLACEMENT AND REFURBISHMENT CHARGE

The District maintains over \$164 million worth of water, sewer and recycled water infrastructure. The District's capital program, which reinvests, replaces and refurbishes the assets that are essential to the provision of water, sewer and recycled water services to the District's customers is funded by the Capital Replacement and Refurbishment Charge. No change in the Capital Replacement and Refurbishment Charge is proposed in the 2020/21 fiscal year.

### POTABLE AND RECYCLED WATER CAPITAL REPLACEMENT AND REFURBISHMENT CHARGE

Meter Size	Current Charge (\$/Month)	Proposed Charge (\$/Month)
5/8"	\$4.66	No Change
3/4"	\$4.66	No Change
1"	\$7.78	No Change
1-1/2"	\$18.91	No Change
2"	\$47.47	No Change

### SEWER CAPITAL REPLACEMENT AND REFURBISHMENT CHARGE

User Category	Current Charge (\$/Month)	Proposed Charge (\$/Month)
Single Family Residential	\$4.93	No Change
Multi-Family Restricted	\$3.91	No Change
Multi-Family Unrestricted	\$4.65	No Change
<b>Commercial</b>		
5/8" Meter	\$4.34	No Change
3/4" Meter	\$7.34	No Change
1" Meter	\$13.55	No Change
1-1/2" Meter	\$24.07	No Change
2" Meter	\$70.96	No Change
<b>Public Authority</b>		
1" Meter	\$4.93	No Change
1-1/2" Meter	\$24.65	No Change
2" Meter	\$39.71	No Change

# POTABLE WATER BUDGET CALCULATION

## RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMERS

A per meter, customer specific water budget is calculated to meet the efficient demands of indoor domestic use as well as outdoor irrigation under normal operating and water supply conditions. Under Emergencies and Water Supply Shortage conditions indoor and/or outdoor water budgets may be adjusted using the Drought Factor (“DF”) to reduce water budgets to further encourage conservation. A water budget is the sum of the indoor and outdoor water budgets.

The **indoor water budget** in hundred cubic feet (ccf<sup>1</sup>) is:

$$55 \text{ gallons/person/day} * \text{Number of people per household} * \text{Days/billing cycle} * DF_{\text{indoor}}/748$$

- The indoor Drought Factor  $DF_{\text{indoor}}$  which is set by the Board of Directors is currently set to 100% and the number of people per household is as follows:
  - Detached home (single family home): 4 people
  - Apartment: 2 people
  - Attached home - unrestricted (i.e. condominium or townhouse): 3 people
  - Attached home - restricted (i.e. condominium or townhouse with age restrictions): 2 people

**Customers may request a variance/adjustment to provide an equitable water budget for special circumstances such as, more people living in the home than the formula provides, medical needs, etc.**

The **outdoor water budget allocation** in ccf is: **(Weather data \* Landscape area \* ETAF/1200) \*  $DF_{\text{outdoor}}$**

- The weather data is measured by the reference EvapoTranspiration ( $ET_0$ ) data in inches of water per billing cycle. ET is the amount of water that is lost by plants through evaporation and transpiration, and needs to be replaced for the plants to remain healthy.  $ET_0$  data is obtained from California Irrigation Management Information System (CIMIS) Station 75 established by State of California Department of Water Resources, Office of Water Use Efficiency;
- The landscape area for multi-family accounts including apartments, condominiums and mobile homes is 25 square feet of landscape per dwelling unit plus any dedicated landscape area associated with the account;
- The landscape area for single-family detached homes is calculated by taking the building area and dividing it by the number of floors and subtracting that from the parcel area. The result is then multiplied by 70 percent to obtain the landscape area as follows:  
Landscape area = (lot size - (building area / number of floors)) \* 70%
- ET Adjustment Factor (ETAF) is a coefficient that adjusts the EvapoTranspiration ( $ET_0$ ) values based on type of plants and irrigation system efficiency. Based on the updated Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance<sup>2</sup> developed by the California Department of Water Resources, any landscape installed prior to January 1, 2010 has an ETAF of 0.8 and new landscape is an ETAF of 0.7. New landscape is defined as new or re-developments.
- $DF_{\text{outdoor}}$  is the outdoor drought factor (set by the Board of Directors) currently set at 100%.  
This factor is not necessarily the same as the DF for indoor;
- 1200 is the conversion factor from inches-water (weather data)\*square feet (landscape area) to ccf (outdoor water budget).

**Under normal water supply conditions and circumstances Customers may request a variance/adjustment to provide an equitable water budget for special circumstances such as, establishing new landscaping and changes in irrigation landscape area. Under Emergencies and Water Supply Shortage conditions, variances/adjustments may be limited.**

The indoor water budget, as determined above, will be billed at Tier I (“Indoor - Efficient”) rates. The outdoor water budget, as determined above, will be billed at Tier II (“Outdoor - Efficient”) rates. Water use in excess of the Tier I and II water budget would be deemed inefficient and/or excessive. Tier III (“Inefficient”) water use would be usage between 100% and 130% of the Tier I and II water budget (or Total Water Budget) and Tier IV (“Excessive”) usage would be consumption over 130% of Total Water Budget.

## POTABLE IRRIGATION CUSTOMERS

Potable Irrigation customers fall into one of two categories: Recreational or Functional. Recreational irrigation customers are those whose landscape is used mostly for recreational purposes (i.e. parks, soccer fields, etc.) while Functional irrigation customers will be those whose landscape is ornamental in nature (greenbelts, medians, etc.).

The irrigation water budget for dedicated irrigation customers in ccf is calculated as follows:

$$(\text{Weather data} * \text{Landscape area} * \text{ETAF}/1200) * DF_{\text{outdoor}}, \text{ where}$$

- Weather data ( $ET_0$ ) as described in the section above,
- Landscape area is assumed to be the lesser of 100% of total parcel area or 100% of the measured landscape area served by each meter,
- ET adjustment factor (ETAF) is equal to 0.8 for Functional irrigation and 1 for Recreational irrigation customers based on the updated Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance, and
- $DF_{\text{outdoor}}$  is the outdoor drought factor (set by the Board of Directors) will be set at 100%. This factor is not necessarily the same as the DF for indoor;

**Under normal circumstances Customers may request a variance/adjustment to provide an equitable water budget for special circumstances such as, establishing new landscaping and changes in irrigation landscape area. Under Emergencies and Water Supply Shortage conditions, variances/adjustments may be limited.**

All of an irrigation customer’s Water Budget will be at Tier II (“Outdoor - Efficient”). Water use in excess of the Tier II water budget would be deemed inefficient and/or excessive. Tier III (“Inefficient”) water usage would be between 100% and 130% of the Tier II budget and Tier IV (“Excessive”) water usage would be consumption over 130% of the Tier II budget.

1. ccf (100 cubic feet) = 748 gallons    2. Also in *State of California Code of Regulations, Title 23, Section 490-495*

## WHY AM I RECEIVING THIS NOTICE?

You are receiving this notice because you are the owner of record of one or more parcels of property located within the service area of El Toro Water District.

## PUBLIC HEARING AND PROTEST PROCEEDING

The Governing Board of the El Toro Water District will conduct a **public hearing on September 24, 2020 at 7:30 a.m.** in the District Board Room of its Administrative Office located at 24251 Los Alisos Blvd., Lake Forest, CA 92630 or virtually if not in person. If the public hearing is conducted virtually, information to access the meeting will be listed in the hearing agenda posted on the District website. The purpose of the hearing will be to consider adoption of the proposed Potable Water Usage Rate Increase, the Recycled Water Usage Rate Increase and a Water and Recycled Water Operations and Maintenance Charge increase. Property (parcel) owners may comment and file a written protest (one vote per parcel owned) on the proposed increases. California law prohibits the District from increasing charges if a majority of the affected property (parcel) owners file a written protest opposing the proposed increases before the end of the public hearing. Written protests must be submitted to the District at P.O. Box 4000, Laguna Hills, CA 92654 or personally submitted on or before the end of the public hearing, which is scheduled for 7:30 a.m. on September 24, 2020. Each protest must identify the affected property and include the signature of a record property owner. Email protests will not be accepted. Oral protests at the public hearing will not qualify as a protest, unless accompanied by a written protest. The District's Board of Directors welcomes input from the public during the public hearing.

24251 Los Alisos Blvd.  
Lake Forest, CA 92630

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