



El Toro Water District

24251 Los Alisos Blvd.
Lake Forest, CA 92630



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 June 24, 2021 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 a detailed budget analysis and an independent professional 2021-22 Water, Recycled Water and Wastewater Rate Study prepared to determine the appropriateness of the amounts, and the 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, sewer 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

District staff has gone to extraordinary lengths to ensure the reliability of the water and wastewater systems while working under new safety protocols during the COVID-19 pandemic. The District continually strives for cost reductions and efficient utilization of the public's assets and made significant efforts to reduce the current budget in an effort to mitigate the magnitude of the rate increase. The cost drivers, however, necessitate a moderate increase in revenue to support the cost of operations. These cost drivers include 1) electricity, 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 for aging water, sewer and recycled water systems, 6) ongoing maintenance of vital infrastructure and 7) District labor necessary to maintain the 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

Given the lack of available groundwater supply, the District purchases 100% of its potable (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 water from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD). MWDOC/MWD's costs to import water from Northern California and the Colorado River 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 pursue near 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.

To diversify and improve water treatment reliability for South Orange County, 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 from a diversity of water 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 MWD, 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 Rate 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 July 1, 2021.

Customers may obtain a copy of the proposed 2021/22 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. 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.

The Governing Board of the El Toro Water District will conduct a public hearing on June 24, 2021 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 proposed Recycled Water Usage Rate Increase and proposed Water, Sewer, and Recycled Water Operations and Maintenance Charge increases. 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 June 24, 2021. 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.

PUBLIC HEARING AND PROTEST PROCEEDING

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.

WHY AM I RECEIVING THIS NOTICE?

PROPOSED MONTHLY TIERED WATER USAGE RATES

Water Usage Charges	Current Rate \$/ccf*	Proposed Rate \$/ccf*
Tier I - Indoor Efficient	\$2.65	\$2.72
Tier II - Outdoor Efficient	\$3.04	\$3.11
Tier III - Inefficient	\$6.21	\$6.78
Tier IV - Excessive	\$7.95	\$8.52
Commercial, Institutional and Industrial ("CI")	\$3.02	\$3.14

* 1 Billing Unit or "ccf" = 748 gallons

RECYCLED WATER USAGE RATES

To recover the cost of producing and delivering recycled water for irrigation purposes, the uniform Recycled Water Usage Rate (\$2.74/ccf) is proposed to increase by \$0.06/ccf to \$2.80/ccf. If approved, the Recycled Water Usage Rate will become effective with the first full billing period after July 1, 2021.

WATER AND SEWER OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE CHARGE

The District administers an ongoing operations and maintenance program 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. As an industry best practice, and to minimize financial impacts to customers and fairly and equitably distribute these costs, the District commissioned an independent Cost of Service Study Report. Coupled with prudent utilization of reserves, the District proposes to increase the water, sewer, and recycled water operations and maintenance charges to meet costs associated with operating and maintaining the water, sewer, and recycled water systems. If approved, the proposed Water, Sewer, and Recycled Water Enterprise Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Charges will become effective with the first full billing period after July 1, 2021.

WATER / RECYCLED WATER			SEWER		
Meter Size	Current Charge	Proposed Charge	Commercial(3)	Current Charge	Proposed Charge
5/8"	\$15.17	\$16.56	Animal Kennel/Hospital	\$3.99	\$4.23
3/4"	\$20.33	\$22.24	Car Wash	\$3.97	\$4.21
1"	\$30.66	\$33.60	Department/Retail Store	\$3.99	\$4.23
1-1/2"	\$56.48	\$62.00	Dry Cleaner	\$3.50	\$3.71
2"	\$108.11	\$118.80	Golf Course/Camp/Park	\$3.49	\$3.70
			Health Spa	\$3.98	\$4.22
			Hospital/Convalescence Home	\$3.50	\$3.71
			Hotel	\$6.04	\$6.41
			Market	\$7.92	\$8.40
			Mortuary	\$7.89	\$8.37
			Nursery/Greenhouse	\$3.54	\$3.76
			Professional/Financial Office	\$3.99	\$4.23
			Public Institution	\$3.93	\$4.17
			Repair/Service Station	\$3.98	\$4.23
			Restaurant	\$3.77	\$4.00
			School	\$4.13	\$4.38
			Theater	\$3.99	\$4.23
			Warehouse/Storage	\$3.16	\$3.35
			Basic Commercial	\$3.50	\$3.71

(3) per ccf of water used

PRIVATE FIRE OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE CHARGE

The District provides water service to private entities who have a fire suppression system (usually sprinklers) in their place of business. While not intended to generate additional revenue, the District proposes updating the Private Fire Operations and Maintenance Charge rates to account for the extra capacity demand necessary to fight an average fire in the District. The proposed Private Fire Operations and Maintenance Charge rates, shown below, reflect the proposed changes to the fixed charges resulting from the updated methodology, which considers the effective fire line capacity at each fire meter or fire line size. This also includes a fire demand rate component calculation to share peaking costs with other water system services. The proposed changes for 2021-2022 in the Private Fire Service rates reflected below will become effective July 1, 2021.

PRIVATE FIRE OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE CHARGE

Meter Size	Current Charge (\$/Month)	Proposed Charge (\$/Month)
4"	\$33.72	\$22.86
6"	\$50.58	\$44.76
8"	\$67.44	\$82.53
10"	\$84.30	\$139.34

POTABLE WATER BUDGET CALCULATION

RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMERS

A per meter, customer specific water budget is calculated to meet the efficient demands of indoor domestic water use as well as outdoor irrigation under normal operating and water supply conditions. During emergencies/water supply shortage conditions, the District may use the Drought Factor ("DF") to reduce water budgets and further encourage conservation. A water budget is the sum of the indoor and outdoor water budgets.

The **indoor water budget** in hundred cubic feet (ccf¹) is:

55 gallons per person per day X Number of people per household X Days/billing cycle X DF_{indoor}/748

- The indoor Drought Factor (DF_{indoor}) is set by the Board of Directors is currently set to 100%. 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 X Landscape area X ETAF/1200) X DF_{outdoor}**

- Weather data is measured by the reference EvapoTranspiration (ET₀) 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. ET₀ data is obtained from California Irrigation Management Information System (CIMIS) Station 75 established by the 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% to obtain the landscape area as follows:
Landscape area = (lot size - [building area /number of floors]) X 70%
- ET Adjustment Factor (ETAF) is a coefficient that adjusts the EvapoTranspiration (ET₀) values based on type of plants and irrigation system efficiency. Based on the updated Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance² 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_{outdoor} is the outdoor drought factor set by the Board of Directors. It is 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) X 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:

(Weather data X Landscape area X ETAF/1200) X DF_{outdoor}, where

- Weather data (ET₀) 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_{outdoor} is the outdoor drought factor (set by the Board of Directors) 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*