

## Water and Wastewater Rates Frequently Asked Questions

**Q. Why is an increase in necessary?**

A. Current rates do not generate enough to cover the cost of operating and maintaining the water and wastewater systems.

The cost of purchased water has increased significantly. The Town purchases water from the State/Veterans Home and distributes that water locally. In 2007 the State charged \$500 per acre foot for water and in 2017 that amount was \$1,202 and is projected to increase at 7.5% a year.

In the water utility operations, over \$2 million is necessary in the next five (5) years to pay for repairs and maintenance to keep the water system operating in compliance with state and federal regulatory requirements. Those projects include:

- Regulator Pit Relocation \$121,540
- Water Meter Replacement Program \$226,275
- Hydrant and Main Flushing \$35,000
- Assess water lines in Washington Park \$51,000
- Ongoing maintenance and required repairs and replacements of water lines \$1,661,256

Planned capital projects for the wastewater fund require \$3.36 million over the next 5 years. Current revenues are not sufficient to cover expenses. The following projects are necessary over the next 5 years:

- SCADA equipment and SCADA controls \$214,176
- Wastewater Building Remodel \$414,281
- Replace Trickling Filter Media \$337,653
- Holding Pond Improvements \$362,226
- Clean/Inspect Primary Digester \$37,132
- Video and Repair Outfall Line at \$109,273
- Ongoing maintenance, required/necessary repairs and replacements \$1,175,188
- Dredge Wastewater Ponds \$150,000
- Replace 4 Pumps at WWTP \$81,200
- Replace Back up Sludge Heater \$218,545
- Clean/Inspect Secondary Digester \$37,132
- Epoxy Scum Well \$31,827
- Slipline/Replace Sag in Outfall \$168,826

**Q. When was the last rate increase?**

A. 2015

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**Q. Where does the Town's water come from?**

A. The Town purchases the water it delivers to you from the Veterans Home/State from Rector Silverado Trail and Yountville Crossroad and Finnell Road into the Town and up to the Veterans Home. In 2007 the State charged \$500 per acre foot for water and in 2017 that amount was \$1,202

**Q. Why are some rates going down and others going up?**

A. As of today, the proposed rates have not yet been adopted. The Town Council has approved for Town Staff to notify all owners of record of the proposed rate increase for water and wastewater that could be up to 7% for water and 12% for wastewater.

If a 7% rate increase (with a one-time draw of \$200,000 Drought Reserve Bank fund) is adopted on February 20, 2018, all ratepayers will receive a 7% increase in the monthly service charge and system replacement fee. The total bill also includes a charge for the actual amount of water used.

Because of the San Juan Capistrano court case our prior four (4) rate tiers designed to encourage water conservation have to be eliminated. The result is there are only two tiers now, Tier 1 for 0-4 billing units and Tier 2 for all billing units beyond 5 units. This means low volume water users (under 4 BU's) will see an increase of approximately \$5.59 per month, average water users (11 BU's) will see an estimated \$1.97 increase and high volume water users who were billed at the old Tier 3 and 4 rates will actually see a decrease of \$17.65.

Commercial water accounts which includes multi-family, mobile home park residents, will see their consumption charge from \$4.40 per BU to \$3.52 per BU.

The final amount of your overall total bill will depend on your water usage. The less you use the less you pay. Eliminating the higher tiers lowered the cost of water for customers who were billed in those tiers.

If the proposed 12% wastewater rate increase is approved, the rates for residential, non-residential, wastewater system replacement fee and sewer load factor and strength rates would be as follows:

- Single Family: would be \$50.20, an increase of \$5.38 (current rate is \$44.82)

**Q. Why is Napa's water bill less than ours?**

A. The Town provides both water and wastewater service. The City of Napa only provides water service. Napa Sanitation District provides sewer service and those charges are on the homeowners property tax bills.

**Q. When will the new rates become effective?**

A. If approved by the Town Council, March 1, 2018 and every year after on January 1, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022.

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**Q. What is the San Juan Capistrano Case ruling?**

A. This is a landmark California Supreme Court case where rate payers in San Juan Capistrano sued the City over their conservation tiered pricing structure on the grounds it violated State Proposition 26 and the higher tiered rates were higher than what it cost the City to produce and distribute the water. As a result, tiered pricing for the purposes of encouraging water conservation were struck down by the court's ruling. Limited use of a tiered structure is permitted where you can justify the costs between the tiers. Should the proposed rates be passed, the Town rate structure will change to two tiers and will eliminate the four (4) tiers.

**Q. When are the community meetings to discuss the proposed rates?**

A. There will be a community workshop on Tuesday, February 6, 2018 at 4:00 p.m.

There will be a Public Hearing on Tuesday, February 20, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.

**Q. How will the meetings be publicized?**

A. At the Town's designated posting locations at Town Hall, Library, and Post Office.

By mail with the Proposition 218 informational packet.

On the Town's website at [www.townofyountville.com](http://www.townofyountville.com)

Via social media by the Town on Nextdoor Yountville and Facebook

Yountville Sun

Utility bill messaging

**Q. Who received a Proposition 218 Notice?**

A. In accordance with the requirements of Proposition 218, an informational packet was mailed to the address of record for all property owners. Additional copies of the Proposition 218 packet will be available at Yountville Community Center and Town Hall.

**Q. When is the last day to submit a protest form?**

A. Prior to the close of February 20, 2018 Public Hearing at the Town Council meeting. Only one protest per parcel will be counted.

**Q. How do I send my protest form?**

A. Protests can be mailed to the Attention of Town Clerk, Town of Yountville Proposed Utility Rate Protest, 6550 Yount Street, Yountville, CA 94599.

Protests must be mailed or delivered in person to the Town Clerk. Verbal, fax, email, e-comment or other electronic protests are not valid and will not be counted.