

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING: PROPOSED WATER SURCHARGES

Hearing Date: December 8, 2020 | 11:30 a.m.

Board of Supervisors' Hearing Room, Hall of Administration, Ventura County Government Center, 800 South Victoria Avenue, Ventura, CA 93009-1920

▪ WHY ARE YOU RECEIVING THIS NOTICE?

This notice is being mailed to you by the Ventura County Waterworks District No. 19 ("District") pursuant to the California Constitution Article XIII D (also known as "Proposition 218"). Under terms of Proposition 218, the District is required to notify property owners of proposed changes to property-related fees such as water services. This letter serves as notice that the District will hold a public hearing at the time, date and location specified above to consider proposed surcharges to take effect on January 1, 2021. Any interested person shall be permitted to present written and/or oral testimony. The District may impose reasonable time limits on both the length of the entire public hearing and the length of each interested person's oral testimony.

▪ ABOUT THE VENTURA COUNTY WATERWORKS DISTRICT NO. 19

The District provides water to the community of Somis. In 2019, 14% of the water was imported water from the State Water Project, delivered through the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and Calleguas Municipal Water District, and the remaining 86% of the water was groundwater from local wells. All revenue generated from your monthly water bills is used to meet costs such as purchasing imported water, electricity, chemicals, maintenance of the water distribution infrastructure, and salaries and benefits for District staff – all of which are needed to bring water to your community. Revenues are not used for other general governmental purposes.

▪ WHY ARE SURCHARGES REQUIRED?

District Staff recognizes the unique nature of the Somis Community as a vital Ventura County greenbelt and agricultural center. Staff has listened to your community's concerns regarding the rising costs of water and have worked to find a fair and proportional solution to the District's financial challenges. The two major financial issues impacting the District are the requirement by the State of California to build an Iron and Manganese treatment facility at Well 2 and legal fees to defend the District's groundwater pumping rights. The potential loss of either Well 2 or the District's groundwater rights would cause future water rates to increase significantly. Rather than proposing a permanent rate increase to fund these two requirements, Staff worked closely with your Citizens Advisory Committee to propose temporary surcharges in proportion to your water meter sizes.

▪ WHAT DO THE SURCHARGES FUND?

The Well 2 Surcharge will fund the annual debt service for a \$1.5 million loan required for the construction of the Well 2 Treatment Facility, scheduled for construction in early 2021. The Las Posas Adjudication Surcharge will refund \$312,303 in legal charges to the District's reserves. These legal charges were required to mount a successful defense of the District's groundwater pumping rights, which were upheld by the Courts on September 17, 2020. The Well 2 Surcharge expires upon completion of the 30-year loan term. The Adjudication Surcharge expires after 12 months.

The proposed surcharges are based on customer meter size and are consistent with Proposition 218 proportionate cost of service requirements. These surcharges, along with projected increases in groundwater allocation due to the successful Las Posas Adjudication settlement agreement, will put the District on a path to robust financial sustainability, giving the District the resources to fund future critical infrastructure projects.

The proposed monthly surcharges will be no higher than shown below:

| <i>Monthly Well 2 Surcharge (30 years)</i> | |
|---|---------------------------|
| <i>Meter Size</i> | <i>Proposed Surcharge</i> |
| 3/4-inch | \$3.39 |
| 1-inch | \$5.64 |
| 1 1/2-inch | \$11.28 |
| 2-inch | \$18.05 |
| 3-inch | \$39.49 |
| 4-inch | \$71.09 |
| <i>Monthly Las Posas Adjudication Surcharge (12 months)</i> | |
| <i>Meter Size</i> | <i>Proposed Surcharge</i> |
| 3/4-inch | \$12.49 |
| 1-inch | \$20.82 |
| 1 1/2-inch | \$41.64 |
| 2-inch | \$66.62 |
| 3-inch | \$145.74 |
| 4-inch | \$262.33 |

The proposed surcharges will be listed as separate line item charges on your monthly water bill and are in addition to the current meter service charges and commodity charges that were approved by the District Board December 12, 2017.

▪ **HOW DO YOU PROTEST?**

If you wish to oppose the proposed surcharges you are requested to submit a written protest by mail prior to December 8, 2020 public hearing at 11:30 a.m. to the following address: Attn: WWD19 Surcharge Protest, 6767 Spring Road, P.O. Box 250, Moorpark, CA 93020-0250. You may also bring it in person to the public hearing.

Protests must contain the following information: (1) the property's Assessor's Parcel Number and address; (2) whether you are the owner of record of the property or are a tenant/leaseholder (if you are a property owner but did not own the property as of the last tax roll, include confirmation of your property ownership); (3) a statement that you are protesting the rate increases; and (4) your name (printed), date, and original signature.

The District will not count written protests received after the conclusion of the public hearing. Facsimile (fax) protests will not be accepted. If you choose to submit your protest by regular mail, please allow enough time for the mail to be delivered; the District is not responsible for U.S. Postal Service delays. Only one protest per property will be counted (even if multiple meters are located on the property). If you own multiple properties affected by the proposed increases, you should submit separate protests for each affected parcel, as the protest threshold is based upon a majority of the total number of parcels. Once opened, protests are disclosable public records.

To view the Board agenda, and learn how you can participate at the hearing during COVID-19, please visit <http://www.ventura.org/meetings-and-broadcasts> the Thursday prior to the public hearing date.

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