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WA-18

Water and Wastewater System Rates



As you probably already know, your PUD provides water and/or wastewater service in the communities of Bickleton, Roosevelt, Rimrock, Ponderosa Park, Wishram, Lyle, Klickitat and Glenwood. As these systems are relatively small and are distinct financial entities, small changes can greatly impact customers. We have always strived to provide long-term stable rates. Doing so means detailed annual reviews of each system and implementing increases as costs change.

In 2020, with the COVID-19 pandemic starting, your PUD commissioners decided not to implement rate increases for any of these systems. The commissioners understood the impacts on our customers from the pandemic. In reviewing the individual systems this year, it is apparent if no rate actions are taken, the PUD will quickly be in a situation where it would have to levy not only increases for the “normal” increase in operating costs, but potentially to make up for the lack of rate increases in previous years. KPUD wants to avoid a large jump.

After discussions about these water and wastewater systems at the May 11 PUD board meeting, the board asked staff to proceed with the normal rate-setting process. We plan to bring more detailed rate information to the board at the May 25 board meeting and set a public rate hearing for June 22.

At the hearing, we will present rate recommendations in a public forum and take public comment. We are reviewing the status of the COVID-19 health risks to determine if the hearing will be open to attend in person in addition to the WebEx format we have been using.

In past years, we have held meetings in local community halls and schools to discuss our rate proposals and the status of each system with you in person. These public meetings could not happen last year due to public meeting restrictions, and will not happen again this year.

We plan to send letters to our water and wastewater customers in these communities prior to the June meeting. The letters will have information regarding the specific water and/or wastewater systems that serve them. You should expect to see the letters by mid-June to allow time for you to respond in writing or participate in the public rate hearing meeting on June 22.

Jim Smith
General Manager