



## NEW SEWER RATE STRUCTURE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### ❖ WHY IS MY SEWER RATE CHANGING?

The new sewer rates have been developed to account for the strength of sewer discharge from customers. Strength of discharge is typically measured as biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) and total suspended solids (TSS). The fundamental objective in developing the new sewer rate structure was to price utility services so that each customer pays for the service that they receive in proportion to their use. Currently, the sewer rate is “consumption-based”, which means every customer pays the same rate based on the volume. However, higher strength wastewater costs more to treat, so many agencies have been transitioning to “consumption-based strength of discharge” rate structure to recover the costs associated with treatment of wastewater more equitably. The new sewer rate structure establishes different rates for a few categories of customers with common wastewater characteristics.

### ❖ HOW WAS THE NEW SEWER RATE STRUCTURE DETERMINED?

The Astoria City Council adopted a sewer rate structure that conforms with industry practices and is fair, equitable and proportional to services received. Development of the new sewer rate structure has taken over two years with funding being provided by the Oregon Business Development Department to hire a consultant to support this effort. Changes to the rate structure were presented to Council multiple times at work sessions and meetings prior to approval in June 2023. Information about the new sewer rate structure has been provided at an ADHDA meeting and through the Chamber of Commerce newsletter, in addition to articles in The Astorian.

The tables below outline the new rate structure in comparison to the existing rate structure as established in Resolution No. 23-17. The classes are assumed based on industry sampling analysis of land use types.

#### CURRENT SEWER RATE STRUCTURE (Consumption-based)

Customer Class	Minimum Bi-Monthly Sewer Service Charge	Bi-monthly Water Use In Excess of 4,000 gallons per Installed Meter (\$/1,000 gallons)
Residential, Commercial & Industrial	\$49.24	\$5.49

#### NEW SEWER RATE STRUCTURE (Consumption-based strength of discharge)

Customer Class	Minimum Bi-Monthly Sewer Service Charge	Bi-monthly Water Use In Excess of 4,000 gallons per Installed Meter (\$/1,000 gallons)	Comments
Residential	\$49.24	\$5.49	Low Strength - No change
Commercial Category 1	\$49.24	\$5.49	Low Strength - No change
Commercial Category 2	\$49.24	\$9.94	Medium Strength
Commercial Category 3	\$49.24	\$12.17	High Strength
Industrial Category 1	\$49.24	Per Industrial Discharge Permit	
Industrial Category 2	\$49.24	Calculated based on monthly discharge reports submitted by customer per Industrial Discharge Permit	

### ❖ WHEN WILL THE SEWER RATE CHANGE OCCUR?

The new sewer rates take effect on January 1, 2024. The change will begin to show up on bi-monthly utility bills that are sent in February and March 2024.

### ❖ WILL MY WATER RATE OR CSO SURCHARGE RATE INCREASE AS PART OF THIS CHANGE?

No; water rates and CSO surcharge rates will not be impacted for any customer class.