

Water Rate Increase F.A.Q

❖ Why are we increasing the rates by 15%

- During our recent rate study, the **Texas Rural Water Association (TRWA)** recommended increasing the base water rate from **\$60 to \$90** per month in order to fully cover the cost of operating and maintaining our water system. After reviewing that recommendation, **we chose not to raise it to the full amount.** Instead, we implemented a smaller increase to **strike a balance** between the financial needs of the water system and the impact on residents.
- Without the Adjustment:
 - We **risk underfunding critical maintenance**, leading to more frequent service disruption.
 - We delay upgrades in service lines and equipment that can result in **higher emergency repair costs** down the road

❖ Why do we have to pay more for water we can't drink?

- Our water may not always taste the way you'd prefer but it **is safe to drink and meets all state and federal health standards.**

❖ What will my bill look like moving forward?

- "Your utility bill includes multiple services: water, sewer and trash. This increase only affects the **charges related to water use and wastewater (sewer) services.** Residential Trash services remain unchanged.
- **City Hall is always available to answer questions (903)496-2251**

❖ Why does the department have so many Water Violations

- A "violation" is not always related to the quality of the water, violations can occur for many administrative reporting requirements. If the violation involves potential health risks the public is notified immediately with clear instructions much like the boil water notices.

❖ Will the increase help our streets?

- The money collected from water and sewer bills is placed into a **dedicated utility fund.** By law and accounting standards, that money **can only be used** to operate, maintain, and improve the **water and wastewater systems.** What This Means:
 - **Water and sewer revenue CANNOT be used** to repair or repave streets.
- These funds are strictly reserved for:
 - Treating and delivering safe drinking water
 - Maintaining water lines, sewer pipes, and equipment
 - Replacing aging infrastructure
 - Meeting state and federal regulations (like TCEQ requirements)

❖ **Why can't the water department tell us if our pipes contain lead?**

- We understand that some questions have come up regarding the **recent notices** sent to water customers. These notices are part of a **federally mandated program** — not an indication that your water is unsafe.
- **What Is This Notice About?**
 - The notices are required under the **TCEQ Lead and Copper Rule Revision**, a **10+ year federal program** designed to help cities identify the materials used in every water service line (the pipe that connects your home or business to the public water main).
- **What the Notice Does *Not* Mean**
 - It does not mean that your water is unsafe
 - It does **not mean the City doesn't know what your pipes are made of**. Rather, it simply means that **we have not yet completed the specific verification and documentation** required by the program to officially confirm your service line's material and remove it from the "unknown" category.
 - The City is required to identify and report the pipe material for **every service line in the system by October 2027**. This is a major effort involving physical inspections, records review, and fieldwork.
- **Where We Stand Now**
 - Over the past year, the City's water department underwent a **complete staff turnover**. While this posed a challenge, we now have a **strong, dedicated team** in place, and we are working diligently to meet all regulatory requirements on time.