



## Rosamond Community Services District

Official Newsletter of Rosamond Community Services District - June 2020



### **New Payments, Same Bill: Base Rates Moving To The Tax Roll**

A new California law has indirectly forced RCSD to modify some of the ways we collect for water and sewer services. These changes are designed to keep our water and sewer services affordable by ensuring our customers are not paying for the water that others are using and not paying for.

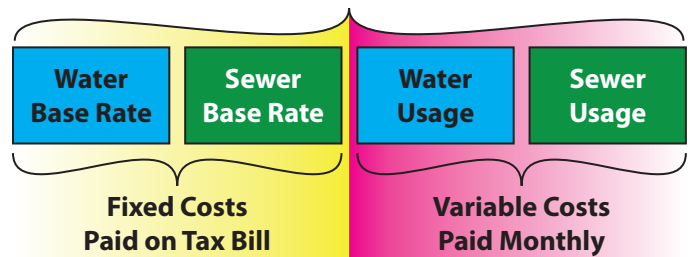
Our first change was to move the base rate for water and sewer services to the tax roll. This will begin July 1, 2020 and will be reflected on the July 31st bill. The monthly bill that you will continue to receive from RCSD will **only** include usage charges. You will still be responsible to pay the water and sewer base rates, but they will be collected via the property tax bill. This change will help protect RCSD, and its customer base, from budget shortfalls caused by unpaid and uncollectable account balances.

You may find it helpful to set aside enough money to cover your base rate in a savings account each month. This way,

you'll be ready to pay when your property taxes come due. Another option is talk to your mortgage provider to have the additional costs added to your impound account. No matter how you choose to pay your base rate, we look forward to all of our customers enjoying the cost stability this new collection method will provide.

This policy change will not affect the amount you pay. It will only change how you pay. It will also help to ensure customers who use our community's water and sewer services pay for what they use.

### **Your RCSD Services Bill**



Your utility bills are already split into four different parts: sewer base rate, sewer usage, water base rate and water usage.

The sewer base rate is calculated to recover and proportionately allocate a portion of fixed costs of RCSD, including, but not limited to, maintenance, insurance, labor, equipment, debt service payments, capital infrastructure replacement costs, collections, billing, and customer service.

The sewer usage is shown in HCF (hundred cubic feet) and is a charge designed to cover the cost of sewage treatment and disposal. This is variable

depending upon the amount of sewage discharged and treated. Sewer usage is calculated based on averaging water usage using industry standard formulas.

The water base rate is a fixed amount determined by the meter size of the property receiving water service from RCSD. These base rates, like the sewer base rate, are calculated to recover and proportionately allocate a portion of fixed costs of RCSD, including, but not limited to billing, collections, customer service, meter reading, meter maintenance, insurance, labor, equipment, debt service payments, and capital infrastructure replacement costs. The majority of these costs are fixed and are not a function of the amount of water a customer uses.

The water usage charge includes the cost of energy necessary to pump water and the direct cost of purchasing water. Since RCSD has a limited groundwater supply, it is necessary to purchase imported water at a much higher cost. The availability of imported water is diminishing as a result of drought and environmental restrictions. The cost of imported water will continue to increase as a result of future costs of solving the water quality and levee problems in the Delta.

### Shifting Accounts to Property Owners

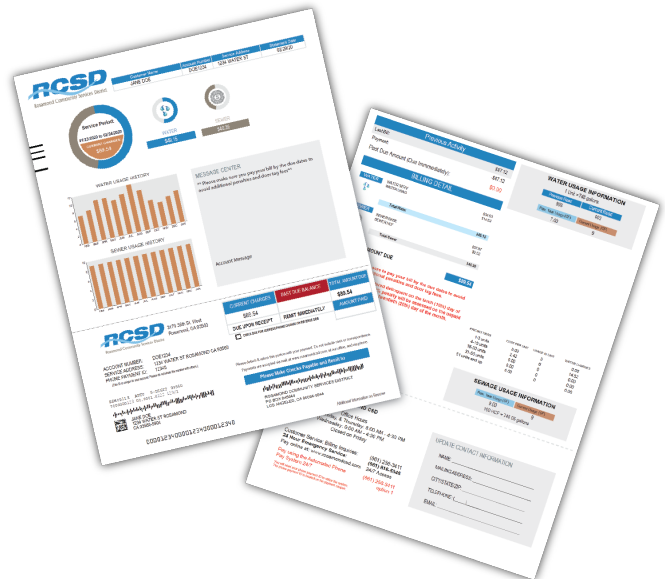
Soon, only property owners will be able to open new accounts at RCSD. This change was implemented to help stabilize water and sewer costs by reducing the high number of accounts that go unpaid at rental properties. Again, this move is designed to ensure those who use the community's water pay for what they use.

Like moving base rates to the tax roll, this policy change will not affect how much each customer pays, only how bills

are paid and from whom the money is collected.

Beginning on July 20th, only the owners of a property will be able to set up new water and sewer service. Existing tenant accounts will be transitioned to the property owner over the next few months.

In addition to this transition, we are getting rid of the credit check requirement for new accounts. In its place will be a required deposit that will be refunded, less any outstanding balances, and the closure of each account.



### More Informed Customers

RCSD has invested in new ways to keep our customers informed, including new easy to read service invoices, email newsletters and social media communications.

Our new service invoices will be showing up in your mailbox soon and will feature a new layout that offers you more information about your account, including historical usage, payments made and



a complete breakdown of charges. We created a guide to the new invoices to help you get to know the new bill layout and features. It can be found on our website, [rosamondcsd.com](http://rosamondcsd.com), by hovering over 'Customers' and selecting 'New RCSD Bills.'

Another way we are trying to keep our customers informed is by sending email newsletters and creating social media posts on Facebook. Did you receive our special email newsletters about COVID-19 or the new invoices? If not, you likely need to update your contact information. You can easily do this by visiting our website, [rosamondcsd.com](http://rosamondcsd.com), hovering over 'I Want To' and selecting 'Update Contact Info'. You can also update your contact information on the bottom portion of the new RCSD bill.

Keeping your contact information up to date is essential to staying informed on regular account information and urgent health and safety alerts.

You can also connect with us on Facebook at [facebook.com/RosamondCSD](https://facebook.com/RosamondCSD). You will find informational posts you can share and comment on. We look forward keeping you better informed as we embrace these new and expanding channels of communication.

### **White Water is Nothing to Worry About**

You may occasionally notice the water from your tap looks white or milky. This unusual appearance is caused by tiny air bubbles suspended in the water. The water is still completely safe and healthy to use and drink, and the white, milky appearance will dissipate if the water is left standing.

This change in appearance is often the result of air entering the water system during maintenance or repairs and working its way through our delivery system until escaping through your tap. We try to lessen this by flushing the air in the lines at hydrants, but it will still happen from time to time.

If you ever have a question about the health or safety of your water, please call us at 661-256-3411.



### **What Does It Mean to be Delinquent?**

We have received several questions about why accounts not paid by the 9th day of each month are being labeled delinquent. While it is true that your account will not be charged any late fees until the 20th of each month, payment is due upon receipt of your bill. This has always been RCSD's policy and it is common among many water providers. We allow you 19 days to pay your bill before assessing any late fees.

We apologize for any confusion this may have caused. RCSD was forced to label unpaid accounts delinquent on the 10th day of the month by new state legislation. If you usually pay on the 15th of each month, you can continue to do so. Your account will be labeled as delinquent on the 10th, but you will not be financially penalized as payment is received by the 19th.

