

From: [Jennifer Becker](#)
To: [City Recorder](#)
Subject: Comment on Proposed Water Rate Increase
Date: Tuesday, February 25, 2025 11:03:50 AM

Caution! This message was sent from outside your organization.

Hello,

My name is Jennifer Becker. I have lived in Lebanon for nearly 12 years now. I have 3 kids, 8, 6 and 4. Our bill, before the \$18 fee, sat at \$125 on average. We aren't extravagant with our usage, showers are less than 5 minutes a person. The dishwasher is strategically loaded to wash the maximum dishes and handwashing is done with care to reuse water the best we can. But we have to use water. Our most recent bill was just shy of \$150. From discussions I have seen on public forums, this isn't abnormal. The average income in Lebanon is less than \$40,000 a year (per US Census Bureau). Taking out 20% in taxes leaves \$32,000 a year. Breaking that into 12 months leaves \$2,667 a month. Median Rent in Lebanon is \$1,274 (per US Census Bureau). Which leaves people with \$1,393 for food, clothes, vehicle, insurance, power bill and water bill. For transparency, my power bill with CPI is on the budget pay plan at \$150 a month and our family of 5 spends an average of \$125 a week on groceries (and most people are shocked we have such a low cost). Our car insurance is \$153 with full coverage because protecting my children while driving is a high priority to me. Our gas bill is \$50 a week for our school and work transportation. So our main bills total to $150+150+500+153+200=1153$. Using our model of averages, this leaves a person with \$240. Please note this example does NOT include: health insurance, prescriptions, vehicle maintenance, clothing, school supplies, internet, phone, hobbies, school fundraiser donations, church tithing, non-profit donations, savings, retirement planning, vacations, birthday gifts/celebrations, holidays, ect.

Last year, the citizens voted to remove fluoride from the city's water supply. The text presented to the public claimed it would save \$25,000 yearly to remove it from the water supply. From chatter I heard, this cost saving was a pushing factor in removing it for many voters. Particularly, because of the impending \$18 fee pushed through, despite massive public outcry. Continuing to raise the cost of living in Lebanon puts strain on families that doesn't need to be there. Our town's mayor has struggled to pay his own property taxes, as has our family, due to economic strains. The above mathematical breakdown shows that the average Lebanon citizen is negatively impacted by the exponentially growing utility bills. On top of the household bills rising, the utility costs rising would also raise costs to small businesses, which would be forced to be passed on to the community if the small business wishes to survive in our town.

I am greatly disappointed in the leadership of our community as they continually seem to be making decisions that put low income families and small businesses at further disadvantage in this strained economy.

Jennifer Becker