



# City of Stevenson

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To: City Council  
From: Leana Kinley, City Administrator  
RE: Comprehensive Rate Schedule and Changes  
Meeting Date: May 16, 2024

## **Executive Summary:**

The city received an Administrative Order from the Department of Ecology in 2017 requiring upgrades to its Wastewater Treatment Plant. Over the past four years there have been continuous rate analysis to balance the impact of rate increases on residents and the needs of the utility. Staff has worked diligently to increase efficiencies at the wastewater treatment plant, partner with customers to decrease loadings at the plant, and work with funders to maximize grants and long-term low interest loans. These efforts translate into a \$20 per month savings on the base residential sewer bill by the end of 2026. The result is a recommended increase of 15% for 2023, or \$15.19 per month.

## **Overview of Changes:**

### *Building Permits:*

- A-Plan Review Fee: Skamania County Building Department requests the ability to charge a \$500 deposit for permits to ensure their costs are recouped if a person abandons their plans. This will mostly apply to larger permits such as single-family residences.
- A5-Demolition Permit: Increase from \$10 to \$150 to cover an hour to review, an hour for permit processing, an hour for water meter lock off and billing coordination, an hour for inspection of sewer lateral decommission/capping.

### *Planning Dept. Review of Building Permit Application:*

- E1- Increase from \$35 to \$75 includes review and inspections.

### *Public Works Department Building Permit Fee:*

- F1-Increase from \$150 to \$350 assumes up to 3 hours for SFRs or the use of a consultant for review and inspections included are private sewer and water line, driveway, and final.
- F2-Increase from \$50 to \$100 assumes 1 hour for minor permit and one final inspection.
- F3-Increase from \$0 to \$50 to cover cost of staff time for inspection.

### *Right of Way Permit Fees:*

- H1-Type A-Increase from \$25 to \$50. Existing resolution also allows for staff time to be billed, which doesn't take place in practice.
- H2-Type B-Increase from \$50 to \$100
- H3-Type C-Increase from \$25 to \$150 to cover increased staff time for review.
- H4-Type D-Increase from \$25 plus recording fees to \$250 to cover increased staff time for review and process to negotiate and have council approve an agreement.
- H6-Use of Right of Way without a permit: From not being addressed to double the cost of the permit fee. -Corresponding ordinance change allowing this charge will need to be adopted.

*Sewer Pretreatment Charges and Fees:*

- I1 & I2 - This section and set of fees are new and assume about 2 hours per year to receive and process reports, 1 hour per year to communicate and review the program. The increased costs follow with increased hours needed for inspection based on type of program and 1 hour to perform annual inspections.
- I3- This section and set of fees are new and assume about 6 hours per year to receive and process reports, 3 hours per year to communicate and review the program.

*Critical Areas Permit:*

- P1-Expedited review - increase from \$35 to \$75 to include inspections.

*Land Use/Planning Department Review:*

- Q-Increase from \$35 to \$75 to include inspections.

*Subdivisions:*

- AB3-Final Plat - Decrease from \$1,500 plus \$1 per 60 sq ft to a flat fee of \$1,500 as most of the work is done at the Preliminary Plat stage.

Removed a \$600 planning fee for City Utility Extension Beyond Plan Area.

Overall comments now apply to Public Works fees in addition to Planning Fees.

*Hydrant Meter Fees:*

- Increase from \$100 per year to \$100 per connection to cover staff time to process the application, connect, disconnect, read the meter, and process the billing for the meter use.

Water and sewer fees have two scenarios listed as discussed during the multiple public hearings.

- Scenario 1: Voters do not approve a 0.3% Street Sales Tax which would not allow the allocation of 0.3% of sales tax to the water/sewer fund without other service impacts.
  - Water fee increase reflects a 7% increase from 2024-2028
  - Sewer fee increase reflects a 10% increase in '24-'25, 3.5% in '26-'27 and a 3% increase in '28
- Scenario 2: voters approve 0.3% Street Sales Tax which would allow the allocation of 0.3% of sales tax to the water/sewer fund.
  - Water fee increase reflects a 5.5% increase from 2024-2028
  - Sewer fee increase reflects a 10% increase in '24-'25 and a 3% in '26-'28
- Both options include the cost of service adjustment for High and Very High BOD customers.

**Action Needed:**

Motion to approve the resolution adopting the comprehensive fee schedule.

If this resolution is adopted it is highly recommended to adopt the accompanying ordinances.