

**2011-2012
SSC Prop 218 Notice
FAQs**

General

Q: How can you raise rates now when the economy is so bad? Can't this wait a few years?

A: These rates adjustments were originally planned to go into effect in 2009, but Sanitation reduced expenditures and deferred projects to hold off the rate changes for 3 years. But we can't do that any longer without significant risk of failures of our sewers and our treatment plants. We did keep the first 3 adjustments as low as possible at 4.5%.

Q: What is this being spent on? Salaries & pensions?

A: 77% of the revenue from this rate adjustment will be spent on construction projects to rehabilitate old infrastructure. This includes the sewers running through your neighborhood, the pumping plants that make sure the wastewater gets to the treatment locations, and the wastewater treatment and water reclamation facilities that provide treatment so the water can be safely reused or discharged to the Los Angeles River or the ocean. A list of these projects can be found at the lasewers.org website.

Another 20% of the revenue will be used to pay off bonds used to finance construction projects. That leaves only 3% of the revenue that will be used for increases in operating expenses, including chemicals, utilities, and salaries.

Q: When does this go into effect?

A: If approved by City Council, the estimated date for this change to go into effect will be March 1, 2012.

Q: I do not agree with these rate adjustments. What can I do to formally address my concerns?

A: Refer the customer back to the notification. Instructions on how to submit a written comment are located in the second to last paragraph of page 3. If the customer is a Spanish speaker, the instructions are located in the second to last paragraph of page 6.

Residential

Q: Is the Winter Water Use method of calculating my bill changing?

A: No, we are still basing residential bills on the Winter Water Use method, which prevents you from being charged for irrigation water that does not go to the sewer.

Commercial

Q: I am a commercial customer and have an adjustment due to my cooling towers (or irrigation, or use of water in product). Will my percentage discharge now increase to 93%?

A: No, only customers billed under the default 90% will see an increase. If you have an adjustment because you send less of your water to the sewer, it will remain in place until your adjustment undergoes its regular review (about every 3 years or so).

Commercial (continued)

Q: Your notice says that commercial customers have reduced their irrigation, so they are sending more to the sewer. But I haven't reduced my irrigation, so why does my percentage discharge go up?

A: The default percentage discharge is used for commercial customers when there is not more specific data. Sanitation would be happy to work with you and calculate how much of your water goes to the sewer based on your specific operations. (refer to [CSSC adjustment form](#))

Low Income Subsidy/Surcharge

Q: I can't afford to pay this – what can I do?

A: Residential customers with a qualifying household may qualify for a 31% discount on their first 9hcf/month of sewer discharge (covers entire discharge amount for most participants). For more info, contact LADWP at 1 800 342-5397 or get more info online at [ladwp.com](http://www.ladwp.com) (actual address is <http://www.ladwp.com/ladwp/cms/ladwp004841.pdf>.) Qualifying income levels are:

1-2 persons	\$31,300
3 persons	\$36,800
4 persons	\$44,400
5 persons	\$52,000
6 persons	\$59,600
For each additional, add	\$7,600

Q: Why should I have to pay a higher subsidy for other people – I have enough trouble paying my own bill?

A: Sanitation is hoping to reduce the amount of the low-income surcharge in the future by taking over the process of verifying that everyone who is currently receiving the subsidy is qualified. We believe that this is an important program, and want to make sure it continues helping those in need. The Federal Clean Water Act requires the City to recover the cost of the Low Income Subsidy program from the regular rate payers.

Q: I just went through the hassle of submitting forms for the SWRRF lifeline – am I going to have to do that again for the low income program?

A: We plan to review the lifeline submittals first, so if you submitted info for that program, you may not need to submit anything else.

Q: Why am I receiving more than one notification?

A: Proposition 218 requires that all parcel owners and rate payers to be notified about this rate adjustments. If you are the parcel owner and the rate payer or you own more than one parcel within the City of Los Angeles, you will receive multiple copies of the notification.