



NEWS RELEASE

Placer County Water Agency

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A non-profit public agency serving the communities of Placer County

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Auburn - Directors of the Placer County Water Agency on Thursday (Nov. 7) approved a new Water Connection Charge (WCC) that includes significant increases in the costs for hooking up to PCWA water supplies.

The new charge, which became effective today (Nov. 8), applies to treated water customers in PCWA Service Zone 1.

The WCC replaces the agency's former Plant Expansion and Replacement Charge (PERC), which had not been increased in five years. The charge is designed to cover construction costs for water system infrastructure to meet needs for new connections.

The WCC in Lower Zone 1 is \$7,971 for a standard 5/8-inch water meter, or equivalent dwelling unit. It replaces a Lower Zone 1 PERC rate of \$5,719.

In Upper Zone 1 the WCC is \$8,971, up from the previous PERC rate of \$6,469.

Approved on a 5-0 vote of the board, the new charge has been in planning for several months and included a public notification process in which letters explaining the proposed change were mailed to more than 36,000 property owners throughout Zone 1.

The extensive planning process and proposed increase prompted numerous property owners and developers to apply for water service before the new rate was adopted, said PCWA Director of Strategic Affairs Einar Maisch.

Maisch said the agency has processed more than 8,000 requests for water service this year, compared to an annual average of 1,500 to 2,000 requests over the past several years.

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As part of the process to adopt the new charge, the Board of Directors agreed to commit water supplies under previous fees to new services which had applications pending as of November 7.

Among those were applications from the City of Lincoln and the California-American Water Co., which use PCWA water to supply their customers. Cal-American supplies water in southwest Placer County. Both agreed to hold off on some of their service requests until after completion of PCWA's permanent pump station on the American River, which is now scheduled for operation by summer, 2005.

In addition, directors agreed to delay implementing the new charge for an estimated 425 canal water users, many of whom are buying bottled water. Officials said delaying the new charge until January 1, 2005, would be an incentive for these canal water users to seek piped, treated water supplies.

In other business, directors:

- recognized Placer County firefighters in a special ceremony with Placer County Fire Chiefs Assoc. President Randy Smith and several other local chiefs. Smith noted the relationship of water and firefighting, saying, "We greatly appreciate your support. This is truly a partnership."

PCWA directors will next meet in adjourned session at 4 p.m. on Nov. 25 at the PCWA Business Center in Auburn. The next regular meeting of the board will be held at 3 p.m. on Dec. 5 in the Placer County Board of Supervisors chambers, 175 Fulweiler Avenue, in Auburn. PCWA board meetings are open to the public.