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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

*Auburn* - Directors of the Placer County Water Agency on Thursday (Nov. 6) approved a 2004 water rate schedule that includes rate increases of 5 to 10 percent for most categories of water use.

The new rates become effective Jan. 1 in the water agency's five service zones, which extend from western Placer County to the Martis Valley in eastern Placer County.

Water agency officials say the adjustments are needed to maintain good levels of service, rebuild aging water system infrastructure and meet rising expenses, including mandates and costs transferred from other levels of government.

Western Placer

In Zone 1, which includes Auburn and areas to the west, the monthly service charge for a standard residential 5/8-inch water meter increases 6.5 percent to \$10.84. The tiered usage charge rises 3 percent for most customers, depending on actual use. Other elements of the water bill, the renewal and replacement charge (up 85 cents) and the charge for state and federal mandated programs (up 14 cents) were also adjusted.

PCWA Director of Customer Services John Kingsbury offered examples of how the rate adjustments would affect typical customers using low, medium and high amounts of water. A low water user in Zone 1 would see a monthly increase of \$1.73, a medium level user would pay an additional \$2.26 and a high user would pay an additional \$4.65.

Upper Foothill Areas

In Zone 3, which includes the small communities along the Interstate 80 corridor

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from Alta to Meadow Vista, treated water customers may expect a service charge increase of 6.5 percent to \$19.95 per month along with increases in the tiered usage rate (3-4 percent), the charge for state and federal mandated programs (14 cents) and the renewal and replacement charge (85 cents).

Typical water use examples were also offered for Zone 3. A low user would see a monthly increase of \$2.34, a medium level user would pay an additional \$3.26 and a high user would pay another \$5.38.

#### Bianchi Estates

In Zone 2, which supplies the 46-home Bianchi Estates area near Roseville, some rate reductions were approved. The Bianchi area was converted this year from well water to treated surface water. Zone 2 user examples include reductions from \$24.35 to \$18.95 for a low user, \$36.55 to \$31.93 for a low/medium level user, \$63.14 to \$61.57 for a high/medium user, with an increase from \$125.06 to \$131.56 for a high level user.

#### Martis Valley

In Zone 4, which supplies water to the Lahontan community near Truckee, the monthly service charge was increased by \$3.20, a state and federal mandate charge was established at \$3.18 per dwelling unit, and a second usage tier was added to promote efficient water use.

#### Irrigation Water

Irrigation customers who receive raw water through the PCWA canal system will see increases of 3 percent for most summer irrigation water service and 7 percent for winter water. The increases apply to all service zones, including the Zone 5 agricultural area west of Lincoln. In Zone 1, the capital facilities charge was increased by 20 cents per month.

Examples of summer raw water use include a customer using 2 miners' inches whose monthly bill will increase by \$3.02 to \$88.51, a larger user of 4 miners' inches

who will pay an additional \$6.26 to a total of \$172.73 per month, and large user of 13 miners' inches who will see a \$20.85 increase to \$551.72 per month.

The summer rate applies to the five-month or six-month irrigation season. Winter rates for the same typical customers will increase by \$6.42, \$12.72 and \$41.07 respectively.

Customers with questions about water rates and charges are invited to contact the PCWA Customer Service Center at (530) 823-4850 or (800) 464-0030.