



# Ramona Municipal Water District

A Public Agency Organized August 15, 1956

## NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING Concerning Proposed Increases in Fees for Wastewater

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT** the Board of Directors of the Ramona Municipal Water District (“the District”) will conduct a public hearing at **2:00 p.m. on June 13, 2017** at the Ramona Community Center, 434 Aqua Lane, Ramona, California 92065, following which it will consider adopting increases in fees for wastewater (sewer) services. If adopted, the annual wastewater (sewer) service fees will go into effect July 1, 2017.

### **Reasons for Proposed Wastewater (Sewer) Fee Increase**

The San Vicente Wastewater System serves parcels located mostly in San Diego Country Estates and the Rancho San Vicente/Ryland Homes development. The Santa Maria Wastewater System serves parcels located mostly in the downtown Ramona area and the Mt. Woodson development. Except for a few special cases, the annual sewer service fees are collected on the annual County Property Tax bills.

Each wastewater system is a stand-alone operation, and the fees for each must be sufficient to recover the costs to operate the wastewater system. The cost of operating and maintaining the two separate wastewater systems is reviewed annually. That annual review indicates that the District will need to increase fees as of July 1, 2017 to fund (1) current and projected operations and maintenance costs for the wastewater systems; (2) the capital infrastructure replacements and improvements needed to repair and update each of the District’s wastewater systems; and (3) compliance with state and federal regulatory requirements for each system. The fees charged to customers for each wastewater system are required to fund the operation and maintenance of each system.

### **Basis Upon Which the Proposed Wastewater (Sewer) Fees are Calculated**

The District uses an “Equivalent Dwelling Unit” (“EDU”) system to ensure that sewer service fees are proportional to the availability and demand for sewer services. Parcels are assigned EDUs based on property usage, and charged for sewer services on a per-EDU basis. EDU levels are based upon available data, industry standards, and best professional estimates by engineers of the District. If a property owner has any questions about the EDUs assigned to the parcel, the property owner may contact the District at (760) 788-2203. A property owner may request a re-evaluation of the EDUs assigned to a parcel at any time. However, the sewer service fee increase proposed in this Notice does not change the number of EDUs assigned to each parcel.

In 2014, the District engaged an independent consulting firm, Bartle Wells Associates, to review the District’s wastewater rates and fees. Bartle Wells reviewed the operations costs, maintenance requirements, and infrastructure needs of the Santa Maria Wastewater System. Bartle Wells

performed a similar review for the San Vicente Wastewater System. Bartle Wells prepared separate sewer rate studies for the Santa Maria and San Vicente Wastewater Systems, and developed ten-year financial projections for each of the wastewater systems. The rate studies analyzed appropriate and proportional wastewater rates and fees, including the EDU methods used by the District.

Based on the 2014 Bartle Wells rate studies, the District has updated its annual review of projected costs to maintain the District’s wastewater systems for the upcoming year, including a review of methodology and projections of the Bartle Wells rate studies. To cover its costs, the District will need to increase per-EDU wastewater rates for each system as recommended by the 2014 Bartle Wells rate studies. The proposed not-to-exceed wastewater service fees per EDU are as follows:

<b>San Vicente Wastewater</b>			<b>Santa Maria Wastewater</b>		
	Current Annual Fee	New Annual Fee		Current Annual Fee	New Annual Fee
Sewer service fee per EDU*	\$720.83	\$774.89	Sewer service fee per EDU*	\$759.30	\$805.00

\* Most single-family residences are assigned an EDU of 1.0.

If adopted, the proposed wastewater fees would provide approximately \$2.9 million in revenue to operate the San Vicente Wastewater System, and approximately \$3.4 million in revenue to operate the Santa Maria Wastewater System. The proposed fees for each system will not exceed the total cost of providing wastewater service to each system’s customers. The cost of wastewater service for each system includes not only immediate operating costs, but long-term capital and operating needs as well. Wastewater rates are used by the District solely to provide sewer service to customers. If adopted by the Board of Directors, the proposed wastewater annual fee increases would go into effect July 1, 2017.

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

At the public hearing, the Board of Directors will consider objections and protests to the proposed rates. Any property owner or any tenant directly responsible for the payment of sewer service fees may submit a written protest to the proposed increases to the fees; provided, however, that only one protest will be counted per identified parcel. Any written protest must: (1) state that the identified property owner or tenant is opposed to the proposed sewer service fee increase; (2) provide the location of the identified parcel (by assessor’s parcel number or street address); and (3) include the name and signature of the property owner or tenant submitting the protest. Written protests explaining the nature of any objections will be given due consideration by the Board.

Written protests may be submitted by mail or in person to the Ramona Municipal Water District, 105 Earlham Street, Ramona, California 92065, or at the Public Hearing, and will be considered so long as they are received prior to the close of the Public Hearing, which will occur when public testimony on the proposed fee increases is concluded. Protests submitted April 11, 2017

via e-mail or other electronic means will not be accepted. Please identify on the front of the envelope for any protest, whether mailed or submitted in person to the District, that the enclosed protest is for the Public Hearing on the Proposed Increases to Sewer Services Fees, and which fee increase you are protesting. If you challenge the fees in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues which you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice or in written correspondence delivered to the District at, or prior to, the public hearing.

The District's Board of Directors will hear and consider all properly presented written and verbal protests to the proposed fee increases at the Public Hearing. Verbal comments at the Public Hearing will not qualify as formal protests unless accompanied by a written protest. Upon the conclusion of the Public Hearing, the Board of Directors will consider adoption of the proposed fee increases. If written protests against the proposed fees are not presented by a majority of the property owners or customers of the identified parcels upon which the fees are proposed to be imposed, the Board of Directors will be authorized to impose the proposed fee increases.

For further details regarding the basis and reasons for the proposed fee increases, or to obtain copies of the 2014 Bartle Wells Associates rate studies, please contact us at (760) 788-2203 or visit our website at [www.rmwd.org](http://www.rmwd.org).

Thank you,

**Ramona Municipal Water District**  
**105 Earlham Street**  
**Ramona, CA 92065-1599**  
**Attn: Public Hearing**  
**(760) 788-2203**