



Olivenhain Municipal Water District Sewer Customers Will Not Face Higher Rates in 2020

Encinitas, CA—Following a review of its sewer rates and charges, Olivenhain Municipal Water District’s Board of Directors voted at its May 20 meeting to hold the line on current sewer rates and fees rather than increase rates as scheduled.

OMWD’s sewer customers were originally expected to see a three percent increase in their sewer bills effective July 1, 2020. The board approved in 2016 a sewer rate study that would see rates rise over a five-year period, of which the fiscal year beginning on July 1 represents the fifth year.

“Our board is concerned about the financial impacts to customers due to COVID-19,” said OMWD Board President Ed Sprague. “Rather than increasing sewer rates at this time, we will continue to do whatever we can to contain our own costs.”

OMWD will reprioritize capital needs and delay noncritical projects in Fiscal Year 2021. While operating costs and capital needs outside of OMWD’s control continue to grow each year, OMWD continues its commitment to long-term financial stability and excellent customer service. This is accomplished, in part, through the replacement of aging infrastructure and maintenance of capital facilities, while complying with the State of California’s evolving regulations.

Rate increases are enacted only when necessary to cover costs needed to sustain operations and maintain OMWD’s position to meet financial obligations. OMWD will undertake a new study later in 2020 that will provide data to update the 2015 Wastewater Cost of Service Study and Financial Plan, evaluate OMWD’s financial health, and assess the funding requirements to complete sewer capital replacement and betterment projects.

OMWD provides sewer service to nearly 5,500 homes and businesses in the communities of 4S Ranch and Rancho Cielo and their immediate vicinities. Sewer fees are included in a property owner’s tax bill, which is due to the San Diego County Tax Assessors Office in December and April of each year.

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Olivenhain Municipal Water District is a public agency providing water, wastewater services, recycled water, hydroelectricity, and operation of Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve. Organized in 1959, OMWD currently serves approximately 86,000 customers over 48 square miles in northern San Diego County.

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