



# IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR WATER RATES

## NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING Concerning Proposed Changes to Water Rates and Service Charges



**DATE:** Wednesday, April 28, 2021

**TIME:** 5 p.m.

*Due to the evolving situation with COVID-19 and the State of California stay-at-home order, Executive Order N-33-20, this meeting shall only be available to the public via teleconference.*

### TO JOIN US ON ZOOM

**Meeting ID:** 867 8995 8872

**Password:** 895505

### To join this meeting via phone, please

dial: 1-669-900-6833 or

1-253-215-8782

This notice is being provided to you by Helix Water District (Helix) pursuant to California Constitution Article XIID (also known as "Proposition 218"). Under the terms of Proposition 218, Helix is required to notify the property owners of record of proposed changes to property-related fees, such as water service.

This serves as notice that the Helix Board of Directors will conduct a public hearing, at the time, date and location specified above, to consider recommended adjustments to Helix's water service rates and charges. If approved, the proposed adjustments will first appear on bills on July 1, 2021 and July 1, 2022 for the rates effective on May 1, 2021 and May 1, 2022, respectively. All members of the public are invited to attend the public hearing. Additionally, under California state law, all property owners and customers of record may submit a written protest to the proposed rate changes. Only one protest per parcel is permitted. Please refer to the "How Can I Participate?" section of this document for instructions on submitting a formal written protest against the proposed action. All written protests will be verified. You may also appear at the public hearing at the date and time specified above. More information is available online at: [hwd.fyi/rates](http://hwd.fyi/rates).

**CUSTOMER SERVICE:** 619-466-0585

Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.

**HWD.FYI/RATES**



**Helix**  
WATER DISTRICT

## Why are rate changes necessary?

A study conducted for Helix by an independent rate consultant determined the cost of providing water and the revenue required to maintain current service levels. Tier widths are also being adjusted to more closely align to customer usage patterns. The cost-of-service analysis identified these factors that necessitate the proposed rates and charges:



**Rising costs** – The cost of operating the water system has increased. Helix is paying more for electricity, treatment chemicals, technology and equipment needed to meet state water quality regulations.



**Capital projects** – Supporting Helix's 24/7 service is an infrastructure maintenance program that never stops. Every pump, tank, pipe, valve, hydrant and meter in our infrastructure is on a cycle. First, there are decades of operation and maintenance. Then, when each of these thousands of components reaches the end of its useful life, there's planning, designing and installing its replacement. This work is necessary to ensure water is available whenever you want it.



**Financial stability** – The cost-of-service study determined that without an adequate rate increase, the revenue generated by water sales would not be sufficient to cover the cost of operations. The proposed rates would allow Helix to fully fund operating expenses, capital costs and meet reserve requirements.

*Helix Water District is dedicated to providing high-quality water at the lowest possible cost through an efficient and reliable system.*

## Description of Water Rate Structure

### Fixed vs. Variable Charges

The proposed rate structure includes a bimonthly fixed charge, imposed upon all customers based on the size of the meter serving the property, and a volumetric rate determined by the amount of water delivered to each parcel, measured in units. One unit equals 748 gallons.



The **Fixed Charge** covers costs that do not change based on the amount of water used such as capital projects, transmission, distribution, meters and service.

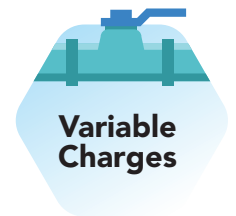
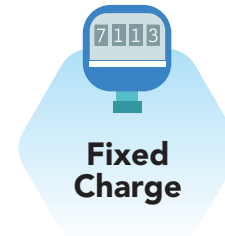


The **Variable Charge** covers expenses such as purchased water, treatment, pumping and other costs that connect directly to the amount of water used.



## Why have I received this notice?

Helix Water District is considering a two-year schedule of changes to water rates and charges that could affect your bimonthly bill. Helix is proposing changes to:



Customers who may be impacted by these changes are receiving this notice and are invited to provide feedback that the Board of Directors will consider prior to voting on the proposal.

## What is a pass-through?

To ensure that there are sufficient revenues to provide water service, Helix is proposing to annually pass through to its customers any increases in the rates for wholesale water and other charges that the San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA) imposes on Helix. Known as pass-through adjustments, these changes will impact the Fixed and Variable Charges for all customer classes, including Single-Family Residential, Multi-Family Residential, Commercial/Government and Irrigation customers set forth in the tables included in this document. If approved, Helix's Board of Directors may implement any SDCWA pass-through adjustment at any time for the five-year period commencing January 1, 2022 through and including December 31, 2027, provided that (1) any increase in the rates as a result of any SDCWA pass-through adjustment shall not exceed 10 percent per year; (2) in no event shall rates be increased by more than the cost of providing water service; and (3) Helix shall provide all customers a minimum 30-day written notice prior to implementing any SDCWA pass-through adjustment.

## Proposed Fixed Charge

The bimonthly Fixed Charge is related to the fixed costs of providing water, such as operations. They are not based on the amount of water used.

METER SIZE	CURRENT CHARGE	PROPOSED Effective 5/1/21	PROPOSED Effective 5/1/22
Less than or equal to 3/4"	\$50.48	\$53.84	\$56.81
1"	\$73.77	\$77.69	\$81.96
1 1/2"	\$131.97	\$161.15	\$170.02
2"	\$201.79	\$244.61	\$258.07
3"	\$422.95	\$536.74	\$566.26
4"	\$748.86	\$912.32	\$962.50
6"	\$1,528.72	\$1,925.80	\$2,031.73
8"	\$3,274.65	\$3,356.60	\$3,541.22

## Proposed Variable Charges

The Variable Charge is a unit charge for the amount of water used. Helix Water District uses a tiered rate structure for Single-Family Residential customers that charges a higher rate to those who use more water, ensuring that higher costs associated with increased water use are paid for by those consuming the most water. Additionally, irrigation customers are charged a higher rate when they exceed their budget to pay for the increased cost of providing water to those customers.

CLASS	CURRENT CHARGE PER UNIT	PROPOSED Effective 5/1/21	PROPOSED Effective 5/1/22
<b>Single-Family Residential</b>			
Current Tiers	Proposed Tiers		
0-14 units	0-12 units	\$4.98	\$5.27
15-34 units	13-26 units	\$5.82	\$5.60
35+ units	27+ units	\$7.24	\$7.10
<b>Multi-Family Residential</b>		\$5.64	\$5.60
<b>Commercial/Government Class</b>		\$5.70	\$5.67
<b>Irrigation Class</b>			
Up to 100% of Budget		\$5.82	\$5.95
101% + of Budget		\$7.24	\$7.04

## Proposed Dedicated Fire Line Charge

The bimonthly Dedicated Fire Line Charge is a fixed charge that covers the cost of providing water system fire flow capacity and maintenance. These charges only apply to properties on which a fire service lateral has been installed.

LATERAL SIZE	CURRENT CHARGE	PROPOSED Effective 5/1/21	PROPOSED Effective 5/1/22
3/4"	\$10.26	\$2.96	\$3.13
1"	\$13.68	\$3.95	\$4.17
2"	\$27.35	\$7.90	\$8.34
4"	\$54.70	\$15.80	\$16.67
6"	\$82.04	\$23.70	\$25.01
8"	\$109.39	\$31.60	\$33.34
10"	\$136.74	\$39.50	\$41.68

## How Can I Participate?

Helix Water District welcomes your participation and input throughout the process as the Board of Directors considers the changes explained in this notice. If you have any questions or comments about the proposed adjustments, you can:



**CALL, VISIT OR LOG-ON.** The cost-of-service study and more information on the proposed changes are available for review on our website: [hwd.fyi/rates](http://hwd.fyi/rates), or by calling 619-466-0585.



**JOIN OUR COMMUNITY MEETING.** For more information and to ask questions about the proposed rates, please attend Helix's Community Meeting on April 8, 2021 at 6 p.m. For Zoom information please see the last page.



**WRITE.** We encourage you to reach out with any questions. Should you wish to protest the proposed changes, owners of real property who will be affected by the proposed rate changes, as well as tenants who will be directly responsible for payment, may file a written protest against the proposed rate adjustment; however, only one written protest per parcel shall be counted in calculating a majority protest. Written protests will be treated as public records once opened. Written protests may be mailed or placed in our dropbox at Helix Water District, 7811 University Ave., La Mesa, CA 91942-0427, Attn: Board Secretary. Protests must specify the rate being protested and must include: your name, parcel number and/or service address, and your signature. Objections submitted by email or other electronic means do not count as formal written protests per State statute. All written protests must be received prior to the conclusion of the public input portion of the public hearing in order to be considered by the Board of Directors.

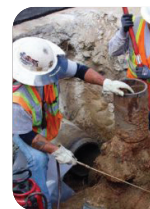


**ATTEND THE PUBLIC HEARING.** Members of the public are welcome to attend the public hearing regarding the proposed rate changes. The public hearing will take place on April 28, 2021, at 5 p.m. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the public hearing will be held virtually. At the public hearing, all members of the public will have an opportunity to speak and give testimony regarding the proposed rate adjustments; however, only written protests count toward a majority protest.



## Public Hearing Process

At the time of the public hearing, the Board of Directors will hear and consider all written protests and public comments. After the public hearing, if a majority of the property owners or customers of record submit written protests in opposition to the proposed rates, they will not be imposed. If a majority written protest is not received, the Board may adopt the proposed changes, though it is not obligated to. If adopted, the new rates will first appear on bills on July 1, 2021 and July 1, 2022 for the rates effective on May 1, 2021 and May 1, 2022, respectively.



## Did you know?

As a public agency, Helix Water District cannot earn a profit from the services it provides and must charge no more than the costs associated with providing services to its customers.

**To see how these rates might impact you, check out our bill estimator at [hwd.fyi/rates](http://hwd.fyi/rates)**



**Helix**  
WATER DISTRICT

Helix Water District  
7811 University Avenue  
La Mesa, CA 91942-0427

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR WATER RATES

*We encourage you to attend our virtual  
Community Meeting April 8, 2021, 6 p.m.*

### TO JOIN US ON ZOOM

**Meeting ID:** 883 8738 4508  
**Password:** 129444

**To join this meeting  
via phone,** please  
dial: 1-669-900-6833 or  
1-253-215-8782

## Helix Helps



### Helix helps

Customer Assistance  
Program

**Do you need help paying your water bill?** Helix Water District has created a customer assistance program to help those who are past due on their water bills due to the coronavirus pandemic. Learn more at [hwd.fyi/help](http://hwd.fyi/help).

*Este documento es importante para todos los clientes de Helix Water District. Para su comodidad, este aviso en español se puede encontrar dentro este documento.*