

April 10, 2017

Dear Property Owner:

**Re: Proposed Sewer Service Rates and Community Meeting Schedule**

We are sending this letter to property owners in the Emerald Lake Heights Sewer Maintenance District (District), which is administered by the County of San Mateo’s Department of Public Works. This letter contains important information about proposed rate adjustments.

The current sewer rates for the sewer or sanitation district serving your property were set five years ago. We have evaluated the previously set sewer rates, the district expenses during the last five years, and future anticipated operational and infrastructure replacement expenses. Although the current rates support most of the requirements of the district, based on our analysis we are proposing adjustments to the sewer rates for the next three years to pay for the anticipated District maintenance and improvement work, increases in sewage treatment costs, and regulatory requirements. The County Board of Supervisors, which acts as the Governing Board for each of the ten (10) districts administered by the County of San Mateo, will consider these sewer service rate adjustments this summer.

**Proposed Sewer Service Rates**

We are proposing to set the sewer service rates for a three-year period (2017-18 through 2019-20 fiscal years). The proposed sewer service rates are recommended to fund the anticipated expenditures of the District in each of the three years.

	Sewer Service Rate (\$/Year Per Residential Unit)			
	2016-17	Proposed Rates		
		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Emerald Lake Heights SMD Zone 2	\$1,010	\$1,280	\$1,415	\$1,490

**Public Meeting Date**

We have scheduled a neighborhood meeting for the Emerald Lake Heights Sewer Maintenance District at:

**6:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 4, 2017**  
**at Clifford Elementary School**  
**225 Clifford Avenue**  
**Redwood City**

At this meeting we will be discussing overall sewer system management, and providing more detailed information about the sewer service rate calculations and the services and projects they pay for. This information will also be posted on our website by the meeting date. Most importantly, we want to hear your comments and input on this issue before we finalize our recommendations to the Board of Supervisors, and provide answers to any questions you may have.



Your District continues to face several challenges. Aging sewer pipes must be replaced to avoid sewer main failures and subsequent overflows, protect public health and safety and enhance the water quality of the Bay. The District is financially self-sufficient and has its own independent budget derived from funds collected through sewer service charges. These funds are spent solely on District expenses. The charges for sewer service appear on your property tax bill because that is the least costly way for the District to collect the charges.

District staff responds to emergencies, maintains pipes and assures compliance with environmental regulations. The County of San Mateo does not operate a sewage treatment plant, nor do any of the ten (10) districts that we operate. Sewage from your District flows through District-owned pipes to a “downstream” agency and on to a sewage treatment plant either owned by a city or a joint powers authority. Each district has an agreement with each downstream agency that provides for the district to pay for services. The sewage treatment plant that treats sewage from your District is the Silicon Valley Clean Water (SVCW) Wastewater Treatment Plant. SVCW has initiated capital improvement projects to replace aging facilities and ensure that the sewage treatment meets their permit requirements. These projects were initiated in 2008 and are estimated to cost \$815 million in total. The District must pay a share of these expenses based upon the percentage of sewage from the district that is treated at the plant or the agreement with the downstream agency.

Your sewer charges pay for:

- Operation and maintenance of the sewer collection system
- Operation and maintenance of the sewer treatment plant
- Improvements to the plant that treats your wastewater
- Repairs to and replacement of your district’s aging pipes
- Inspections of the district’s pipes
- Emergency response and repairs
- Compliance with local, state and federal health, safety and environmental protection regulations.

If you are unable to attend the meeting, but would like to provide comments please direct them to:

James C. Porter, Director  
Department of Public Works  
County of San Mateo  
555 County Center, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Redwood City, CA 94063  
or  
e-mail: [sewers@smcgov.org](mailto:sewers@smcgov.org)

Additional information about your district, frequently asked questions, and the timeline for rate setting can be found on our website at: [www.smcgov.org/sewers](http://www.smcgov.org/sewers)