



2025 Sewer Rate Changes

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ'S)



Why are Sewer Rates going up?

The current monthly sewer rate (\$5.45 per EDU) does not fully cover the City's costs for maintenance, repairs, improvements, and reserves. There is a \$335,467 shortfall in the 2024-25 budget, and the City is not meeting financial requirements for its bonds. Also, there is no funding for much-needed repairs and upgrades.

1. What is the Sanitary Sewer System?

The City of Salinas maintains the sewer system that carries wastewater from homes and businesses to a regional treatment plant run by Monterey One Water (M1W). The City manages the pipes and pumping stations, while M1W handles treatment. Each agency charges its own sewer fee.

2. What are the Proposed Sewer Rates?

The sewer rate will increase from \$5.45 to \$16.35 in 2025, with a 2% increase each year thereafter. To review the proposed sewer rates for the various land uses, visit <https://tinyurl.com/SSRS25>.

Table 1: Proposed 5-year rate increase.

| Fiscal Year (FY) | 2025-26 | 2026-27 | 2027-28 | 2028-29 | 2029-30 |
|------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Rate per EDU per month | \$16.35 | \$16.68 | \$17.01 | \$17.35 | \$17.70 |

3. What is an Equivalent Dwelling Unit (EDU)?

An Equivalent Dwelling Unit (EDU) is the wastewater demand of a typical dwelling unit. M1W estimates the typical wastewater flow of a dwelling unit at 150 gallons per day.

4. What is a Sewer Rate Study?

A rate study reviews how much it costs to run the sewer system. It was done to:

- Assess current and future costs.
- Plan for \$114.8 million in system upgrades over 10 years.
- Set fair rates that follow legal rules (Proposition 218).



What is Proposition 218?

This law ensures sewer rates only pay for sewer services (no other City costs) and cannot be increased without proper notice and the chance for property owners to protest.

5. When will the Proposed Sewer Rates start?

A public hearing will be held Tuesday, September 23, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. at City Hall (200 Lincoln Ave, Salinas) during which protests will be tallied. If 50%+1 protests are received, the proposed rates cannot be approved.

If approved, new sewer rates go into effect on October 1, 2025, and will adjust each July 1st through 2029.

6. How will my bill change?

If approved, the table below shows how the proposed sewer rates will be listed in your sewer utility (bimonthly) bill for the October–November 2025 service period.

Table 2: Sewer Utility Bimonthly Bill

| Charge Type | Bimonthly Amount | Monthly Equivalent |
|--------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Monterey One Water (Treatment) | \$108.00 | \$54.00* |
| City Sewer System (Conveyance) | \$ 32.70 | \$16.35* |
| Total Sewer Charges | \$140.70 | \$70.35 |

*Sewer rates effective July 1, 2025 (for treatment) and October 1, 2025 (for conveyance).

7. Can these Rates change again?

Yes, the City Council can adjust rates again if needed, following the Proposition 218 process.

8. What happens if the Proposed Sewer Rates are not increased?

Without the sewer rate increase:

- Failing systems could cause sewage spills, fines, and public health risks.
- Sewer system repairs will be delayed, and future costs will rise.
- Bigger rate increases may be needed later.
- The City could face \$10,000 per day fines from the State.
- The City's S&P bond rating may be further reduced ([August 2025 S&P Global Ratings Report](#)).



CONTACT PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

PHONE: (831) 758-7241 | EMAIL: PUBWORKS@CI.SALINAS.CA.US

ADDRESS: 200 LINCOLN AVENUE, SALINAS, CA 93901



2025 Sewer Rate Changes

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ'S)

9. How do I protest the Sewer Rate increase?

You can protest if you are the property owner or rate-paying tenant. If 50%+1 of the affected customers protest, the increase cannot move forward.

| | |
|---|--|
| To submit a valid protest, include: | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Your name (property owner or tenant). |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Your property address or assessor parcel number. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The statement: "I protest the proposed sewer rate adjustments." |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Your original signature. |
| Submit By Mail or In Person to: City of Salinas City Clerk 200 Lincoln Avenue Salinas, CA 93901 | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No email, phone, or fax submissions are accepted. |
| | Deadline: Before the end of the Public Hearing on Tuesday, September 23, 2025. |



10. Is there help for Low-Income Households?

The City is developing a Customer Assistance Program to help qualifying residents with the City's portion of the sewer bill. Details will be shared at the September 23, 2025, City Council meeting.

11. What Is an Objection?

It's a written letter you, as a property owner or rate-paying tenant, can submit to the City of Salinas City Clerk office to oppose the proposed sewer rate increase.

To submit a valid objection, your letter must include your name, address or parcel number, the specific reasons why the proposed rates violate Proposition 218 or other laws, and the desired resolution or outcome. If your objection does not explain how the rate increases violate Proposition 218, it will not be considered valid.

Deadline: The City must receive your objection by 4:00 p.m. on September 23, 2025. Only objections received by that time will be considered by the City Council, who will decide whether to adjust, reduce, or cancel the rates.

Scan code to learn more about the 2025 Sewer Rate Study



CONTACT PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

PHONE: (831) 758-7241 | EMAIL: PUBWORKS@CI.SALINAS.CA.US

ADDRESS: 200 LINCOLN AVENUE, SALINAS, CA 93901