City of St. Helens

RESOLUTION NO. 1725

A RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH WATER, SEWER AND STORM DRAINAGE UTILITY RATES

WHEREAS, pursuant to St. Helens Municipal Code Title 13, Water, Sewer and Storm Drainage Utility rates and charges are to be established by resolution; and

WHEREAS, on November 4, 2015, a public forum was held by the City Council to provide information about the proposed schedule for utility rate increases; and

WHEREAS, the Council deliberated on November 4, 2015.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY OF ST. HELENS RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The water, sewer and storm drainage utility rates and charges set forth in Exhibits 1, 2, 3 and 4, attached hereto and made a part thereof by this reference, are hereby adopted.

Section 2. This Resolution implements increases effective for the first full billing cycle on or after December 1, 2015.

Section 3. This Resolution supersedes Resolution No. 1647 and any previous resolution setting forth water, sewer and storm drainage utility rates and charges.

Approved and adopted by the City Council on November 18, 2015, by the following vote:

Ayes: Locke, Carlson, Conn, Morten, Peterson

Nays: None

Randy Peterson, Mayor

ATTEST:

Kathy Payne, City Recorder

City of St. Helens
Water, Sewer and Storm Drainage Utilities Administrative Rules

1 Deposits

A deposit of $90 will be required of customers within the City limits, and a deposit of $120 will be required of customers outside the City limits of the City of St. Helens before water, sewer, and/or storm drainge service will be provided. A customer may request a deposit refund after 12 consecutive months of not incurring any late fees on their account.

2 Utility Assistance Program

The Utility Assistance Program, formerly known as the Senior Citizen Discount, was permanently discontinued on December 4, 2013. Those customers who previously qualified and were receiving assistance prior to December 4, 2013, shall receive a fixed discount of $20 per bi-monthly billing ($10 per month) so long as they continue to meet the criteria of: age 65 or older and either own or rent and currently reside in a residence within the city limits.

3 Restoration Charge

A customer shall pay for restoration of water service when service has been discontinued under the provisions of this resolution. The customer shall pay the following service fee for restoration:

Between Hours of:	The Greater of:	
8 AM to 4 PM	$ 20.00	or actual cost of labor and materials
4 PM to 8 AM or Weekends/City holidays	$ 100.00	or actual cost of labor and materials

These charges shall not apply to new water service applications.

4 Delinquent Accounts

Upon failure to pay water charges due within the first ten days of a month, by the 15th day of the month the account shall be delinquent and a late charge of $5 shall be added, and by the 25th day of the month the account shall be assessed an additional $20 delinquent fee and water service to the customer may be turned off (dates subject to change if they fall on weekends or holidays).

5 Billing Adjustments

a Leak Adjustments

i The request must be in writing (include completed City's Water Leak Adjustment Form), completed within 30 days of billing date to which the customer wishes the adjustment to apply, and include receipts and/or 3rd party statement that leak was repaired. Due to timing of detection versus billing, adjustments may be allowed to be applied to the current billing and the immediate previous billing as well.

ii For consideration of leak adjustments, the leak must be repaired within five days of detection and/or when physical access is available, and the customer can demonstrate that they took other mitigation measures to prevent/lessen water loss until repairs were completed.

iii Measurement of water lost due to a leak - the City will use the customer's average seasonal usage for the pervious 3 years as a base consumption. If the customer does not have a complete history, then the City will utilize the average consumption for a like customer (i.e. Residential 600 cf per month) when calculating any adjustments.

iv Customers will be responsible for half of the calculated water loss due to a leak.

v The City may not consider leak adjustment requests from customers who have already received a leak adjustment in the past 18 month period.

vi Payment of excess water consumption (leak portion) may be made through a payment plan at the discretion of the utility billing specialist (based on payment/credit history). Payments can be no less than $25 per month or $50 bi-monthly.

vii Additional adjustment may be made by the City Administrator and/or their delegate if a hardship of payment can be determined.

c Meter reading errors

i Misread meter - If meter is misread during the monthly or bi-monthly reading cycle, upon detection the City will suspend any/all late fees and immediately re-read the meter and bill accordingly.

ii If testing a customer's meter results in detection of under/over billing, then that ratio of discrepancy may be applied on bills retroactively for a 12 month period. The City Administrator has the discretion to modify as they may deem reasonable.

iii If an account is discovered to be billed incorrectly due to setup error on the City's part, then no retroactivity of billing will be applied unless a credit is due to the customer. If incorrectly billed and/or failure to bill is due to incorrect or falsified information provided by the customer and/or failure to notify the City based on Municipal Code, then the City may retroactively apply the billing corrections for up to a 36 month period.

d Unexplained usage

It may be determined that a customer has experienced an unexplained increase in usage and is eligible for a one time adjustment at the discretion of the City Administrator.

e If a customer wishes to dispute a billing adjustment made by the City, they have 30 days from the initial determination of request to provide their dispute in writing which will be further considered by the City Administrator and/or City Council.

6 Temporary Services for new construction

The City may allow temporary service during construction of a new structure needing Water, Sewer and/or Storm drainage. The contractor will be required to complete an application for services, pay a one time fixed charge of $25, a deposit as stipulated in section 1 of this exhibit, and will be billed based on defined customer classifications derived at time of application.

City of St. Helens
Water Utility Rates and Charges

Billings for customers include two components: Fixed rate and a volume charge for the amount consumed. The two components are added together to compute an invoice for each customer. Fixed rates are based on costs associated with maintaining/reading meters and the costs associated with billing and are charged per connection to the water system. Volume rates are based on the customer class for each 100 cubic feet (ccf) of water. The following table lists rates for customers within the City of St. Helens, retail customers outside the City of St. Helens, and wholesale customers.

City of St. Helens rates and charges are effective for billing cycles starting on or after dates shown below. Rates and charges shall be applied to all accounts on a monthly or bi-monthly basis. Certain designated accounts that may be deemed "Large Volume" accounts are billed monthly.

	Inside City of St. Helens	Outside City of St. Helens
Effective Date:	12/1/2015	12/1/2015
Water Utility Rate Components		
1 Fixed Rate		
Monthly billings	$ 10.4800	$ 20.9600
Bi-monthly billings	20.9600	41.9200
2 Volume Rate (by Customer Class per 100 Cu.ft.)		
Residential	5.2190	10.4380
Multifamily:		
Duplex	5.0380	10.0750
Apartments	4.9370	9.8735
Commercial/Industrial	4.2320	8.4630
Wholesale		
Columbia City		3.1540

3 Outside the City limits of the City of St. Helens

a Except as indicated in the Enterprise Zone Ordinance No. 2500, all properties outside the city limits shall be charged rates identified above.

b Application for new service connection outside the city limits for surplus city water shall be reviewed by the Public Works Director and the City Council for facilities planning. Such application shall not be approved by the City Council unless the necessary size of main is extended to serve anticipated growth in the relevant area of the City's Urban Growth Boundary.

c No Connection for new service outside the city limits for City water shall be installed unless a consent to annex is submitted to the Planning Department and an outside City water user agreement is signed and received by the City Administrator.

4 Hydrant Meter

Any customer who receives a permit for a hydrant meter shall pay a deposit of $200, and shall pay Commercial/Industrial rates for such water usage. Such customer shall also pay a monthly rental fee for the meter of $25 per month, or portion thereof. Meters must be returned every 12 months for assessment of condition, meter reading and billing of usage.

5 Water Testing Charges

Upon request by a City water customer, the City will provide testing for total coliform and fecal coliform. The City shall charge the customer $45 for such test. This charge also applies to construction requests for the same test on new pipelines.

6 Meter testing

A customer may request the meter providing water service to their property be tested for accuracy. The test will require the following deposits to be collected before testing:

Meter sizes	Deposits
One inch or less	$ 100
Greater than one inch and less than one and a half inches	$ 150
Greater than one and a half inches	Set by Public Works Director of Operations

If testing results show the meter was faulty, the deposits will be refunded; if not, then no refund will be given. Adjustments will be governed by exhibit 1 section 5 of this resolution.

City of St. Helens
Sewer Utility Rates and Charges

Billings for customers include two components: Fixed rate and a volume charge for the amount consumed. The two components are added together to compute an invoice for each customer. Fixed rates are based on costs associated with maintaining/reading meters and the costs associated with billing and are charged per connection to the sewer system. Volume rates are based on the customer class for each 100 cubic feet (ccf) of water or a fixed amount if no measurable consumption is available. The following table lists rates for customers within the City of St. Helens, retail customers outside the City of St. Helens, and wholesale customers.

City of St. Helens rates and charges are effective for billing cycles starting on or after dates shown below. Rates and charges shall be applied to all accounts on a monthly or bi-monthly basis. Certain designated accounts that may be deemed "Large Volume" accounts are billed monthly.

	Inside City of St. Helens	Outside City of St. Helens
Effective Date:	12/1/2015	12/1/2015
Sewer Utility Rate Components		
1 Fixed Rate		
Monthly billings	15.2700	19.0900
Bi-monthly billings	30.5300	38.1500
Residential without measurable consumption[3]		
Monthly billings	47.5500	59.4400
Bi-monthly billings	95.0800	118.8500
2 Volume Rate (by Customer Class per 100 Cu.ft.)		
Residential (Single Family)		
With measurable water consumption[4]	5.8647	7.3283
Multifamily		
Two residential sewers	6.4862	8.1103
Duplex	4.6817	5.8446
Apartments	4.5013	5.6341
Commercial[5]		
Low Strength	5.2632	6.5764
Medium Strength	6.6566	8.3208
High Strength	9.2631	11.5689
Special Strength[10]	Varies	
Wholesale		
Columbia City		1.7845

3 Without Measurable Water Consumption

a **Residential customer** accounts are considered to be "without measurable water consumption" when potable water is obtained from a well or where the customer has no personal water consumption history established during the winter averaging period within the service area. New customer accounts without history are set based on 5.50 ccf (monthly) until measurable consumption is recorded and used to establish a new rate. Customers receiving only sewer service who obtain potable water from a well or another water provider are set based on 5.50 ccf (monthly). Adjustments may be made based on actual usage during the winter averaging months of January through April if the customer can provide sufficient documentation.

b **Multifamily customer** accounts are considered to be "without measurable water consumption" when potable water is obtained from a well or where the customer has no personal water consumption history established during the winter averaging period within the service area. New customer accounts without history are set based on 5.50 ccf (monthly) per unit until measurable consumption is recorded and used to establish a new rate. Customers receiving only sewer service who obtain potable water from a well or another water provider are set based on 5.50 ccf (monthly) per unit. Adjustments may be made based on actual usage during the winter averaging months of January through April if the customer can provide sufficient documentation.

c **Commercial customer** accounts are considered to be "without measurable water consumption" when potable water is obtained from a well or where the customer has no personal water consumption history established during the winter averaging period within the service area. The sewer volume charge for new customer accounts will be calculated as follows:

i Strengths will be defined by Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) code (i.e. restaurants defined as high) or the customer may elect to have a qualified laboratory regularly monitor and provide measurements of Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD), Total Suspended Solids (TSS) and other particulates (i.e. fats, oils, and grease) to the City.

ii Volumes will be from certification of meter readings provided at the source (well or 3rd party provider). It will be the customer's responsibility to obtain and forward meter readings to the City on a regular bases. In absence of actual meter readings, the City will utilize average usage patterns from similar commercial customers with measurable usage. This method is to be an interim step until such time as a system to measure water usage can be implemented and/or received.

4 Residential Sewer Accounts - Winter Averaging

a Volume will be based on 4-month winter averaging of water consumption. The winter average period will be defined as the 4-month period starting with the first full billing cycle starting on or after December 15th of each year.

b Accounts with an average usage of less than 1 ccf of water consumption are automatically assessed at the 5.50 ccf average.

c Customers may request in writing to have the sewer based on actual usage if the property is vacant (transition between tenants, foreclosure, etc.) or consistently averages below 1 ccf per billing cycle over a 12-month period.

d The assigned average for water consumption may be appealed to the City Administrator, or his/her designee, and could be modified pending a review of the account and findings thereof.

5 Table utilized to define commercial strengths

Strength Classification	BOD (mg/l)	TSS (mg/l)
Low	0-250	0-300
Medium	251-500	301-600
High	501-1,000	601-1,200
Special[10]	1,001+	1,201+

The responsible person for paying the sewer charge may appeal the strength classification made by the City. Such appeal shall be made in writing to the City Administrator. The person appealing must provide sufficient information as to the strength of the sewer discharge created by their use so that the City Administrator or designee may evaluate the evidence and determine the proper strength of the waste generated.

6 Outside the city limits of the City of St. Helens

a Except as indicated in the Enterprise Zone Ordinance No. 2500, all properties outside the city limits shall be charged rates identified above.

b Application for new service connection outside the city limits for City sewer shall be reviewed by the Public Works Director and the City Council for facilities planning. Such application shall not be approved by the City Council unless the necessary size of main is extended to serve anticipated growth in the relevant area of the City's Urban Growth Boundary.

c No Connection for new service outside the city limits for City sewer shall be installed unless a consent to annex is submitted to the Planning Department and an outside City sewer user agreement are signed and received by the Water Department.

8 Dormant Sewer Lines

Testing of a dormant existing sewer line connected to an old building or to be reused for a new building will be at a cost of time and materials.

9 Sewage Dumping Charges

a The rates to be charged all persons, firms or corporations for septic or sewage materials derived from the pumping out or cleaning of on-site sewage disposal systems shall be $0.110 per gallon effective 12/1/15. This rate shall be determined from the signed source and quantity record to be provided by all sewage disposal service providers.

b The rate for domestic sewage from sources other than septic tanks and chemical toilets that is not concentrated by such pretreatment shall be $0.090 per gallon effective 12/1/15, with a minimum fee of one month residential sewer rate (with monthly winter average of 5.5 ccf). To qualify for this rate, sewage disposal service providers shall request a review of the sources proposed for delivery as domestic sewage by the Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent. Only material from sources approved as domestic sewage by the Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent shall receive a domestic sewage rate. Sources and quantity records must demonstrate that only material from approved domestic sewage sources are contained in sewage disposal vehicles dumped at this rate.

c A surcharge of $0.01 per gallon shall be charged for any waste generated and accepted from outside of Columbia County.

d Wastewater discharge permit rates may be modified at the discretion of the Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent based on loading and/or available plant capacity.

e The septage disposal facility will be open and readily available during normal operating hours of 8 AM and 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday. Hours of operation for weekends and City Holidays (which will be posted accordingly) will be 7 AM to 11 AM.

10 Surcharges - Special Strength

a All surcharges shall be based on total metered water supply into the premises for flow and customers will provide to the City regular testing results of samples. A sewer flow meter and alternative sampling or re-sampling at customer expense may be approved by the Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent. The concentration of each pollutant in excess of the above limits shall be used to determine the monthly surcharge for the period throughout the time interval between sample periods. The concentration shall be the average value of five consecutive daily tests taken over a period of five days, except when another period is specified by the Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent. Samples shall be taken at an approved manhole or other location determined by the Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent to be suitable so that samples will be representative.

b Surcharges - Special Strength charges are highlighted in the following table

BOD (mg/l)	TSS (mg/l)	Effective 12/1/15 Rate per ccf of usage
1,001-2,000	1,201-2,400	$ 12.8421
2,001-4,000	2,401-4,800	19.8997
4,001-8,000	4,801-9,600	32.8419
8,001-16,000	9,601-19,200	57.4433
16,001-32,000	19,201-38,400	106.2249

Acceptance and pricing for loads in excess of table will be at the discretion of the Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent.

The responsible person for paying the sewer charge may appeal the strength classification made by the City. Such appeal shall be made in writing to the City Administrator. The person appealing must provide sufficient information as to the strength of the sewer discharge created by their use so that the City Administrator or designee may evaluate the evidence and determine the proper strength of the waste generated.

City of St Helens
Storm Drainage Utility Rates and Charges

Billings for customers are based on amount of impervious surface for a property. The measurements are broken down into components of single family units or equivalent residential units.

City of St. Helens rates and charges are effective for billing cycles starting on or after dates shown below. Rates and charges shall be applied to all accounts on a monthly or bi-monthly basis. Certain designated accounts that may be deemed "Large Volume" accounts are billed monthly.

	Monthly	Bi-monthly
Effective Date:	12/1/2015	12/1/2015
Storm Drainage Utility Rates		
1 Residential	10.98	21.96
2 Commercial	10.98	21.96
3 Industrial	10.98	21.96
4 All other uses As defined	10.98	21.96