

# THE UTILITY CONNECTION

News and information for Prosper's Utility Customers

For more information call Utility Billing at 972-346-2640

Oct-Nov (2) 2017

## Water and wastewater rates to increase

### *Rate adjustment designed to maintain solvency of Utility Fund*

**D**ue to the rising costs of purchasing water from our supplier, as well as the costs associated with storing and distributing water to residences and businesses, the rates for both of these services increases on Oct. 1 for the next three years.

Water purchased by the Town from the North Texas Municipal Water District is increasing in cost annually, and those increases are necessarily passed along to consumers. This is the case because the Utility Fund, a separate mechanism for financing water, wastewater and solid waste, is self-sustaining. The Utility Fund is kept solvent by ensuring that charges related to utility service for all customers is equal to the cost of those services. As those costs rise or fall, so do the charges.

The Council and staff have been extremely diligent in attempting to keep those costs as low as possible, but the cost of purchasing water and the costs associated with distributing that water to homes and businesses continue to rise. As a result of a comprehensive study on water and wastewater rates, the Town Council has approved the first rate adjustment since 2012.

For customers with a one-inch meter, which is the majority of customers, the minimum monthly service charge rises from the 2016 rate of \$18.54 to \$19.85 starting on Oct. 1, 2017; \$21.25 starting on Oct. 1, 2018; and \$23.20 starting on Oct. 1, 2019. Customers with larger meters will experience similar increases.

As for water utilization charges, called volumetric charges, those rates will also rise. As an average, the rate for 0-10,000 gallons rises from the 2016 rate of 3.74 to \$4 starting Oct. 1, 2017; \$4.28 starting on Oct. 1, 2018; and \$4.67 starting on Oct. 1, 2019. Using the same starting dates, the rates for 10,001 to 40,000 gallons go from the 2016 cost of \$5.60 to \$5.99, \$6.41; and \$6.99. Higher volumetric rates show similar increases.

Monthly charges for wastewater service will also increase over the next three years. These rates will rise from the 2016 rate of \$22.63 to \$25.35 starting on Oct. 1, 2017; \$28.40 starting on Oct. 1, 2018; and \$31.85 starting on Oct. 1, 2019. The cost per 1,000 gallons of wastewater increase from the 2016 rate of \$3.52 to \$4.15; \$4.90; and \$5.78 over the next three years.

Rates for commercial customers are also seeing an increase each of the next three years.

Unfortunately, the rate adjustments are unavoidable, as the Utility Fund must operate "in the black," that is, without carrying debt or deferring debt to later years. This is the case with all self-sustaining funds, of which virtually every Utility Fund-type mechanism is based.

To review the new rates, please visit Utility Billing at [www.prospertx.gov](http://www.prospertx.gov).

## Winter averaging sets wastewater charges

*Water metered from Nov. 15 to Feb. 15 measured to set next year's monthly sewer charges*

**H**ave you ever wondered how water utilities calculate how much to charge for sewer or wastewater services? Some customers may not be aware of the process that determines how much the Town of Prosper charges for sewer service.

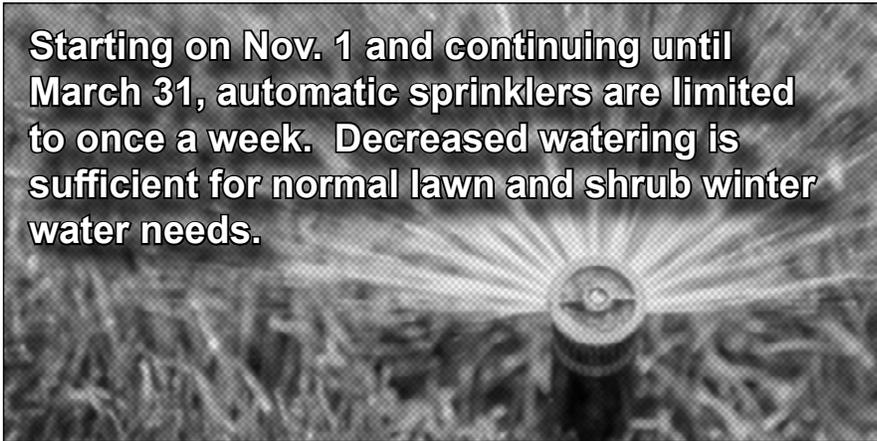
The process is actually quite simple. The first thing to understand is that the calculation process is done every year. And, while many households may not see a big change from year to year, some homes may actually see a drop or rise in the wastewater charge because of what happens in the winter.

The winter season is important only because that's when the Town monitors water use, and bases sewer charges on the amount of water being used during that period. There's no accurate way to measure how much water goes into the various drains, sinks, toilets, showers or baths in a home. So, the way to get an accurate reading is to monitor the water use.

The reason this is done during the wintertime is because the Town, and virtually all other water and sewer utilities, figure that the vast majority of your water use in the winter is used inside the home, and thus discharged into the sewer lines, since most homes will severely curtail or eliminate their outdoor irrigation in the winter.

So, why would the wastewater charge change from year to year? If the number of people in the home increases or decreases throughout the year, presumably the amount of water used during the winter will either go up or down. Or, a leaky faucet in the winter will not only drive the monthly cost of water up, it will show up in the sewer charges during the following year. Also, washing half loads in the clothes or dish washer may affect the sewer charge as well.

Starting on Nov. 15 until the end of February, be mindful that your water usage determines your sewer charges for the following year.



**Starting on Nov. 1 and continuing until March 31, automatic sprinklers are limited to once a week. Decreased watering is sufficient for normal lawn and shrub winter water needs.**