

## Bend City Council approves utility rate increases

*by Bend\_Weekly\_News\_Sources*

On Wednesday, the Bend City Council approved the City's proposed water and sewer rate increases. Effective July 1, 2007, water rates will increase 5.5% and wastewater rates will increase 6.0% in the City of Bend. This means the monthly residential fee will increase an average of \$1.38 (winter months) and \$2.75 (summer months) for water and increase an average of \$1.43 for sewer, bringing the monthly residential sewer charge to \$25.18. The rate changes will enable the Public Works Department to continue to maintain its high quality service, meet the obligations of state and federal environmental requirements, and cover rising operating costs due to added inflation and aging infrastructure replacements. In addition, a new \$4.00 per month stormwater fee will be added to the residential utility bill statements beginning July 1. Non-single residential properties will also pay a monthly fee based on the amount of impervious surface area on the specific property. If a homeowner does not currently receive water or sewer services from the City of Bend, that homeowner will receive a utility bill for the stormwater fee on a quarterly basis. Stormwater runoff pollution prevention and local flooding prevention programs will be funded through this fee. Specifically, the fee will fund the planning, engineering, construction, operation and maintenance of drainage facilities, as well as fund flood management and water quality projects. Through stormwater protection and planning, the City is taking a long-term approach to protecting the health of the area's rivers, aquifers, and other water sources. The City offers sewer and stormwater utility fee reductions for eligible senior citizens age 62 or older and for persons with disabilities. To find out more about this program or their monthly utility charges, the public may call (541) 388-5515.

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