

## Consultant to discuss Manila rate hikes

Jessie Faulkner/The Time-Standard

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MANILA -- It's no secret that the community services district has been contemplating an increase in its water and sewer rates.

LACO Associates, the district's consultant, will present details of its water and wastewater rate studies at a special board meeting today at 6:30 p. m. in the Manila Community Center.

The proposed new rates are designed to cover operating costs and build up reserves for future equipment replacement.

The consultant is proposing a \$22.98 increase in the monthly sewer rate from the current \$28.75 to the recommended \$51.73. For water, the suggested increase more than doubles the base rate price from the current \$15.75 to the recommended \$32.94. That does not include the current consumption fee of 22 cents per hundred cubic feet -- with the current average fee at \$1.81 per month.

The recommended rate hike proposes charging 73 cents per hundred cubic feet, which is expected to average \$6.05 per month. The recommended new average water rate would total \$38.99.

LACO Associates engineer Leonard M. Osborne, who prepared the studies and will make tonight's presentation, said Wednesday that the intent of recommendations is to cover the district's operating costs and begin to build savings for future equipment replacement.

Osborne said his presentation will include background information on the operations, the assumptions made to develop those recommendations and explain why the rate increases are needed.

Among the dominant reasons for the suggested water rate increase are increasing operational costs, increasing wholesale water costs and reserve funds for future equipment replacements.

For the recommended sewer rate increase, the rationale is nearly identical: expected increases in operational costs as well as the need to develop operational and capital improvement reserves, according to the wastewater rates study report.

If You Go:

What: Manila Community Services District board of directors special meeting

Where: Manila Community Center, 1611 Peninsula Drive

When: 6:30 tonight

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