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LWD adopts modest rate increase to support capital projects

LITTLETON – The Water Department has adopted a 10 percent rate increase for most customer classes, which are based on usage, to help fund capital improvement project on town's water system, according to General Manager Savas Danos, who added that the increase is effective immediately. Higher use customers – those who use in excess of 5,000 cubic feet of water per quarter – will see a 20 percent increase.

A recent survey of similar sized water systems with treatment plants showed Littleton to be at the low end of water rates. Even with this increase, Littleton will retain its position as one of the lowest cost water providers in the region, Danos said.

For residential customers at the base rate (0-2,500 cubic feet), the rate increases from 2.95 cents to 3.25 cents per cubic foot of water. Customers at the next level of usage (2,501-5,000 cubic feet) will see an increase from 3.03 to 3.33 cents per cubic foot. For customers at the next level (5,001 - 7,500 cubic feet), the rate increases from 3.31 to 3.97 cents per cubic foot. Customers using 7,501 to 10,000 cubic feet per quarter will see and increase from 3.39 to 4.07 cents. Those using in excess of 10,000

cubic feet will be billed at a rate of 4.176 cents per cubic foot. For all other customer classes, the rate rises from 3.26 cents to 3.91 cents per cubic foot of water.

LWD's incremental rate structure is designed to encourage greater water conservation, since customers who use less water pay lower rates.

While water rates have remained relatively stable, with only modest increases over the last few years, a number of factors necessitates this latest increase, according to Danos. The state grant for the treatment plant has expired, which forces the department to make up the \$183,000 annual amount with greater revenues. Danos added that future capital projects, most notably well and treatment plant maintenance, would require a bond. "We need to generate these revenues in support of our capital requirements," Danos said, adding that the improvements "are essential to maintaining the integrity of our system."

Danos explained that for a household of four, whose average usage is around 2300 cubic feet (17,250 gallons) per quarter, and whose bill is normally about \$67, this increase means an additional \$8 per quarter.

"We are proud of our tradition of supplying drinking water of the highest quality at the greatest value and we remain committed to delivering outstanding customer service," Danos said of the department.

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