

July 2016



Doña Ana Mutual Domestic Water Consumers Association

Change in Rate Structures

The Board of Directors recently held a work session and three public meetings to discuss possible changes to the current water and wastewater rate structure. These public meetings included a presentation by our Rate Analyst Carl Brown from Getting Great Rates and questions from the public. The Board of Directors then met on Thursday June 2, 2016 at their regularly scheduled meeting where they adopted a resolution passing the new rate structure proposed by Mr. Brown. The board passed the new structure with a start date of August 1, 2016.

The major changes in the water rate structure in-

cludes changing from 8 tiers of usage to 4 tiers of usage and a base rate that is based on meter size and not the total consumption for the month. Also, under the new rate structure users will be billed for actual usage and the usage will not be rounded up to the next 1,000 gallons.

Some of the same changes occurred with the wastewater rates. The base rate will be base on the water meter size. The Association will still use the winter month averaging system for residential accounts. However, we will not round the usage to the next 1,000 gallons when billing for wastewater. The new wastewater rates only apply to wastewater cus-

tomers who the Association provides some type of collection or treatment for.

The Board of Directors is tasked with ensuring that the Association can meet its yearly budget requirements and also establish reserve levels to adequately plan for the future of the Association. The Board has done a good job of keeping expenses low and therefore has not changed the rate structure since 2008.

Should you have questions regarding the new rate structure please contact one of our customer service representatives at (575) 526-3491 Option 1.

New Base Rates		
Meter Size	Water	Wastewater
3/4 inch	\$17.10	\$15.47
1 inch	\$24.13	\$16.05
1.5 inch	\$35.83	\$17.03
2 inch	\$87.34	\$21.33
3 inch	\$216.12	\$32.07
4 inch	\$363.62	\$44.37

New Water Rates	
Gallons	Rate per 1,000
0-4,999	\$2.02
5,000-9,999	\$2.69
10,000-19,999	\$3.59
20,000+	\$4.79

New Wastewater Rates	
Gallons	Rate per 1,000
All	\$3.32

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Message from the Board President

I have recently had numerous reports of Members becoming irate and even abusive with our staff, personnel who are employees of our contractors and subcontractors, and volunteers who were recruited to assist in reminding Members of upcoming Membership meetings. This is totally unacceptable! Our staff has strict instructions to deal with our Members calmly, politely, professionally, and courteously with the expectation that Members will reciprocate. Any issue can be much more readily resolved by calm,

rational communication between representatives of the Association and Members.

Whenever an issue cannot be resolved by a staff member, please escalate it to their supervisor. If that does not resolve the issue, ask for the next more senior supervisor, etc. Our staff is not employed for the purpose of being subjected to verbal abuse; and have been instructed to inform any Member who subjects them to such conduct to calmly and politely inform the offender that such conduct is unaccepta-

ble and if it is not terminated immediately, the contact will be terminated. Issues must be dealt with at the proper level, ie. Management Staff or ultimately the Board of Directors. Abuse of our staff, contractor personnel, and/or volunteers is not condoned and will not be tolerated!

Jim Melton
Board President

New Tanks and Water System Improvements

Recently the Association opened bids for the Picacho Hills Water Tanks and Water Line Project. There were a total of seven bidders for the project, which lead to very competitive bid prices. The low bidder on the project was General Hydronic's out of Alamogordo with a bid of roughly \$1.9 million. The contractor has completed several jobs in southern New Mexico for Holloman Air Force Base, City of Alamogordo, and Mescalero.

This project will consist of the installation of two new water tanks totaling 1.8 million gallons of storage capacity, an additional water source with the connec-

tion of Well #15 to the system, and installation of new water lines in multiple locations. The additional water lines will be installed along Anthem Road, Barcelona Ridge, and Picacho Mountain Loop. This project will also include several new pressure reducing valves (PRV's) in various locations and also rehab existing PRVs. The PRVs are needed in order to reduce the pressure that will be created by building the new water tanks at a much higher elevation than the current tank. Construction is scheduled to begin on July 11, 2016.

We ask if you are driving in the area that you watch for construction workers and slow down when they are working along the road. There will be traffic control in place so please watch for signage and orange barrels.

As always should you have any questions regarding this project or anything that the Association is involved in please contact our office.

New Employee

We would like to welcome the newest member of our team, Stephanie Nelson. Stephanie joined our accounting department in late April.

Stephanie joins our team after spending time working in management in the fast food industry. She gained excellent customer service skills while processing various types of insurance claim and added to her list of skills when she worked in the accounting department for a local construction company. She brings to our

team 10+ years in customer services, 3+ years in management and accounting.

Stephanie was born and raised in Albuquerque, NM. After graduation she moved to Las Cruces where she enrolled in the Business College at New Mexico State University. Stephanie is currently pursuing a Bachelors in General Business.



Routine Bac-T Sample Collection

What is a Bac-T? Simply, it is a **Bacteriological water analysis**, a method of analyzing water to estimate the numbers of the bacteria present and, if needed, to find out what sort of bacteria they are. This process is used, for example, to routinely confirm that water is safe for human consumption or that bathing and recreational waters are safe to use.

Here at Doña Ana MDWCA, we strive to uphold the number one responsibility of this Water System, this is as follows: To provide safe and reliable drinking water to our consumers. In the undertaking of this task we have to routinely sample water throughout the system in a methodical manner to prove that we have safe and bacteria free water.

We adhere to the Sampling Site Plan that

has been determined, by New Mexico Environment Department (NMED), to be the best way to collect the sample and send it to a certified lab for analysis and show proof of compliance to state and federal regulators. NMED has deter-



"Confirm that water is safe for human consumption"

mined, by virtue of population, DAMDWCA needs a total of 30 different collection sites and every month we collect 10 samples which are analyzed and reported by the lab to our local Compliance Officer. Each month the collection site is changed to the next batch of ten sites, and the sites cycles in this manner every month.

Valley and Taylor Water System Improvements

Doña Ana Mutual Domestic Water Consumers Association has begun the design of the next phase of the water transmission line. This phase will include approximately 23,800 LF of 18-inch PVC water line along North Valley Drive (between Engler & Taylor Road), Doña Ana Road (between Taylor & Dona Ana School Road), and Taylor Road (between Valley and Elks).

Souder Miller & Associates is currently finalizing the surveying data and has started the preliminary design for the project. The project is scheduled to begin construction in Fall 2016.

The engineering estimate for the project is \$3.1 million which includes all Engineering fees and construction costs. This project will be paid for through left over

funding through the Water Trust Board. The Association has been very fortunate to receive excellent bids for several of our large construction project which resulted in almost \$3 million dollars in funding for this project.

Payment Options and Billing Update

The Association would like to thank our customers for your patience as we continue to try and improved our services for you.

We have taken steps to ensure paying your billing statement is easier as we now provided a perforated statement as well as a return envelope. We also offer a number of payment options in addition to



the standard method of mailing a payment to our office. One option is an automatic draft with either your checking account or credit card. We also offer payments over the phone, in person, on our website, or dropped at one of our three locations with payment drop boxes. For more information regarding our payment options please visit our web-

site at www.dawater.org.

Some of our members may have noticed that they are receiving a duplicate copy of their tenants billing statement. The Association has begun utilizing this duplicate feature to ensure that property owners are aware of any issues that have occurred or may occur in the future since the property owner is ultimately responsible for any unpaid balance.

Wastewater Survey

The Association has been in the process of actively trying to secure funding to expand wastewater services outside of the Village of Dona Ana. The first area scheduled to start collecting wastewater is in the San Ysidro area, which is north of the City limits in the El Camino Real and Dona Ana Road area (Southeast Collection Project). However, we would like to gauge the interest of the public regarding their feelings of having a sewer system to connect to. The connection to the system would not be mandatory, strictly

optional. In preparation for the Southeast Collection System Project the Association was able to finalize a permanent agreement with the City of Las Cruces. The agreement provides treatment for wastewater collection by Dona Ana MDWCA. This agreement allows the Association to focus on expanding sewer collection service in the area without having to construct a wastewater treatment plant. This also allows the Association to concentrate on seeking funding for

collection systems rather than for treatment facilities.

If you would like to participate in the survey please visit our website site at www.dawater.org, the survey is located on the home page. The survey only contains eight questions and we appreciate your input!

Should you have any questions regarding the survey please contact one of our customer service representatives.

Upcoming Projects (Fairview Phase II & WW Fencing)

We have a couple of projects that will begin the construction phase within the next 6 months.

Recently we have had several issues with someone breaking into our wastewater plant in Picacho Hills. The vandals have been turning aspects of the plan off and affecting the plants ability to properly treat the wastewater. The vandals have been climbing over the current fencing around the wastewater plant in order to gain access to the plant. If you see any one entering one of the utility facilities and they do not seem to belong please contact us immediately. You can call our

office during regular business hours at (575) 526-3491 or our on call operator after hours at (575) 644-4027.

Tampering with a public utility is federal crime!

However, due to the multiple breeches in security the Association will be building a new fence around the wastewater plant sooner than expected. We expect the new fence should be under construction starting in September 2016.

The second project that will be starting construction is Fairview Phase II. This project will connect all four of our sys-

tems together. The project will install a 12 inch water line from the corner of Shalem Colony Trail to Picacho Hills Drive and connect into the existing Picacho Hills system near the Pueblo Garden Subdivision. The project is currently in the design phase and will not begin construction phase until late Fall 2016. It provides a secondary source of water for the Fairview Estate system. The Fairview Phase II project will be paid for through a grant through the New Mexico Colonias Infrastructure Fund.

Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan

The Association submits an infrastructure capital improvement plan (ICIP) each year to the New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration. The ICIP is a plan that helps entities establish planning priorities for potential future projects. It is important for local government entities to establish a plan that helps them fund and develop infrastructure at a pace that sustains their activities.

The 2018—2022 ICIP includes the following top 5 projects for Dona Ana MDWCA:

1. Southeast Collection System
2. Via Norte Water System Improvement Project
3. Sewer Line Improvement in Picacho Hills Arroyo
4. Westwind Water System Improvement Project
5. Riverwalk Water System Improvement Project

If you would like to obtain a complete list of all of the projects that were included in the current ICIP plan please visit our website www.dawater.org. You can also find the past two years ICIP on the same website. If you have a project that you would like to have included in the ICIP for next year please contact our office and we would be happy to discuss your proposed project.

Ray Ponteri—District 5



In January 2016 members in District 5 elected a new board member for their district. They elected Ray Ponteri.

Mr. Ray Ponteri has spent most of his life in the Las Cruces and El Paso area. Born and raised in the New York City area, he served in the USAF, and received his BSBA in Marketing from Bryant University before moving to El Paso as a VISTA Volunteer in 1979 where he worked in the housing projects assisting tenets in operating food buying clubs.

In 1987 he received his Masters of Accountancy from UTEP and worked for

the El Paso Water Utilities as an accountant before accepting a position as President/CEO of El Paso Employees Federal Credit Union. Under Mr. Ponteri's leadership the Credit Union grew to 300 million dollars with over 40,000 members and 130 employees. Mr. Ponteri has served on various city and county boards including El Paso Water Utilities Advisory Board which reviewed proposed rate increases and water conservation plans for the Utility. In 2010 Mr. Ponteri retired from the Credit Union and moved to the Picacho Hills area of Las Cruces .

Consumer Confidence Reports

A Consumer Confidence Report (CCR), which can be called an annual water quality report or a drinking water quality report, provides information on your local drinking water quality. Every community water supplier must provide an annual report by July 1 of each year to its customers, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Consumer Confidence Report Rule. You may receive this by mail or electronically.

Most public water suppliers are required to provide CCRs annually to their customers. People who do not pay their own water bills, such as those who live in apartments or condos or rent houses, may need to contact a building manager for more information or check online to see if their CCR has been posted.

Knowing your water source is important because germs, chemicals, and minerals—known as "contaminants"—may exist at varying levels, depending on the source.

Keep in mind that while some things listed as "contaminants" in your CCR can be harmful to your health, others can be good for you, such as the appropriate amount of a disinfectant that keeps your water safe from germs. For example, if your local water system adds chlorine or chloramine to protect you from germs in the water, it will be listed as a contaminant, even though these chemicals are added to kill germs and protect your health. Knowing what levels of contaminants are in your water source—and whether those contaminants are actually harmful—can help you to determine whether or not you should take additional precautions in protecting yourself and your family from potential water-related illnesses.

The EPA determines what levels of contaminants are safe to have in your water, and your CCR will show you whether or not your water source has a higher level of contaminants than recommended. It is most important to pay attention to wheth-

er contaminant levels are marked as "violated," meaning the level is higher than EPA allows. This will be the best indication of how the contaminants in your water source might affect your health.

All CCRs are required to provide general information on Cryptosporidium a parasite that can cause a severe diarrheal illness, because it can be dangerous for persons with severely weakened immune systems, even at low levels. It is also very tolerant of chlorine disinfection. This section exists on every CCR and **does not** necessarily indicate the presence of Cryptosporidium in your drinking water.

<http://www.dawater.org/#!/water-quality/c1r2u>

Board of Director Vacancy

Currently the Board of Directors has a vacancy on the Board. They are in need of someone to serve in the District 3 Representative seat. If you have property with a membership located in District 3

and would be interested in serving on the board of Directors please submit a letter of interest to Jennifer Horton, Executive Director.

If you are interested in serving you must be willing to commit roughly 6 hours a month to the Board of Directors.



**DOÑA ANA MUTUAL
DOMESTIC WATER
CONSUMERS
ASSOCIATION**

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*We are committed to provide quality water
and sanitation services for members of our
community.*

Doña Ana Mutual Domestic Water Consumers Association was established in 1974 with 76 connections supplied by a single well. We have since grown to over 5,400 water connections and 800 waste water connections and serving over 15,000 people.

Doña Ana MDWCA is a political subdivision of the State of New Mexico and is considered a membership association who provides water and wastewater services. We are the largest Mutual Domestic in the State of New Mexico. Our staff takes pride in providing the best water and waste water services.

Calendar of Events

Board Meetings

July 7, 2016
July 21, 2016
August 4, 2016
August 18, 2016
September 1, 2016
September 15, 2016

All Board Meetings begin at 9:00am

Closures

July 4, 2016
September 5, 2016

Completed Projects

The Association has had a number of projects under construction the past 12 months and a number of those projects have been completed recently.

The Association recently drilled a replacement well in the Radium Springs area. The well is now complete and we should be receiving the final water quality reports in the next few weeks which are required before the well is allowed to pump in the system. The new well was drilled to a depth of 250' to replace the existing 100' well. The additional well will assist in the summer months to provide a more reliable water source, larger water capacity, as well as eliminating the current issues that are a result of the declining water table.

The second project that was completed was the first round of upgrades to the Picacho Hills Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) which will improve the treated wastewater that is reused at the golf course. Morrow Enterprises constructed and installed a bar screen to catch larger objects such as rags, plastic bottles, and other solids from entering the treatment plant. This replaced the existing method which included using plastic

milk. The filtration at the beginning of the plant is vital to the plant operating efficiently and correctly. This will reduce the damage to valves, pumps, and other appurtenances. The new screen also creates a more sanitary working condition for the staff. The project was completed June 24, 2016.

The third project completed is the upgrades to the Fairview Water System constructed by Morrow Enterprises. This project addressed a number of issues in the Fairview Area. The project installed new water mains which now allow the residence in the area to have fire flow and adequate pressure for every day needs. The project also installed a connection to the Fairview System from the Dona Ana System which provides a more reliable water source to the system. This also helps accomplish part of the long term goal of the Association which is to interconnect all four systems. The interconnection allows for stability and reliability in all of the areas that the Association serves.

The next completed project was the Railroad Crossing Project which was completed by Burn Construction. The project

consisted of four railroad crossings to connect waterlines in various locations, which reduces the number of dead-end lines in the water system.

The SCADA project is the final project that was recently completed. The upgrades to the SCADA system throughout the service area will allow all of the water systems to communicate better which allows the staff to have better controls and monitoring of the system. The project also included automatic flushing valves at each well site which helps distribute cleaner water into the distribution system. The upgraded system will also allow us to better monitor the water tables in the area to address any issues that may arise from the declining water table.

