

## New Rate Structure Planned for 2010

As we went to publishing this newsletter our Board of Directors were getting ready to pass a Resolution of Intent to set new rates and a new rate structure for our central system customers. The new rates will affect everyone who receives this newsletter. The details of the new rates were sent in letters to your homes in January, and have been advertised in the *Loudoun Times-Mirror*, the *Leesburg Today*, and at our website. A Public Hearing is scheduled for February and the new rates would go into effect April 1, 2010.

Over the last 20 years, we have kept rates fairly static. In 2006, we had our first rate increase in 15 years. The increase occurred over three years, and resulted in customers paying an average of \$8 more per quarterly bill. It was necessary to adjust water rates at that time to keep pace with the rising cost of water we purchase from our providers.

This current rate increase is also needed to keep pace with the rising cost of purchased water, as well as higher operating costs for the Broad Run Water Reclamation Facility, which is our state-of-the-art wastewater plant that treats wastewater to the limits of technology. A third factor influencing the rate increase is higher fuel prices. Just as rising fuel prices have affected your personal electricity bills and gas prices, they have increased our operating expenses as well.

As a revenue-neutral agency, our income from you must equal our expenses. When expenses increase, so must our income.

Before raising rates, however, we have made many efforts to reduce our expenses. As stewards of public money, we have always operated on a conservative budget. But we needed to find ways to trim it further. Two areas of focus were our personnel expenses and capital costs. We scrutinized all staffing and salary needs and reorganized staff to streamline job duties. We also cut capital spending by about 40% over the last two years.

We're doing what we can to keep expenses down, but in order to preserve our financial position today and in the future, this increase is needed. We invite you to call or write and ask us any questions you have that could help explain the new rate structure or the need for the increase further. You may reach us by phone at 571.291.7880; by web; or by mail, write Attn: GM, Loudoun Water, PO Box 4000, Ashburn, VA 20146.

### ATTEND A LOUDOUN WATER BOARD MEETING

You are always welcome to attend our monthly Board meetings, usually held the second Thursday of each month at 3:00pm in the Boardroom of our Administration office at 44865 Loudoun Water Way, Ashburn, VA 20147.

## Winter Tips for Your Meters



Brrr, it's cold outside. During the winter season abnormally cold temperatures may cause freezing of water mains, meters and/or the service lines to your home. You can help prevent frozen meters and pipes by using the tips from the fall News-Leak (available online at our website, [www.loudounwater.org](http://www.loudounwater.org)) or by contacting us if you notice any meter lids that appear loose or improperly sealed. Loose meter lids can be a safety hazard and could allow cold air to seep in and possibly freeze the meter. You can report loose or broken meter lids by calling Customer Service at 571.291.7880.

Visit [www.loudounwater.org](http://www.loudounwater.org), for more information.

### WATER

#### FUN FACT #4

Insulate pipes in unheated spaces. Hardware/building supply stores carry insulation designed to keep pipes in these areas from freezing.

# NEWS Leak

## Don't Miss Out. Sign Up for NewsLeak Online

Beginning in April, the NewsLeak will only be available by email to customers who subscribe to it. This move answers your request and saves us money. We've heard from many customers who said they would prefer an email newsletter. The majority of responses from our survey last summer mirrored those sentiments. We'd like to thank those who called or wrote to say how much you enjoy reading this bill stuffer. That means a lot to us to know you found our tips and articles helpful. We hope you continue to enjoy the new electronic format. Please visit our website at [www.loudounwater.org](http://www.loudounwater.org) to sign up for the email newsletter. Any special messages can still be found on your bill printed under Important Notice.

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# Water You Thinking?®

We know the last thing on your mind right now is your lawn, but we're thinking of it. When the weather warms up and you begin spring maintenance/installation on your irrigation system, make sure you use a contractor that's Loudoun Water Preferred.

That way, you can be sure your system is well designed, it protects your water supply from backflow, it saves water, and saves you money.

[www.loudounwater.org/Residential-Customers/Loudoun-Water-Preferred](http://www.loudounwater.org/Residential-Customers/Loudoun-Water-Preferred)

