

RE: Water rate increases public hearing scheduled for Friday, May 10

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To:WaterRateBoard <waterrateboard@Phila.gov>

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Hello,

I am writing in reference to the public hearing scheduled regarding water rate increases. Given that the meeting is scheduled in the middle of a work day, I am submitting the following in writing per instructions: Members of the public can also submit written comments by emailing WaterRateBoard@phila.gov

The increase for non TAP-R households is substantial - and far outpaces both inflation and wage growth. Thus, this is putting undue pressure on those residential customers who are not part of the program.

While I understand the necessity for the program, I am wondering what type of monitoring, education and/or restrictions are placed on those who are part of the TAP-R program so that residential members who are not part of the program are not constantly hit with such high increases.

For instance:

Is there any monitoring of water usage for households that are part of the TAP-R program? And, if it shows substantial water use, does someone reach out with educational materials on limiting water used? What about installing low flow toilets and faucets?

Seems like we need to do something to be a bit more equitable here - and not simply allow for any excesses to be passed on to residential customers who are already paying high rates - not only for water for but all city services and associated taxes.

Looking forward to hearing your response.

Sincerely,
Shara

Per the notice, the reason for the increase is:

Reason for TAP-R Adjustment

The proposed TAP-R Adjustment is needed to set the surcharge rates based upon costs expected in the next rate period, September 1, 2024, through August 31, 2025.

Customers enrolled in TAP pay a fixed amount based on their income. Bills are capped as a percentage of income and are constant each month. TAP Participants in the lowest income bracket pay a bill equivalent to 2 percent of their monthly income or a minimum of \$12/month.