



Forsyth County
Department of Communications
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**WATER AND SEWER RATE INCREASES UNDER
CONSIDERATION FOR 2009**

Public Hearing scheduled for January 8, 2009

FORSYTH COUNTY, Georgia – Forsyth County government is considering the implementation of increased water and sewer rates for 2009, to help offset projected revenue shortfalls. A Public Hearing regarding the proposed rate increases is scheduled for the January 8, 2009 Board of Commissioners meeting.

The proposed increase would change the residential water base rate from \$12 for the first 3,000 gallons to \$12 for the first 1,000 gallons. The senior citizen water base rate would change from \$9 for the first 3,000 gallons to \$9 for the first 1,000 gallons. Customers using 1,001 to 2,000 gallons monthly would pay an additional \$3.40; those using 2,001 to 3,000 gallons monthly would pay an additional \$6.80. The same tiered rates in effect now would remain in place for every additional 1,000 gallons used over 3,000 gallons.

The proposed new residential sewer base rate would be \$10; the proposed sewer base rate for commercial accounts would be \$20. In addition, accounts would be charged a usage fee in accordance with existing rates.

“The proposed water and sewer rate increases are necessary because of a decrease in revenues due to several factors including the ongoing drought, the outdoor water restrictions that remain in effect and the slowdown in development,” Chief Financial Officer Bill Thomas said. “If the rates are not increased, we are projecting a \$5 million operating loss for the Water and Sewer Department for 2009.”

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The rate increases would be considered interim, while Forsyth County awaits the completion of a rate study that will lead to development of a long-term approach. Thomas anticipates being able to present the rate study to the Board of Commissioners in the second quarter of 2009.

The Water and Sewer Department is an enterprise fund which does not utilize funding from the county's General Fund. Water and Sewer operations rely solely on user fees, and do not receive property taxes or sales tax. Water and Sewer operations are required, by accounting standards, to be self-supporting.

The Public Hearing on the proposed rate increases will be held Thursday, January 8, 2009 in Suite 220 of the County Administration Building, located at 110 E. Main St. in Cumming. The meeting begins at 5 p.m. All interested parties are invited and encouraged to attend.

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