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Schoharie Reservoir - New York City Water Supply System

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Statement of the New York City Department of Environmental Protection on Water Rate Proposal

On Friday, April 7, the New York Water Board met and proposed an average increase of \$4.48 a month for a single-family home and an average increase of \$3.80 a month per unit in a multiple-unit family home. Even if this proposed increase were to go into effect, the annual water and sewage charges for single-family home would be less than the average of 23 major cities in the United States. New Yorkers pay less than \$2 for 750 gallons of water.

Hearings about this proposed adjustment of 9.4 percent will be held around the five boroughs May 1 – 3rd.

While New York City operates the largest municipal drinking water and sewer system in the United States, it is still subject to some basic laws of economics. It takes a large amount of energy both to move clean drinking water through the five boroughs and to operate our sewage plants. Significantly higher costs for electricity and fuel are being reflected in this proposed adjustment. So, too, legally-required mandates to improve our systems and construction projects to make sure we continue to have a safe and clean water supply are resulting in higher costs and Friday's revision of earlier projections on water and sewer rates for Fiscal Year 2007.

By far the biggest problem that is causing this proposed increase are the deadbeat homeowners who don't pay their water bills. It is fundamentally unfair that under the current system of governance, hard-working families that play by the rules have to pay higher water rates to cover for their neighbors who don't pay their bills. We would like to work with the City Council to create a strong enforcement mechanism that includes water liens, so the authorities have the ability to go after delinquents who don't pay their water bills like they already go after people who don't pay their property tax bills.

MORE INFORMATION

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