

[Home](#)
Customer Services

- › [Ways to Pay Your Bill](#)
- › [Account Information](#)
- › [Customer Assistance](#)
- › [Service Line Protection Program](#)
- › [Water Rates](#)
- › [Property Managers & Trade Professionals](#)

Water Utilities

- › [Drinking Water](#)
- › [Wastewater](#)
- › [Stormwater](#)
- › [Harbor Water](#)
- › [Long Term Control Plan](#)

The Watershed

- › [Watershed Protection](#)
- › [Watershed Recreation](#)

Citywide Initiatives

- › [Regulatory Reform](#)
- › [Environmental Education](#)
- › [Conservation Programs](#)
- › [Air Pollution Control](#)
- › [Noise Codes & Complaints](#)

Business and Professionals

- › [Forms & Permits](#)
- › [Economic Development Unit](#)
- › [Doing Business with DEP](#)
- › [Asbestos Abatement](#)
- › [Construction, Demolition & Abatement](#)

About DEP

- › [Inside DEP](#)
- › [News](#)
- DEP Featured In...
- Stories from DEP
- Press Releases
- Public Notices
- Testimony & Public Comments

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Lowest Water Rate Increase in Nine Years Approved by New York City Water Board

3.35 percent change is less than half the increase anticipated

Minimum charge to be frozen for roughly 25 percent of all single-family homeowners, many of them seniors, will see no rate increase

City to cut “rent payment” to reduce rates, redirect funds to water and sewer system

The New York City Water Board today voted to approve the Department of Environmental Protection’s (DEP) proposed 3.35 percent increase in the Fiscal Year 2015 (FY15) water rate. The approved rate for FY15 represents the lowest increase in nine years and is less than half the published projection of 7.8 percent. The significant reduction was achieved through internal cost-cutting measures, refinancing higher cost debt, and by redirecting part of the excess rental payment that had been adding to ratepayers’ bills. In addition, DEP will freeze the minimum consumption charge for customers that use fewer than 100 gallons per day. As a result, roughly 25 percent of all single family homes will see no increase in their water rates. Under the new rate, a typical single-family homeowner will see an increase of less than \$3 per month and a typical multi-family unit with metered billing will see an increase of less than \$2 per month.

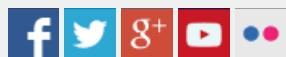
As part of the rate adoption, DEP also introduced a number of customer service improvements including:

- **Freezing the minimum charge** - DEP will freeze the minimum charge for customers who use less than 100 gallons of water each day at last year’s rate. As a result roughly 25 percent of single family homes—many of them owned by seniors—will see no water rate increase.
- **Creation of a low-income assistance program** - The City will fund a Home Water Assistance Program to assist low-income homeowners. DEP will partner with the NYC Human Resources Administration, which administers the Federal Home Energy Assistance Program, to identify homeowners who would be eligible to receive an annual credit on their water bills.
- **Expanding the leak forgiveness program** - Through the Leak Notification Program DEP has saved customers \$45 million in leak-related charges since 2011. Until now, leaks on maintainable fixtures, such as toilets and faucets, were not included in DEP’s leak forgiveness program. To encourage a quick response to those leaks, DEP will extend partial forgiveness of leak-related charges to any customer who fixes a leak that resulted in a high bill within 120 days.
- **Extending the deadline for customers to file an appeal with the Water Board** - Currently, customers have 30 days to file an appeal with the Water

More Information

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- › [Capital Projects](#)
- › [Careers at DEP](#)
- › [Environmental Reviews](#)
- › [Interagency MOUs](#)
- › [A to Z Index](#)
- › [Contact Us](#)



Board. DEP has extended that deadline to 60 days.

- **Halting the lien sale process for customers with a pending appeal** - DEP will exclude any customer from the lien sale list who has a pending appeal on the date the 90-day list is published. The change will ensure customers have a fair shot to appeal a bill they believe is unwarranted.
- **Suspending interest for customers with a “catch-up” bill after Automated Meter Reader (AMR) installation** - DEP will grant customers who are issued a “catch-up” bill after the installation of AMR 90 days to pay their bill, interest free. The change will reduce unanticipated charges on customers' bills.

For more information on DEP's rate proposal to the New York City Water Board Click [here](#).

 [All Press Releases](#)

