

**From:** [Aaron Meiggs](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Public comment on rate increase  
**Date:** Sunday, June 26, 2022 5:58:44 PM

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To whom it may concern

To add to the public discussion regarding water rate increases.

Mortgage rates are increasing, Trumps tax rate is going away, food prices are going up along with gas prices, to summarize inflation is at an all time high. Wages are not matching and in comes another public utility asking for more money to improve services, I have not seen a city of salem vehicle improving my streets water system, just to collect billing information.

Families are being squeezed at every turn. Shouldn't public utilities help the public? I will not see any improvement in my water needs. If I renovated and improve my pipes, since they are old is the city going to help me replace my pipes from my meter?

So times we have to do more with less, learn to live within your budget. I can't ask for money because I want to spend more.

I want to go on public record in opposition to a rate increase.

Kind regards  
Aaron Meiggs

**From:** [Andrew Prince](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Price Hikes?  
**Date:** Monday, June 27, 2022 8:48:56 PM

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Good Evening.

I find it funny that your flyer proposes a 5% price hike, and then the next topic says "HELP TO PAY YOUR UTILITY BILL" RIGHT UNDERNEATH!!!

So you are planning to raise hard working people's rate while you give people that don't work hard a break? What the hell are you thinking. It's like a slap in the face. So, if you need help paying your bill, which is about where I am, and my parents (fixed income) are now, Gas prices are KILLING US! You are asking hardworking folk to pay extra, yet giving lazy people a free pass? That's wrongheaded and anti-American all the way around.

HELL NO to a price hike during a recession, and not one penny of my fees better go to lazy welfare folks that don't want to work!

How insulting to propose a rate hike and then the next paragraph on the flyer offer assistance for bills.

NO  
NO  
NO

Don't raise my prices until you stop giving lazy people MY money to help pay theirs!

Broke as it is,

Prince Family

July 7, 2022

Reference: Proposed Rate Increases  
for City of Salem Utility Customers

Bruce Carmichael  
5937 Blue River Dr. SE  
Salem, OR. 97306

City of Salem  
City Recorder's Office  
555 Liberty Street SE, Room 225  
Salem, Or. 97301

Dear Sir,

Please find, below, my comments concerning the proposed Utility Rate Increases. Please include these in the hearing.

- ① I am in favor of and would vote for an audit of the City of Salem Utility operations. This audit should be performed by an independent auditing firm with no financial obligations to the City. The audit should detail the monies being collected by the City of Salem (Utilities) and detail how these monies are being spent.
- ② I am in favor of and would vote for ~~exp~~ exploring the privatization of the City Utility operations. I believe that this would give more value for the citizens tax dollars than the current operations.

Sincerely,

Bruce Carmichael

RECEIVED

JUL 11 2022

CITY OF SALEM  
LEGAL DEPARTMENT

**From:** [Bill Guthridge](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Cc:** [William Guthridge](#)  
**Subject:** Proposed rate increases will hurt  
**Date:** Monday, June 27, 2022 9:53:57 PM

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We do not support the proposed rate increases.

During a time of rising gas and grocery prices, the city wants to raise utility prices. This is nonsense.

This price increase will adversely affect those on fixed incomes.

Please do not add to our rising prices.

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Bradley Larios](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Response to Water Rate price hike proposal  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 28, 2022 12:33:24 PM

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Hi there. My name is Brad. I am a resident of Salem in the MiddleGrove area. I am writing today in repsonse to the proposed rate increases you are imposing. I contest this. Water is already too much and its not our job to help pay for the failing infrastructure. That was Brown's doing and whatnot. The fed approved money for infrastucture repair. Passing those costs to us is not fair. Not at that rate. You say the average household should see an estimated ~ \$10 hike in the bill. But the wastewater base cost is already agregious with no remedy to those who offset some storm water such as rain barrels and stuff. Portland does it. Why cannot we be progressive about it?

I will only support a rate hike if you support more low income assistance programs directly in house!

I want to be part of the zoom meeting too!

Take Care, Brad Larios II Oregonian, businessman, dog dad.

**From:** [Bennett Roberts](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Rate Increase  
**Date:** Sunday, July 10, 2022 9:44:42 PM

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I am writing this email to cite my problems with proposed rate increases. Since moving to Salem I am already paying more on my water bill than anywhere else in Oregon I have lived. If the proposed increase is to do repairs or improvements, I would like a list to prove what is being done. I often see this excuse given but rarely see it followed through with. Look at the conditions of our roads in Salem. As a tax paying citizen and a member of this community, I do not see the validity of a rate increase. No matter how small, when I already pay 100 plus a month for just myself in water. I was paying 60 in Clatskanie, and 50 in Forest Grove. These current rates and proposed increases I find to be unacceptable.

Bennett Roberts

1785 Plateau Dr NE Salem, OR 97305

# Cristina Marcelino-Jory

4040 Coolidge Dr. SE Salem, OR 97317

Phone 503-991-1250



June 26, 2022

City of Salem Utility Customers  
555 Liberty Street SE Room 225  
Salem, OR 97301

Attention: City Recorder's Office

Dear Sir or Madam:

I'm writing this letter today June 26, 2022 to petition the City of Salem to NOT move forward with the proposed rate increase for the water/sewer/storm water.

First and foremost, I am on a fixed income and having paid my dues all these years only to be literally taxed and fees out of my house. The local and state government should truly learn to live within a reasonable budget just like a responsible household would. In this current economic situation, we are all in I would rather see the city just maintain the status quo than to take on more projects than we can pay for.

The proposal of 5% increase is still above the average cost of living that is afforded me in my social security. To summarize total increase is 15% not 5%.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Cristina Marcelino-Jory

**From:** [noreply@cityofsalem.net](mailto:noreply@cityofsalem.net) on behalf of [towken@comcast.net](mailto:towken@comcast.net)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Contact City Recorder  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 19, 2022 6:56:20 PM  
**Attachments:** [ATT00001.bin](#)

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Your Name	Douglas Luth
Your Email	towken@comcast.net
Your Phone	5039300502
Street	4760 20th Ave S
City	Salem
State	OR
Zip	97302
Message	Re: Proposed Rate Increases I object to any further rate increases! If the City can find \$80M to rename a State Highway, give away many tax deferments, propose a \$300,000,000 bond issue of which about 25% goes to the Fire Dept and City Hall renovation, along with an unending stream of funds for the homeless (Bums) or in polite circles our "Guests" I will not support any further rate/fee increases!

This email was generated by the dynamic web forms contact us form on 7/19/2022.

**From:** [denise.martin](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Rate Increases  
**Date:** Sunday, June 26, 2022 7:30:56 PM

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We are asking that you reconsider rate increase. Salem water/sewer is almost double what we paid living in Keizer a few years back, it's too much already with inflation and hardship people are facing as every other facet of living expenses increases. Figure out a way to make your budget work. Tired of always having it passed on to the consumer - minimum wage increases on July 1 - so all the restaurants and business will be raising prices again on the consumer. It never ends.

All the housing builds going up in this city there should be enough funds coming in to tackle whatever projects need addressed.

**From:** [Helen Caswell](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Raising my water fees is unacceptable  
**Date:** Monday, June 27, 2022 10:00:22 PM

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Dear City Council,

The roughly 5% increase in water fees you are considering is far too high. It is a struggle for many to pay the current amount as it is.

Instead, I urge the city to streamline its processes and make them more efficient. Do NOT simply do the easy thing and raise fees for people like me.

Thank you,

Helen Caswell  
4190 - 12th St. SE  
Salem 97302

**From:** [Jim Vick](#)  
**To:** [cityredcorder@cityofsalem.net](mailto:cityredcorder@cityofsalem.net)  
**Subject:** Proposed Rate Increases for City of Salem Utility Customers  
**Date:** Sunday, July 3, 2022 10:30:52 AM

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Dear City Counselors:

Prior to your vote on the proposed rate increase for utility customers, please be advised that the notice recently sent to customers is intentionally misleading. The notice states that "This proposal will fund repair and replacement of aging infrastructure such as water mains, sewer pipes, and pump stations." While this may be partially true, the statement is misleading in that not all funds generated from this tax are used for the purposes stated. If you inquire further about the use with city staff, you will find that funds have been used other purposes, as a general lush fund. I have personally been involved with a sale of property to the city where the money came from this fund. This sale had no connection with utilities.

If the funds generated were used specifically for the purposes stated in the notice, a rate increase would most likely not be necessary, or at least in the amount requested.

Jim Vick 503-302-3210

**From:** [JERRY LAURA WATSON](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Proposed Water Rate increse  
**Date:** Monday, June 27, 2022 12:39:42 PM

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In these days of hipper inflation, gasoline prices that were unimageable a year ago, living on a fixed income is more and more difficult for us old guys. Now the City wants to raise water rates again. I could go along with that, if I could see the benefit, which I can not.

This is why:

I also own a house in Lincoln City on a similar size lot to my lot in Salem, with a similar house foot print on that lot. Both lots are triangular in shape on cull-de-sac's. Two similar properties in two Oregon cities. The City water bills at the Lincoln City house has averaged \$59.25 over the past four months. The City of Salem water bill for that same period has averaged \$75.84, or 28% higher and I haven't started using any water for irrigation at either location. Now the City want's to add another 5% making my average water bill before irrigation over \$80.00 per month. It looks like another brown lawn year.

What in addition am I getting for the additional money? I am getting the same clear fresh water in Lincoln City for a whole lot less \$\$.

I doubt this e-mail will make any difference. The City will intact the increase rates anyway.

Jerry Watson  
500 West Hills Way NW

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

**From:** [jr.ma](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** flooding  
**Date:** Sunday, July 3, 2022 2:55:19 PM

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In regards to the post card sent out on the rate increase of water rates. Our street is one of the first to flood when we get a heavy rain. It seems the water bill is already rather high, but I sure hope if rates are raised or not that you will work on a remedy for this flooding of our street. Seems something that could have been addressed years ago and hope that the crumbling sidewalks is also on the agenda.

Thank you,

Jennifer

**Amy Johnson**

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**From:** KEITH & TAMMY BLAIR <blairbear218@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 11, 2022 2:39 PM  
**To:** CityRecorder  
**Subject:** Written testimony on Proposed Utility Rate Increases  
**Attachments:** Salem Utility Rates 2023-2024.docx

City Recorder,

Attached is a letter that contains my written comments in opposition to the proposed utility rate increases forthcoming. I would like my comments to be considered as my written testimony as part of the public hearing on this topic. Thank you. If you have any questions concerning this, please contact me.

Keith A. Blair  
663 LaCresta Dr SE  
Salem, Oregon 97306

July 11, 2022

City of Salem City Recorder  
555 Liberty St SE. Room 205  
Salem, OR. 97301

Dear City Recorder,

I would like my written comments to be considered as part of the public hearing record on the proposed Water, Wastewater and Stormwater rate increases scheduled for January 2023 and 2024. **I want to voice my opposition to these proposed increases.**

I was flabbergasted when I received a notice in the mail advising of proposed rate increases to our utility rates by the City of Salem. With inflation currently at 8.6% and increases in prices for gas, food and other products across the board, I could not believe the City of Salem would be so foolish as to propose these substantial rate increases at this time. As a Nation, we are on the brink of a recession and the City thinks it is wise to increase our utility rates?

The City of Salem recently raised our water, wastewater, and stormwater rates by 11% for each of the last two years (January 2021 & 2022) for a total of 22%! It seems the City of Salem believes it has found an unending revenue source by increasing our utility rates every couple of years. Even though you can raise the rates doesn't mean you should! The Operations fee that the City of Salem adopted and implemented on our utility bills in February 2020 is just an example of taxing us without representation. I firmly believe this was just another way of circumventing the employee-paid payroll tax the City was seeking voter approval for in May 2020, but was not enacted. If this abusive taxing pattern continues to be used by the City, it will cause taxpayers to revolt

and pass legislation limiting your ability to increase our utility rates just like Ballot Measure 8 did regarding increases to our property taxes.

In researching how Salem compares to other cities regarding the utility rates, an article written by Amelia Josephson dated May 29, 2019 titled "The Cost of Living in Oregon" states, "According to numbeo.com, the average utility bill in Portland, Oregon is \$174.97. That's for a 915-square-foot apartment and includes electricity, heating, water and garbage. In Eugene, the average monthly utility bill is \$120.96. In Salem, utilities average a much pricier \$155.13." As this article points out, it appears Salem has higher utility rate costs than most other Oregon cities.

Additionally, there are other factors that need to be considered when raising our utility rates. According to this same article, Oregon is, simply put, a high-tax State. Oregon has a progressive income tax system with rates ranging from 5% to 9.9%. That top rate of 9.9% is the third highest in the U.S., behind California and Hawaii. Granted, this article is three years old, prices have not gone down, but have increased substantially in the last 1 1/2 years!

If passed, this rate increase will most likely have a ripple effect. For those who rent, the rate increase will be passed along to renters through a rent increase. Senior citizens who are on a fixed income will not be able to afford the climbing rent or rate increases. Tax payers need a break, so we can actually enjoy some of our wages that we have so diligently worked hard for over the years. In this dire economic climate that appears will not end soon, only unwise city leaders would pass these proposed utility rate increases.

I respectfully ask that the City Councilors carefully weigh their decision on these proposed water, wastewater, and stormwater rate increases and vote it down please. Thank you.

Keith A. Blair  
663 La Cresta Dr SE  
Salem, Oregon 97306

**From:** [Kathy Johnson](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Utility rate increases  
**Date:** Monday, July 11, 2022 2:45:28 PM

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I would like to express my opposition to the proposed rate increases for water, wastewater and stormwater. Our rates are already high and just 2 years ago we had an \$8.00 permanent addition to our monthly utility bill. I realize that prices are going up, but 5% seems pretty steep. Citizens are having enough trouble with the high costs of food and gasoline. This increase will especially hurt the working class citizens who contribute a larger percentage of their income to the necessities of life.

If an increase is truly necessary, I would hope it would be more like 2% which would be more manageable. There must be ways to make the process more efficient, rather than always asking for more money.

Yours truly,  
Kathleen Johnson  
4232 Rogets Ct. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

**From:** [Lori Martino](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** rate increase  
**Date:** Sunday, June 26, 2022 9:01:04 PM

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To Whom it May Concern,

Cost of living has tripled with our current administration. This is a difficult time to increase fees. Using the bill estimator, I determined that my monthly bill will increase by \$8 a month. This may seem like an inconsequential amount, but as a senior citizen who is looking to minimize expenses in hopes of retiring, this does not help. Perhaps other fees could be reduced. Not really sure what a city op or franchise fee is, but those are tacked onto our monthly bill, also.

Thanks for your time,  
Lori Martino

**From:** [noreply@cityofsalem.net](mailto:noreply@cityofsalem.net) on behalf of [skazz999w@hotmail.com](mailto:skazz999w@hotmail.com)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** City meeting public comment  
**Date:** Sunday, June 26, 2022 8:32:27 PM  
**Attachments:** [ATT00001.bin](#)

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Your Name	Philip Ratcliff
Your Email	skazz999w@hotmail.com
Your Phone	5039744858
Street	4665 Tragen Ct SE
City	Salem
State	OR
Zip	97302
Message	<p>I received in the mail, a notice of a water rate increase beginning next year. Since August 1, 2015, we 10 homeowners on Tragen Ct. have been paying a \$2.80 fee with our water bill. This is a street light fee. That adds up to \$2,296.00 that we have paid since then. Yet, we have no streetlight on our cul-de-sac. I have requested a streetlight repeatedly. We are getting ripped off. --- We, along with other residents pay a \$8.34 "city operations" fee with our water bill. This was imposed because the city was unable to balance its budget without this added tax. - -- Every year the water rates increase, and now they will increase again. We are getting tired of these ripoffs. The water rates increase in times of low inflation, so the current inflationary trend has nothing to do with this latest increase. Stop these constant ripoffs!</p>

This email was generated by the dynamic web forms contact us form on 6/26/2022.

**From:** [noreply@cityofsalem.net](mailto:noreply@cityofsalem.net) on behalf of [rkeudell54@gmail.com](mailto:rkeudell54@gmail.com)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Submission  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 20, 2022 1:35:35 PM  
**Attachments:** [ATT00001.bin](#)

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Your Name	Rob Keudell
Your Email	rkeudell54@gmail.com
Your Phone	503-278-1660
Street	5103 Andresen St SE
City	Salem
State	OR
Zip	97306
Message	<p>Hello my name is Robert Keudell and I have been a consumer of Salem's utility services for five years. Within those five years our household has experienced a price increase of 10 percent. There is a lack of transparency as to why these increases are happening beyond the rate of inflation. The volume of consumption used is clear but the administrative and management fees included within monthly bills need to be thoroughly explained. These proposed rate increases for 2023 and 2024 is another increase that will not be properly explained and consumers deserve to see where funds are being allocated and used. This is frustrating and government entities such as the City of Salem Utilities need to show more transparency. Without transparency there is no accountability and people are taken advantage of wrongfully. I am opposing these rate increases because I already feel taken advantage of considering the amount of pay per month without much explanation.</p>

This email was generated by the dynamic web forms contact us form on 7/20/2022.

My name is Richard Kinion, I am writing in regards to your rate hike, this is crap, first of all why don't you tell the truth it is a cost of living raise for all you big shots in the office, it is not for maintenance or replacement. I have lived at 2645 Church St for 30 yrs and the city has never done maintenance or replacement. But for all those yrs you people raised our rates. Now the city suddenly replaces 2 pipes, now 2 days later I get a notice saying there going to raise rates that is crap. President Biden has our economy the worst than its ever been. And you people want to make things worse. People have trouble paying bills, Rent & buying Food, but you do not care as long as get yours. City of Salem at your service my Butt. Only when you want something, and right now you want to bleed people out of there last dime, so you get a raise. Let the city of Salem vote, you say you are for the people of Salem so let them vote on it, but you won't because you wouldn't get your raise because it would get voted down.

RECEIVED

JUL 11 2022

CITY OF SALEM  
LEGAL DEPARTMENT

14 July, 2022

Received

JUL 18 2022

City of Salem  
Finance Department

RECEIVED

JUL 20 2022

CITY OF SALEM  
LEGAL DEPARTMENT

Salem City Council Re: Proposed Rate  
Increase of Utility Rates

My home address is 3526 Nonesuch  
Rd. S. I'm requesting a reduction  
of my monthly water base of \$12.22  
I am not of city water. My property  
consists of almost three acres of  
older filbert and holly trees. I  
trees absorb more water than  
runs off. I'm also charged \$2.80  
monthly street light fee. The only  
"street light" we have is a yard light  
across the street which we pay for.

I have no objection to paying for  
services provided but I do question  
being billed for services provided.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely Ray S. Myers

**From:** [Ron Tregaskis](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Proposed Rate Increases for Salem Utility Customers  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 13, 2022 3:10:03 PM

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We have lived in various places on the East coast, but are new to Oregon. In fact, we just finished building a new house. We have paid 2 months of Salem Utility bills without having used any water, not even a single unit of water. However, we still paid over \$60 for each of those 2 months with no usage at all. I can hardly wait to see what the bill will be when we start using water every day, but I suspect it will be a lot more than we have ever paid anywhere. After all, in my short life of 70+ years, this is the first time I have ever had to pay a water bill while consuming 0 gallons of water. And now you are looking for a 5% increase???

People wonder why there are so many homeless folks in Oregon. I used to wonder, but I don't wonder anymore. With one of the highest income taxes in the nation, real estate taxes that are 4x what we paid in our last, comparably priced home (which included garbage and recyclables pickup 3 times per week), gasoline taxes among the highest in the nation, and water/sewage bills that must be up there in the stratosphere, I wonder no more. In fact, I now wonder how anyone making less than \$100,000 a year can afford to live here at all. And you are looking to increase water/sewage and stormwater charges by 5%.

If I get a say in this, I say no to your increase.

Ron Tregaskis

**From:** [noreply@cityofsalem.net](mailto:noreply@cityofsalem.net) on behalf of [4egoodman@gmail.com](mailto:4egoodman@gmail.com)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Contact City Recorder  
**Date:** Friday, July 15, 2022 3:35:21 PM  
**Attachments:** [ATT00001.bin](#)

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Your Name	Richard Tweedy
Your Email	4egoodman@gmail.com
Your Phone	8315964228
Street	1840 Snowball Ave SE
City	Salem
State	OR
Zip	97306
Message	Please include this email to the July 25, 2022 City Council meeting. I am pushing back on the proposed rate increase for water, wastewater and stormwater for the following reasons: 1. Bad timing: Inflation is straining your customers' budgets. 2. City Operations Fee is \$8.34 per month which recently went into effect should be enough money. 3. If City Operations Fee is not enough, then find money from COVID or Federal Infrastructure funds.

This email was generated by the dynamic web forms contact us form on 7/15/2022.

**From:** [Rene](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Proposed Rate Increases  
**Date:** Monday, July 11, 2022 3:19:51 PM

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Hello,

I would like to provide written testimony against any additional rate hikes. There have been several rate hikes in the last few years. Our water bills are some of the highest in the west. It's not the water we are paying for, generally. It's fees upon fees upon fees and more fees. My water bill is way over most of the people I know, \$90 for a one-person household in May, when it was still raining and I wasn't watering anything! I keep calling and asking why my bill is so high. No one can tell me. There are no street lights near my home and I do not have a water leak. Now, you are proposing to INCREASE MY BILL!! I am retired, live on a fixed income and cannot even afford the current outrageous \$90! Perhaps your executive team could take a decrease in pay; the same percentage you are considering raising our bills. Under the current administration everything is going way up! We cannot continue to absorb more costs, more taxes, taxes, taxes or fees, fees fees. Please do not increase our rates. We pay too much as it is. Thank you. Rene' Wahl

**From:** [Roxanne](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** water rate increases  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 20, 2022 12:01:15 PM

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I am a very low income senior. An increase in water rates is going to severely impact my ability to manage my already stressed monthly finances. For the sake of the environment, keeping trees and vegetation watered to keep temperatures down, trap moisture in the soil, clean the air and give crucial protection to our pollinators and their role in pollinating our food crops needs to be considered a very high priority. Water is crucial to life and should never be withheld from a household.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Roxanne

RECEIVED

JUN 29 2022

CITY OF SALEM  
LEGAL DEPARTMENT

6/27/22

To whom it may concern,  
I'm writing on behalf  
of the increase of my  
water bill just a few  
years ago you increase my  
bill. The reason was  
for our Side Street lights.  
I live on 40th PC SE &  
have yet to see any lights  
on my street. My street  
is pitch black, & because  
of that tons of cars park  
out front of my house.  
~~either~~ waiting for their  
drug dealer.

Or come back & park to  
do there drugs.

Secondly, I have issues  
with the homeless, coming  
in at dark to park there  
trailers <sup>& camp</sup> in front of my  
house. Its easier for  
them to not be seen because  
of no outside lights.

Lastly, if you are done  
putting ~~up~~ up the street  
lights, why can't you use  
the money coming in for  
that, to pay for your next  
project. I have never  
seen my bill be lowered

because you were finished  
with the Street lights

Sincerely,

the disappointed  
customer,

Suzanne Bigelow

1694 40th PL SE  
Salem 97317

**From:** [Sarah LaMont](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Water rate increases  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 28, 2022 4:46:07 PM

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Please do not raise water rates again. I have lived in Salem the last seven years. Rates keep going up. We seriously pay you for when it rains already. It's ridiculous. There were no breaks or discounts when water was undrinkable. Rates went up then too. Prices of everything are going up these days. This is another blow to the residents of Salem that many will not be able to afford. You will only have more people asking you for help and money. This is a basic necessity. Please consider the needs of the people you supposedly serve. If there are costs you are facing that give need for the rate increase please provide additional information and transparency.

**From:** [Sam Phillips](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Proposed Rate Increases  
**Date:** Monday, June 27, 2022 11:12:38 AM  
**Importance:** High

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Dear City of Salem Recorder,

I am writing to you today voice my very, very strong objection to your proposed water, wastewater and stormwater rate increases. The United States is currently in the worst economic downturn in 40 years. Inflation is skyrocketing and the stock markets are in the tank. These all affect the livelihood of your taxpayers. Many of your taxpayers are retired (like myself and my wife). We are on a fixed income. I am positive you are aware of the current economic status of our country, our state and our beautiful city, but please allow me to share some recent statistics regarding our economy.

Fuel prices are through the roof! According to AAA Salem fuel prices are nearly 61 cents higher per gallon than the National average. In addition, fuel is \$1.93 higher per gallon than one year ago. <https://gasprices.aaa.com/?state=OR>

Unemployment in the Salem Metropolitan Service Area stands at 3.7% according to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics.

[https://www.bls.gov/regions/west/summary/blssummary\\_salem.pdf](https://www.bls.gov/regions/west/summary/blssummary_salem.pdf)

The Consumer Price Index – CPI-U for March 2022 is 8.7% higher than it was 12 months previous. That is quite a bit.

[https://data.bls.gov/timeseries/CUUR0400SA0&output\\_view=pct\\_12mths](https://data.bls.gov/timeseries/CUUR0400SA0&output_view=pct_12mths)

The Cost of Living is up 3.9% from one year ago and locally is 0.8% higher than the National average.

<https://www.salary.com/research/cost-of-living/salem-or>

Now, I do understand that city policy is to evaluate operating costs and make billing adjustments every two years to maintain our water systems. However, I must state that this is not the time to consider rates increases. As elected officials and public employees who represent the citizens, I urge you to re-consider the proposed rates and stave off these increases, at least for a few years until our economy improves.

Again, now is not the time to be raising fees on the backs of your taxpaying citizens. Please vote no on the proposed rate increases.

Sincerely,

*E/S/Sam Phillips*

Sam Phillips

**From:** [Sam Phillips](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Water Rates Public Comment  
**Date:** Saturday, July 9, 2022 9:23:17 AM  
**Importance:** High

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July 9, 2022

Dear City Recorder,

I am writing to you today voice my very, very strong objection to your proposed water, wastewater and stormwater rate increases. The United States is currently in the worst economic downturn in 40 years. Inflation is skyrocketing and the stock markets are in the tank. These all affect the livelihood of your taxpayers. Many of your taxpayers are retired (like myself and my wife). We are on a fixed income. I am positive you are aware of the current economic status of our country, our state and our beautiful city, but please allow me to share some recent statistics regarding our economy.

Fuel prices are through the roof! According to AAA Salem fuel prices are nearly 61 cents higher per gallon than the National average. In addition, fuel is \$1.93 higher per gallon than one year ago.

Unemployment in the Salem Metropolitan Service Area stands at 3.7% according to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The Consumer Price Index – CPI-U for March 2022 is 8.7% higher than it was 12 months previous. That is quite a bit.

The Cost of Living is up 3.9% from one year ago and locally is 0.8% higher than the National average.

Now, I do understand that city policy is to evaluate operating costs and make billing adjustments every two years to maintain our water systems. However, I must state that this is not the time to consider rates increases. As elected officials and public employees who represent the citizens, I urge you to re-consider the proposed rates and stave off these increases, at least for a few years until our economy improves.

Again, now is not the time to be raising fees on the backs of your taxpaying citizens. Please vote no on the proposed rate increases.

Sincerely,

*E/S/Sam Phillips*

Sam Phillips

**From:** [T.F](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** Proposed Rate Increases  
**Date:** Monday, June 27, 2022 11:55:13 AM

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I recognize that we are in a state of hyperinflation.

I also recognize that I lost 80% of my household income with the death of my wife last year.

Furthermore, I recognize that a \$60-\$80 water bill shows I pay \$2-\$4 for water.

The rest is base rates and taxes and fees.

At first glance, \$80 for \$4 worth of water is insulting.

If I try to calm down and think it through, I recognize infrastructure costs have to be paid for.

I am certain you are doing your utmost to keep those costs in line considering the level of accountability

and scrutiny you must find yourself in, with your business model.

This Proposed Rate Increase comes at an interesting time.

With the receipt of my last bill, I am considering shutting off my service entirely.

I have been engaging in a Dave Ramsey budget process which gives a percentage of pay to each category.

Let me be clear. The costs you relay to me, along with my other utility costs, far exceed that percentage.

The grim reality is..... the problem isn't that you charge too much.

The problem is..... that I make too little.

The message we receive from team Biden is that we must reduce demand and keep labor costs in check.

All I hear is stagflation. And slow economic suicide.

The analysts are saying the labor market is going to flip.

The HORRIBLE PAYING JOBS will begin to dry up, making a bad situation worse for labor. For me.

My experience with "sharing" my opinion of activities of government has taught me that I am ignored. Powerless.

I receive the usual letters of cordiality. With apologies. There's nothing you can do. I still engage. I still write. I even testified on the state legislative floor, with no effect.

For a short while I attended city council meetings, but found the writing on the wall. I see that here as well.

The simple truth is, I'm being forced out of my home.

It's just a matter of time.

So, you offered this email address to share my thoughts.

I have shared.

Take care.

Todd Fox  
West Salem