



# BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

## ADDITIONAL MEETING DOCUMENTS

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Additional or revised information or documents are often passed out to the Board at the meetings.  
Whenever possible, this informational cover page will accompany those documents.

**MAKE 20 COPIES OF ANY DOCUMENTS, INCLUDING THIS COVER SHEET, AND RETURN TO JAIME KEPHART PRIOR TO THE MEETING.**

MEETING DATE	8/15/2018
AGENDA ITEM	4.C. Utilities Manager Report
DOCUMENT TITLE(S)	Update on the Munis System & Utilities
FROM	Rafael De La Torre, Deputy Utility Manager for Electric Distribution and Acting Utilities Manager
NEW OR REVISED?  Is this a revision that is different from what was in the agenda packet or is it something entirely new?	New
RECOMMENDED ACTION  If you have a new or revised recommended motion for the Board, enter it here.	<u>N/A</u>
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION  Please VERY BRIEFLY explain the purpose of this information or document.	Mr. De La Torre presented this information during the manager's report.

## **UPDATE ON THE MUNIS SYSTEM AND UTILITIES**

**August 15, 2018**

Los Alamos County went live on July 1, 2018 (start of the new fiscal year) with the new Munis ERP software system which included utility billing.

### **BILLING DELAYS**

- As of August 6 - July utility bills have been mailed to all DPU customers.
  - We intentionally held bills for the first half of July to ensure that the data transferred correctly from the old system (Cayenta) into the new system (Munis), and that bills were calculating correctly the amount charged to each customer. (Staff was very focused on the dollar amount billed).
  - We began sending bill files to our bill-print vendor to be printed and mailed on July 23rd. Because we didn't hear from the vendor that there were any problems, we incorrectly assumed that bills were being mailed.
  - The vendor later told us that they ran into complications printing the bills at the current location in Las Vegas, Nevada. They transferred the files and the supplies to their Michigan office. They also needed to retool their equipment in Michigan to print the bills with the new file format and color specifications.
  - Bills began to drop in the mail on August 3<sup>rd</sup>. (It took seven days for bills to arrive from Michigan to Los Alamos, New Mexico).
  - To speed up delivery of future bills, DPU has requested the vendor to print the bills with black ink only – which can be handled at the Nevada office. This will actually reduce the price slightly of printing the bill and speed up the turn-around time.
- Because the bills were delayed – DPU is waiving all late fees until we can get back onto a regular billing schedule

**LOS ALAMOS DPU APP (SUSPENDED) - view utility account balances, bills and make payments on line of on smart mobile devices.**

- Coinciding with the billing software change, staff has been working through a conversion for its Los Alamos DPU App so that it points correctly to the new software while maintaining history from the previous software.
- Therefore, Los Alamos DPU app is not registering any utility account activity post-July 1 and it is not allowing payments.
- We will be testing the reworked Los Alamos DPU app on Monday, August 20 and hope to have it fully functional before the end of August 2018.
- In the meantime, we made arrangement for customers to be able to make payments through the Paymentus website with a credit card, debit card, or e-check. There is no fee to process a payment this way. The website is: <https://ipn.paymentus.com/rotp/LACU>

**UTILITY BILL PRESENTATION**

- We thank our customers for scrutinizing the bills and pointing out various anomalies that we are currently working with the Munis Tyler Forms team to fix these.
- I am pleased to report that the changes are more with the bill presentation, as opposed to the dollars charged for the commodity used.
- The corrections are as follows:
  - A. **Service Period:** The bills incorrectly printed that the service period was from **May 1 to July 20**. However, the bill actually covers the period from the last meter read to the current meter read (unfortunately – most customers had 40 or more days in this period – so it may appear that their bill is larger than normal).
  - B. **Electric:** For large electric customers – While the “**Demand**” and “**Demand Rate**” did not appear on the bill, it was calculated correctly and included in the charge to the customer.
  - C. **Gas:** Bill is not showing the pro-rated charge for each billing rate during the billing period. However, the total on the actual bill is correct.
  - D. **Water:** Everything above 8,000 gallons was bumping up to the Tier 2 charge of \$5.29 rather than the \$4.98. This caused an overcharge of \$0.31. This has been

corrected. The Tier 1 rate will now be applied to 8,999 gallons (to comply with the tiered water rate code).

- E. **Graphs:** Several customers have asked that we apply a “measurement” on the Y axis of the graphs.
- F. **Water Graph:** The “*current*” bar is pulling data from “current meter read” less the “previous meter read” which is in hundred gallons. The graph is then multiplying it by 1000 (since we bill in thousand gallons). In the example bill:  $1041 - 874 = 167$ . Thus 16,700 gallons, but it is being graphed as 167,000 gallons. We have changed the parameters of the graph to pull the data from the “Usage” column. In the example, the “Usage” column is 16, therefore 16,000 gallons.
- G. **Auto-pay customers:** For customers who have signed up for “auto-pay,” the bottom portion of the bill indicates, “Make Checks Payable to:” ... This has been changed to state “Do Not Remit Payment” for ACH customers only.

#### **ACH CUSTOMERS (Customers signed up for Auto-Pay)**

- Our standard practice is to transfer funds from a customer’s specified checking or savings account 20 days from the bill date.
- Because of the delay that resulted in mailing the July utility bills, we postponed drafting the balance due from customers’ checking or savings accounts until they had an opportunity to receive and review their bill.
- Earlier this week, we sent a letter out to those customers who would have already had their funds transferred by now. We notified them that we would be drafting those funds this Friday, August 17<sup>th</sup>, unless we heard from them that the dollar amount or the date was a problem.

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

- We need to acknowledge that several members of our staff have worked tirelessly before, during and after this conversion. They have given up evenings, weekends, and holidays to make this go as smoothly as possible.

- The Customer Care Center has been fielding numerous phone calls, emails, and walk-ins. Yesterday we had approx. 1700 phone calls.
- The Customer Care staff, is listening and responding to each customer's concern – but they are only five people. Some calls are being missed.
- For the most part, customers have been very understanding. We appreciate and thank them for their patience.





County of Los Alamos

Customer Care (505) 662-8333, [customer care@lacnm.us](mailto:customer care@lacnm.us)  
Pay your bill online: <https://rebrand.ly/DPUmyaccountportal>

BALANCE DUE

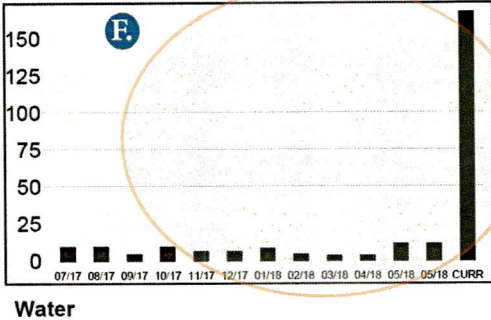
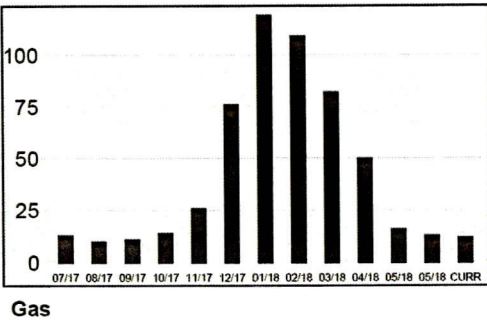
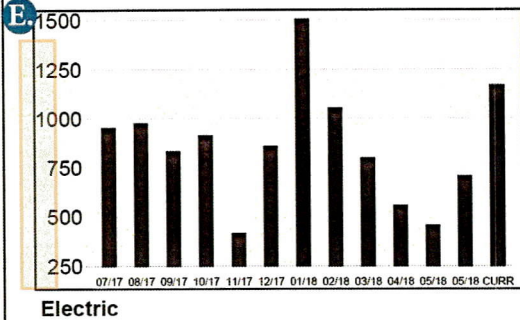
Customer Name: [Redacted]  
Service Address: [Redacted]  
Bill Number: [Redacted]

Cycle 12

Account Summary

Bill Date	07/23/2018
Due Date	08/17/2018
Service Period	05/01/2018 to 07/13/2018
Customer ID	[Redacted]
Account Number	[Redacted]
Previous Balance	0.00
Payments	0.00
Current Billing Amount	345.90
TOTAL AMOUNT DUE	345.90

Description	Meter	Read Type	Previous Meter Reading	Current Meter Reading	Demand	Demand Rate	Multi.	Usage	Commodity Rate	Charge
ELECTRIC	KWH	A	22960	24128			1	1168	0.115200	134.55
										12.00
										146.55
GAS	THERM	A	3233	3248			1	13	0.340000	4.42
									0.370000	4.81
										9.50
										14.28
WATER	KGAL	A	874	1041			1	16	4.980000	39.84
									5.290000	37.03
									6.320000	6.32
										9.42
										92.61
SEWER							1			47.45
										47.45
REFUSE							1			25.00
										25.00
7.3125% Electric and Gas GRT										11.76
5.0% Water, Sewer and Refuse										8.25
										345.90
										0.00



THIS MONTHS MESSAGE:

✂ Detach and return the portion below with your payment ✂



COUNTY OF LOS ALAMOS  
PO BOX 99  
LOS ALAMOS, NM 87544-0099

ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED



Bill Date	07/23/2018
Customer ID	[Redacted]
Account Number	[Redacted]
BALANCE DUE	345.90
Due Date	08/17/2018
Enter Amount Paid	
Low Income Family Assistance	
Enter Contribution in Excess of Bill	

G.

Make Checks Payable to:  
COUNTY OF LOS ALAMOS  
PO BOX 99  
LOS ALAMOS, NM 87544-0099

00006382019800001661800000345900



# BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

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MEETING DATE	8/15/2018
AGENDA ITEM	5.A. Public Hearing for Sewer Rate Ordinance 02-288
DOCUMENT TITLE(S)	Open Forum Responses
FROM	Julie Williams-Hill, Public Relations Manager
NEW OR REVISED?  Is this a revision that is different from what was in the agenda packet or is it something entirely new?	New
RECOMMENDED ACTION  If you have a new or revised recommended motion for the Board, enter it here.	<u>N/A</u>
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION  Please VERY BRIEFLY explain the purpose of this information or document.	Attached are the public comments from the County's online Open Forum

# Board of Public Utilities to Consider Proposed Sewer Rate Increase

*The Board of Public Utilities will consider a proposed sewage rate increase at the August 15th Board meeting. Do you have any feedback for the Board?*

All Statements sorted chronologically

As of August 13, 2018, 10:54 AM



*Open Forum is not a certified voting system or ballot box. As with any public comment process, participation in Open Forum is voluntary. The statements in this record are not necessarily representative of the whole population, nor do they reflect the opinions of any government agency or elected officials.*



# Board of Public Utilities to Consider Proposed Sewer Rate Increase

*The Board of Public Utilities will consider a proposed sewage rate increase at the August 15th Board meeting. Do you have any feedback for the Board?*

As of August 13, 2018, 10:54 AM, this forum had:

Attendees:	64
All Statements:	14
Minutes of Public Comment:	42

This topic started on July 26, 2018, 12:40 PM.

## Board of Public Utilities to Consider Proposed Sewer Rate Increase

The Board of Public Utilities will consider a proposed sewage rate increase at the August 15th Board meeting. Do you have any feedback for the Board?

Name not available (unclaimed)

August 10, 2018, 6:08 PM

I don't see a need for the rates raised when they just were last year.

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Name not available (unclaimed)

August 5, 2018, 10:39 PM

I thought I read this is to help replace the White Rock sewer plant? Is it going into a special fund to guarantee that is how it is used? What is the advantage to having money set aside for this project? when is the replacement going to happen? Is this really what it is being used for? I think the need for this rate increase should be explained better. Increasing the base rate can place more hardship on limited income residents because you cannot control this aspect of the bill through personal choices (conservation).

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Name not available (unclaimed)

August 4, 2018, 9:31 AM

The utilities are constantly at the board on increasing the cost. I don't believe we should increase the sewage.

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Name not shown inside WHITE ROCK (registered)

July 28, 2018, 6:49 PM

The draft ordinance as published on the LA County website is incomplete: Under Section 40-202, (a) lists how residential charges will be calculated using Section 40-203. This is not included in the published copy. "For calculation of charges under 40-203, the volume measurement for residential customers will be 1,000 gallons times the number of occupants of the residence." This statement leaves the door open for additional charges based on the three months winter usage volume. Please complete the ordinance before holding the Board meeting and sending this incomplete ordinance to the Councilors.

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Dann Alison inside WHITE ROCK (registered)

July 28, 2018, 7:43 AM

The rate at which one consume water has only a small bearing in sewer. Six months per year we are watering. Why isn't the rate based more accurately on the consumption seen during winter. I don't understand the overall billing scheme as it stands.

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Name not shown inside WHITE ROCK (registered)

July 27, 2018, 2:14 PM

Continually reducing services and raising rates is absurd. This needs to stop NOW. Vote NO

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David North inside LA SENDA (registered)

July 27, 2018, 11:35 AM

## Board of Public Utilities to Consider Proposed Sewer Rate Increase

The Board of Public Utilities will consider a proposed sewage rate increase at the August 15th Board meeting. Do you have any feedback for the Board?

As one of the minority on a septic system, I have no direct interest. But I suspect those who will have to pay this bill might be interested to see how much of the increase is related to the wastewater system used at the golf course, etc -- or at least how much that costs. Is there any connection between the sewer charges and the pipeline to the ski hill? Overall, the rates seem to be in line with costs in other areas, especially as older systems wear out all over the country.

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Name not available (unclaimed)

July 27, 2018, 11:14 AM

I am an older single woman who lives in White Rock. Currently, the sewer portion of my utility bill is approximately 25 percent of my bill. I live in a small, recently built, energy-efficient home. My yard is xeriscaped in the front- I have not used any water in the small front yard- and I water a small portion of yard in the back (approximately 300 square feet). I can manage most of the other parts of my spending, keeping my total bill to about 150 dollars per month. I don't use trash hauling every week- I can get by with my recycling cart being used once a month or once every 5 weeks. The garbage roll cart goes out once every two weeks. The sewer bill is one part of my utility bill that I can't control, and I feel that the amount I pay for sewer is already high. Please consider my opinion when you make this decision.

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Alex V inside ASPEN - WALNUT (registered)

July 27, 2018, 8:50 AM

Sewage fees are already \$47! My biggest complaint is the fixed service charges. Having to pay \$73 before any usage is maddening. If DPU needs to fund improvements, I actually don't mind paying a higher rate, \*for what I use\*, and sewage charges should be related to water usage. I think it used to be like that, with lower sewer rates in the summer to account for outdoor watering. I am out of town for extended periods and my overall utility usage is pretty low, so paying almost as much in fixed service fees as my actual usage just seems wrong and super unfair. Build the actual cost into the rates and get rid of the fixed service fees.

1 Supporter

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Name not available (unclaimed)

July 27, 2018, 7:28 AM

Will there be compensatory lowering of electric rates with installation of solar/carbon free resources? The rising utility rates are proving a drain on fixed income residents.

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Name not shown (unverified)

July 27, 2018, 7:03 AM

There should be a better background statement for this. Not enough information. How much is the anticipated debt service? What is the cost basis for this rate change?

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Name not shown inside WESTERN (registered)

July 27, 2018, 7:02 AM

## Board of Public Utilities to Consider Proposed Sewer Rate Increase

The Board of Public Utilities will consider a proposed sewage rate increase at the August 15th Board meeting. Do you have any feedback for the Board?

This is absolutely Ridiculous!. Residents recently had a significant sewer rate increase of around 30% to pay for White Rock sewer repairs and this past year, water rates went up. Recycling services went down. Stop gouging the resident of LA to accomodate mismanagement of costs. Why haven't we used GRT money to support any of this?

1 Supporter

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Name not shown inside NORTH COMMUNITY (registered)

July 27, 2018, 6:47 AM

Vote NO. DPU cannot continue to raise rates.

1 Supporter

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Name not shown inside NORTH COMMUNITY (registered)

July 27, 2018, 5:29 AM

Residential rates for water and other charges have already gone up recently. It is unacceptable to increase residents further. Increase commercial to make up the difference. They will be able to handle the increase more than low income and elderly residents.

1 Supporter

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