

April 2015

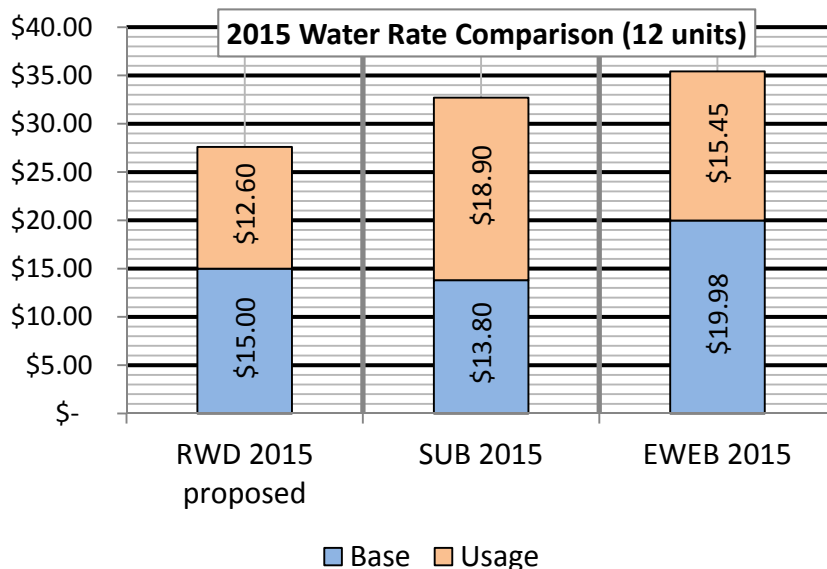


Dear Customer,

As I shared last summer, Rainbow Water District celebrated our 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary on August 22. The first residents formed the district in 1949 to pool their money and buy water from EWEB for a short period of time while they drilled our first wells and installed piping to serve new subdivisions. Over time, as homes were built and the population grew, the district built storage tanks and drilled more wells to expand the water supply.

During the growing years, it was hard to build the infrastructure fast enough to keep up with the district's growth. After most of the neighborhoods filled in, however, we had several decades of relative stability. By water system standards, our pumps and pipes and valves were fairly new and did not require many expensive repairs. We were able to keep the monthly water bills pretty low, and we were proud of that.

We are now entering a new era of challenges. Oregon is entering a fourth year of drought. We are fortunate to have deep wells and do not foresee any shortage of water, but the hot and dry conditions put stress on our system as pumps work longer and get less rest to keep up with the watering demand. Regulations intended to make water safer to drink have added complexity and new requirements to our operations. Finally, a large part of our system is now 50+ years old and showing its age. While our customers still have the lowest monthly water bill in the Eugene-Springfield area, we have a need to raise prices just like our neighboring water utilities.



The average Rainbow customer uses about 12 units (8,976 gallons) of water per month. The average bill is made up of **base charge plus a usage charge** for the amount of water that is actually used

In June the average bill will go up by \$2.35 per month with our planned rate increase. The graph shows how Rainbow's new rate will compare to SUB and EWEB rates.

**With challenges, however, come opportunities to improve our district and make it better.**

We just finished a project along 19<sup>th</sup> Street to install corrosion protection for one of our larger pipelines. This work will extend the life of the steel and delay replacement of this piping. We coordinated our efforts with some other work that SUB is doing closer to the shopping center, and both utilities are rushing to complete the work so we won't need to cut the road after Lane County completes a major paving project on 19<sup>th</sup> Street this summer. In some of our culdesacs we are also replacing corroded galvanized piping to improve flow and reliability.

We recently upgraded portions of our control system, using technology advances to give our operators improved abilities to gather information and manage the water system.

Last year we completed a seismic analysis of our storage reservoirs. In the coming year we will hire engineers to design improvements that increase the resiliency of our tanks and their ability to withstand an earthquake and store water for emergency use.

In March, a 45-year old well suffered a mechanical failure. When we hired a well driller to pull the pump and troubleshoot the problem for us, they determined that not only did our pump have a broken shaft, but a hole had formed in the well screen and was allowing gravel to start filling the bottom of the well. Our well driller is on a fast track to drill a replacement well and overhaul two other wells in time for summer. We will work alongside them to study our aquifer and learn more about our future supply options.



Thank you for supporting us as we invest in your water system for the next generation!

**Remember that you can find us on the web at [www.RWDonline.net](http://www.RWDonline.net) and you can link from the website to our new Facebook account! (If you want to LIKE us on Facebook, don't confuse us with Rainbow Municipal Water District which is located in the San Diego area.)**

Sincerely,



Jamie Porter, Superintendent

Our **2014 Annual Water Quality Report** is available online this year and will not be mailed. You may view a copy through the link under our website's Water Quality menu, or enter this URL:  
**[www.rwdonline.net/2014RainbowReport.pdf](http://www.rwdonline.net/2014RainbowReport.pdf)**