

## WHAT YOU'LL SEE ON YOUR NEXT UTILITY BILL

Bills mailed at the end of December (and due January 26, 2004), covering service from December 1 through December 31, will reflect the new rates. The table below presents the monthly flat rates. The complete rate structure, including rates for metered and bulk water users, can be found at [www.juneau.org](http://www.juneau.org).

### NEW FLAT RATES

| If You Have           | Water | Sewer | Tax  | Waste Mgt. Fee | Your Bill Will TOTAL |
|-----------------------|-------|-------|------|----------------|----------------------|
| Water & Sewer Service | 22.61 | 54.91 | 3.88 | 5.40           | 86.80                |
| Water Service Only    | 22.61 | --    | 1.13 | 5.40           | 29.14                |
| Sewer Service Only    | --    | 54.91 | 2.75 | 5.40           | 63.06                |

## QUESTIONS? COMMENTS? NEED MORE INFO?

Extensive information on these rate changes is available from the CBJ website ([www.juneau.org](http://www.juneau.org)). The site contains minutes of Assembly deliberations, reports from CBJ staff, as well as details on the rate study analysis—including assumptions regarding operating costs, debt service, inflation, and other factors.

- ◆ If you have questions about the rate increase, don't hesitate to call Joe Buck, Director of Public Works, at 780-6888.
- ◆ If you have technical questions about billing, call the utility billing office at 586-5261.

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## INFORMATION FOR CUSTOMERS ON CHANGES TO WATER AND SEWER RATES

*New Rates In Effect Beginning  
December 1, 2003.*



[www.juneau.org](http://www.juneau.org)

## WHY ARE UTILITY RATES CHANGING?

Faced with increasing expenses, and concerned that utility payments were not covering the true cost of delivering clean drinking water and treating wastewater, the CBJ spent over a year considering various options. We knew that both the water and wastewater utilities—each a separate “enterprise fund” operated and financed in a manner similar to private businesses—needed major repairs as well as upgrades to comply with increasingly strict environmental laws.

After scrutinizing the results of an independent, comprehensive financial review of the costs to provide water and wastewater services and the revenues received from customer payments, the Assembly agreed that rate changes were overdue. It was clear that current rates were not covering the true cost of providing water and sewer services. User fees had not kept up with costs and the CBJ has been “robbing Peter to pay Paul” for too long: to pay back loans for needed repairs and maintenance, we had used up our savings accounts and had occasionally dipped into sales tax revenues.

## WASTEWATER/SEWER UTILITY FACTS

Few of us give much thought to what happens to the wastewater that leaves our bathrooms, kitchens, and utility rooms every day. In fact, the work to make wastewater “go away,” is quite complicated, technical, exacting; and, in part because of our location and concern for the environment, expensive.

Juneau’s wastewater is discharged into water bodies very sensitive to contaminants. Federal and state regulations for allowable discharges vary depending on many factors, and, because of the location of the outfalls of Juneau’s three wastewater treatment facilities, Juneau’s wastewater must be cleaned to among the highest standards in the state. The Mendenhall Valley Treatment Plant discharges treated effluent to the Mendenhall River, which then flows directly into the Mendenhall Game Refuge. The outfalls of Juneau’s other two plants (the Juneau Douglas Treatment Plant on the Rock Dump and the Auke Bay Treatment Plant near the Auke Bay Post Office) also operate under rigorous standards.

## WATER UTILITY FACTS

Water rates have remained the same for more than a decade. The new monthly rate for Juneau will still be lower than rates in Anchorage or Fairbanks.

A 1999 national study conducted by an independent company showed Juneau’s water rates below the national average. At that time, the average cost in the United States for 250 gallons of water was 52 cents. The cost for this same amount of water in Juneau was 44 cents. The new rates will raise Juneau’s cost to 52 cents, meeting the 1999 national average.

## STRICT STANDARDS

Juneau must meet strict standards in order to discharge treated effluent into the Mendenhall State Game Refuge, Gastineau Channel and Auke Bay. Requirements for discharges into these waterways are among the most stringent in all of Alaska.