

PUD ponders rate increase

By Nick Baptista / The Valley Springs News / August 31, 2016

The Valley Springs Public Utility District is looking at a five-year plan to eventually increase sewage rates for the typical home from \$49.50 to \$81.09 a month by 2020.

VSPUD General Manager Mike Fischer said a final draft of the rate proposal could come before the VSPUD Board of Directors by Sept. 14 and that would trigger a 45-day public notification process and a public hearing on the matter for sometime in November.

The board is looking at a five-year plan to help finance improvements to the wastewater system. The first proposed monthly wastewater rate hike would begin on Dec. 1 of this year and go to \$56.59 per month. There would be four subsequent rate hikes on July 1 of each year from 2017 to 2020.

The new rates at the time would be \$66.78 in 2017, \$75.76 in 2018, \$78.37 in 2019 and \$81.09 in 2020.

The water and sewer district mainly situated in downtown Valley Springs has 292 residential and 88 commercial customers. Commercial customers would see an equivalent rate hike.

The proposed rate increases are subject to majority protest. If more than 50 percent of affected property owners submit written protests against the proposed rate hikes at the public hearing, the increases cannot be adopted by the board.

In addition to the hikes, the district is looking at lowering the baseline usage level from 6,000 to 4,600 gallons a month.