

# Gwinnett County Government NEWS RELEASE

Charles E. Bannister, Chairman  
Board of Commissioners

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## COUNTY ADJUSTS WATER AND SEWER RATES

(Lawrenceville, Ga., March 3, 2009) – Water and sewer base rates in Gwinnett will increase slightly on July 1 after new rates were recommended by the Water and Sewerage Authority and approved Tuesday by the Board of Commissioners.

For a typical residential ¾-inch meter, the monthly base charge for water service will go up from \$7.30 to \$7.50. The base charge applies even if a customer uses no water at all. This is the first base-charge adjustment since 1999.

A new monthly base charge for sewer service will also take effect on July 1. There was no base charge for sewer previously. “Base charges rise as our operating costs rise to cover such expenses as utilities, chemicals, fuel, maintenance and labor,” explained Peter Frank, Deputy Director for Business Services in the county’s Department of Water Resources (DWR).

The new base charges will increase the average residential water/sewer bill by \$5.20 per month starting in July. In January 2010, a previously approved rate increase based on the amount of water used will also take effect, raising the average bill another \$4.32 based on average usage of 6,000 gallons/month. A similar increase will follow in 2011 as approved in the 2005 rate resolution.

Gwinnett’s current volume-based rates are \$3.86 per thousand gallons for water and \$4.91 for sewer. Sewer rates are calculated based on the amount of water used.

“We believe these rates are reasonable and that they will cover our expenses without having to borrow money that we would have to pay back with interest,” said Lynn Smarr, Acting Director of DWR.

The new rate resolution includes additional volume-based hikes for the years 2012 through 2015. It also makes current summer conservation rates effective year-round as recommended by the state and the North Georgia Metropolitan Water Planning District.

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“Conservation rates are designed to discourage excessive water use by increasing the base rate by 50 percent if a residence uses more than 8,000 gallons a month and doubling it after 12,000 gallons,” Board Chairman Charles Bannister explained. The year-round conservation rates will take effect in January 2010.

“Our rates will still be in the ‘middle-of-the-pack’ for metro Atlanta, and the services we provide are among the best in the state,” added County Administrator Jock Connell. The complete resolution is available online at [www.gwinnettcountry.com](http://www.gwinnettcountry.com).

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