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Sewer fees go up in July

By **BRYON SAXTON**

SYRACUSE -- Many North Davis and Roy residents could see their sewer bills jump by 20 percent a month beginning July 1.

The North Davis Sewer District, serving the area from Roy to Kaysville, is proposing increasing its monthly user fees from its current rate of \$5.80 per residential equivalent to \$7 per residential equivalent, said James E. Schroeder, district financial consultant with the Ogden-based firm of Wiggins & Company, which contracts with the district.

"They have been talking about this for three years," Wiggins said.

A public hearing on the proposed increase will be at 6 p.m. May 14 at the sewer district offices, 4252 W. 2200 South, Syracuse. The public is invited to attend.

The district is increasing its rates due to increased operation costs and to catch up with inflation after not raising its rates for more than a decade, Wiggins said.

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The rate increase of about \$15 more a year per connection, will generate \$878,000 for the district in

new yearly revenues, officials said.

A proposed user fee increase is also planned for commercial connections, which will experience about the same percentage of increase.

The district has roughly 65,000 connections serving about 190,000 residents, said Kevin Cowan, district manager.

One other consideration in having to raise user fees is the downturn in revenue the district is experiencing because impact fee revenues are significantly down with the lack of new building, Cowan said.

"One of our revenue streams is lower than what it has been," Cowan said.

The district's revenue stream consists of taxes, impact fees and monthly user fees, Cowan said. When one of those streams is "significantly down," as impact fees are, the district must still meet costs in operating the sewer treatment plant.

If home building should rebound within the next year or two, then the sewer board could revisit the monthly user fee assessment, Cowan said.

District officials realize the increase is coming at a time when finances are tight. However, they are hoping, based on the initial response received from cities alerted to the proposed increase, that the public will be understanding.

"Thus far, people seem to understand the justification for it," he said.

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