

QUARTERLY UPDATE

BOARD MEETINGS

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Wednesday, August 21
5pm

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Wednesday, September 18
5pm

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Wednesday, October 16
5pm

What's Happening in the District?

All District Board Meetings are hybrid, so the public can attend either in person or join the meeting virtually. Here's the link if you'd like to join in: <https://tinyurl.com/bdezc5md>
Meeting ID: 849 3064 6501
Passcode: 474179

Do you need assistance with our On-Line Bill Pay Service? Please contact us at 503-292-2777 or at customer.service@wswd.org

We're here to help you!

Check out our Water Quality Report at www.wswd.org

CONTACT US!
3105 SW 89th Ave.
503-292-2777

On the web at:
www.wswd.org

Email:
customer.service@wswd.org

Also, check the website for our newsletters, past and present.

www.wswd.org



Serving the
West Slope
Neighborhood
Since 1922

Volume 5 • Issue 3 • QUARTERLY UPDATE

July to September 2024

What's Going On at West Slope Water District Managing Water Rates in the Face of Increasing Expenses



Like everything else it seems, the cost of running a water system is increasing as well.

NO ONE LIKES TO PAY MORE FOR SOMETHING WHEN THEY WERE USED TO PAYING LESS FOR IT. We understand that because we are consumers as well. The Dollar Tree Store is now the Dollar & a Quarter Store. The "Dollar Menu" at your favorite fast-food restaurant is now the "Value Menu." Like everything else it seems, the cost of running a water system is increasing as well. On page 2 of this newsletter is a graphical breakdown of the revenue the District collects from rates and how/where that revenue is spent. Water rates must increase to keep pace with the cost of purchased water, the cost of materials and labor for capital projects, and the cost of District personnel (salaries, health insurance, etc.). Failing to keep the District's revenue in line with its expenses is bad water system management and is a disservice to the customer. At their June 26th meeting, the West Slope Board of Commissioners

approved a water rate increase of 6% to the consumptive portion and a 3% increase to the fixed portion of the water bill. For the average home that uses 8 units of water per month (1 unit = 100 cubic feet or 1 CCF = 748 gallons of water) the increase is about \$4 per month. To some, that may not seem like a lot of money. To others, it does. We understand this, too.

We find ourselves at a crossroads of sorts in our current society today. On one side, public utilities like West Slope Water District must continue to keep water rates on pace with water expenses. On the other side, many customers are struggling to make ends meet with the rising cost of groceries, transportation, health care, housing, education, and taxes. How can most families afford rising utility bills on top of all of their other expenses in this inflationary time? Our goal is to keep the District in the excellent shape it is in for decades to come while making sure our customer water rates are equitable and affordable for all customers. The Board has been intentional about setting aside funds to pay for future infrastructure replacement costs related to pipes, reservoirs, and other aging assets in our distribution system so that debt can be kept at a minimum.



So, in response, West Slope is working with consultants to develop a new tiered water rate that would take effect in mid-2025. Late this summer and into early fall, West Slope will release what we are calling "Water Rate 101" sessions to provide customers with a better understanding of the rate setting process and better insight to manage their own water bill. Watch for inserts in your water bill and our website for information on how to attend these sessions live, virtually or later on YouTube. Under the Board's leadership and staff's day-to-day management, the District will continue to move forward with its goals to facilitate a reliable water distribution system, maintain a long-term water supply, and provide a high level of customer service for future generations.

We believe it is in everyone's best interest to keep our customers informed of what we are doing to make the West Slope WD water system the best it can be for generations to come.



2024-25 Budget Overview

West Slope Water District Goals

- ✓ **Facilitate a visible and reliable water system** – District business existence and hard infrastructure
- ✓ **Maintain the District’s long-term water supply** – Maintain our quality product
- ✓ **Normalize operational optimization** – Maintain a high level of service and customer service interface

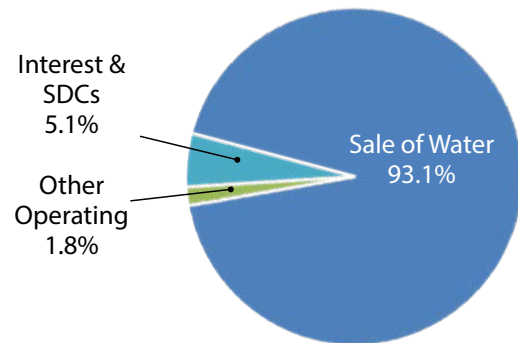
The budget reflects the goals developed by the Board of Commissioners and serves to move the District forward in accomplishing its vision to provide equitable stewardship of water resources that ensure continuous availability of high-quality drinking water. The budget not only serves as a financial plan, but also as a tool for accountability.

Budgeted Beginning Fund Balances: July 1, 2024 – \$6,541,000

WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM:

Budgeted Revenue Sources: \$5,551,000

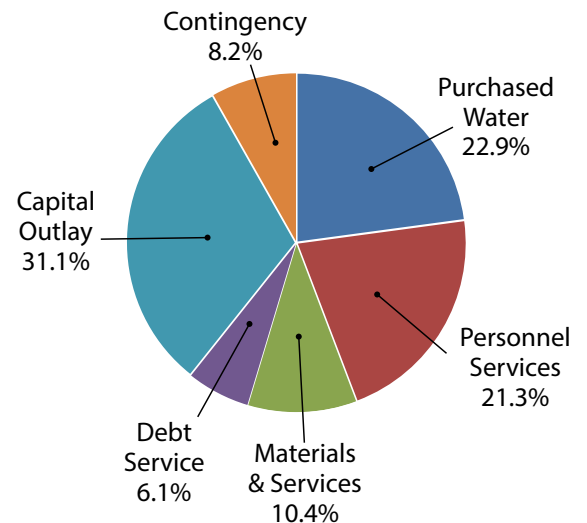
- Sale of Water: \$5,169,000 – 93.1%
- Other Operating: \$99,000 – 1.8%
- Interest & SDCs: \$283,000 – 5.1%



WHERE THE MONEY GOES:

Budgeted Expenditures by Category: \$5,869,000

- Purchased Water: \$1,342,000 – 22.9%
- Personnel Services: \$1,253,000 – 21.3%
- Material & Services \$612,000 – 10.4%
- Contingency: \$481,000 – 8.2%
- Debt Service: \$356,000 – 6.1%
- Capital Outlay: \$1,825,000 – 31.1%
 - Garden View Pipe Replacement Project
 - Water System Master Plan & Rate Study
 - Vehicle & Equipment Purchases



Budgeted Ending Fund Balances: June 30, 2025 – \$6,223,000

The complete FY2024-25 Adopted Budget can be found on the District’s website at: <https://www.wswd.org/annual-budget>

