



## Metropolitan Water Pollution Abatement Advisory Committee

King Street Center, 201 S Jackson St, MS: KSC-NR-0508, Seattle, WA 98104  
206-477-4435

### MEMBERS:

*Alderwood Water and Wastewater District*  
*City of Algona*  
*City of Auburn*  
*City of Bellevue*  
*City of Black Diamond*  
*City of Bothell*  
*City of Brier*  
*City of Carnation*  
*Cedar River Water and Sewer District*  
*Coal Creek Utility District*  
*Cross Valley Water District*  
*Highlands Sewer District*  
*City of Issaquah*  
*City of Kent*  
*City of Kirkland*  
*City of Lake Forest Park*  
*Lakehaven Water and Sewer District*  
*City of Mercer Island*  
*Midway Sewer District*  
*Muckleshoot Indian Tribe*  
*Northeast Sammamish Sewer and Water District*  
*Northshore Utility District*  
*Olympic View Water and Sewer District*  
*City of Pacific*  
*City of Redmond*  
*City of Renton*  
*Ronald Wastewater District*  
*Sammamish Plateau Water and Sewer District*  
*City of Seattle*  
*Skyway Water and Sewer District*  
*Soos Creek Water and Sewer District*  
*Southwest Suburban Sewer District*  
*City of Tukwila*  
*Valley View Sewer District*  
*Vashon Sewer District*  
*Woodinville Water District*

March 27, 2019

The Honorable Dow Constantine  
County Executive, King County  
401 Fifth Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98104

The Honorable Rod Dembowski  
Chair, King County Council  
516 3rd Ave, Room 1200  
Seattle, WA 98104

### **SUBJECT: Wastewater Treatment Division 2020 Rate Recommendation**

Dear Executive Constantine and Councilmember Dembowski:

The Metropolitan Water Pollution Abatement Advisory Committee (MWWPAAC) would like to express its support for the 2020 sewer rate proposal submitted by Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) Director Mark Isaacson. MWWPAAC has reviewed the 2019-2020 WTD budget and rate proposal for 2020, and with it the revised rate forecast for 2019-2025. The proposed rate serves to continue reducing outstanding debt through 2030 by instituting increased cash financing and moderate rate increases, which is in line with the MWWPAAC debt review committee recommendation. Based on that review, we support the proposed 2020 rate of \$45.33, which represents no change from 2019's rate. We encourage you to support this proposed rate and continue to focus on affordability and resiliency.

The component agencies of MWWPAAC share WTD's mission of protecting public health by collecting and treating the region's wastewater to a high standard. Also of everyday importance to the agencies and our ratepayers is future rate stability. As we move into the next budget and rate setting cycle, we look forward to continued collaboration with WTD on reviewing WTD finances and policy decisions that impact future rates. We wish to highlight several topics that MWWPAAC finds important with regard to rate impacts:

- **Capacity Charge**

- Affordability Study:

- MWWPAAC supports the need for affordable housing in the region and agrees that an affordability program can reduce the burden of the capacity charge on new affordable housing projects. However, we need to hear more about the proposed source of funding for the program – whether it will be covered by an increase in the capacity charge itself or from the monthly sewer rate. MWWPAAC appreciates the regular updates as this program takes shape, and anticipates further discussion about a reasonable funding plan that reduces or minimizes increases in the monthly sewer rate.

- User Charge Classification Study:  
Several of our representatives have worked together with WTD staff on a separate study of the current categories of the capacity charge and how they might be improved and regularly updated to reflect changes in the region. We appreciate the opportunity to contribute to this issue and hope WTD will analyze this objectively, using the results of the work group recommendation, when implementing any changes.
- **Clean Water Plan (formerly known as Systemwide Comprehensive Plan)**
  - We appreciate the many Capital Projects WTD will need to implement over the next 20 years, which adds to the significance of the Clean Water Plan. Of particular interest is the impact of resiliency and recovery plans on WTD's capital plan and long-term rate projections. As WTD's core customer base, MWPAAC desires to address those challenges together.
- **Regional Infiltration and Inflow (I/I) Control Program**
  - We look forward to continued involvement in the study of enhancements to the Regional I/I Control Program. We appreciate WTD's active involvement in researching this problem and developing cost-effective plans to address it.
- **Sewage Treatment Contract Renewal**
  - We appreciate WTD's active involvement and cooperation on the ongoing sewage treatment contract negotiations with the Regional Negotiations Team. A refreshed contract will address many of the issues that have long been topics of discussion between WTD and MWPAAC.

In conclusion, MWPAAC supports the 2020 rate package with a continued commitment to a partnership with WTD for effective wastewater management. We remain appreciative of WTD's openness in giving MWPAAC a meaningful role, and look forward to continued collaboration.

Sincerely,



Pamela Carter  
MWPAAC Chair

cc: MWPAAC Members  
King County Councilmembers  
Regional Water Quality Committee Members  
Christie True, Director, Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP)  
Mark Isaacson, Division Director, Wastewater Treatment Division, DNRP