

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

TO: CHAIR AND BOARD MEMBERS
FROM: JENNIFER BURKE, DIRECTOR, SANTA ROSA WATER
SUBJECT: ANNUAL STORM WATER ENTERPRISE CHARGES

AGENDA ACTION: MOTION

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by Santa Rosa Water that the Board of Public Utilities, by motion, recommend that the City Council, following a public hearing on August 18, 2026, adopt by two-thirds vote the Storm Water Enterprise Charge Report and approve placement of the Storm Water Enterprise charges on the Sonoma County Property Tax Roll for collection by the Sonoma County Auditor-Controller-Treasurer-Tax Collector at the same time and in the same manner as Sonoma County property taxes are collected, unless those charges do not meet the County minimum of \$10 and/or parcel owner contact information is known to be incorrect.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this motion is to recommend that the City Council, following a public hearing on August 18, 2026, adopt the Storm Water Enterprise Charge Report and approve placement of the Storm Water Enterprise charges on the Sonoma County Property Tax Roll for collection by the Sonoma County Auditor-Controller-Treasurer-Tax Collector. The annual Storm Water Enterprise charge for Fiscal Year 2026-27 was set at \$43.52 per Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU) by City Council Resolution No. RES-2026-078, adopted on June 16, 2026. The proposed action concerns only the collection of the previously established charges and does not modify the ERU charge.

BACKGROUND

The City of Santa Rosa is required under the federal Clean Water Act to obtain and comply with a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit and Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges from the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (Storm Water Permit). To comply with permit requirements and to control and reduce flooding, property damage, erosion, and storm water quality degradation in the City, the Council, in 1996, added Title 16 to the City Code, which created a Storm Water Enterprise and Utility ("Storm Water Enterprise") as an agency of the City. Under Title 16, the City Council is authorized to prescribe and collect charges

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(special assessments) for the services and facilities of the Enterprise. The Council's intention to collect the Storm Water Enterprise charges on the Sonoma County Property Tax Roll was stated in Resolution 22880, adopted in 1996, which levied the annual charges.

PRIOR BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES REVIEW

Not applicable.

ANALYSIS

The City's Storm Water Enterprise follows procedures requiring an annual noticed public hearing before the annual charges are placed on the Sonoma County Property Tax Roll. A notice of the public hearing to be held August 18, 2026, was published on July 31, 2026, and will be published again on August 7, 2026. The Storm Water Enterprise Charge Report (Report), showing the Storm Water and Drainage charge for each parcel within the City limits for Fiscal Year 2026-27, was prepared and filed with the City Clerk.

The annual Storm Water Enterprise charge for Fiscal Year 2026-27 was set at \$43.52 per ERU by City Council Resolution No. RES-2026-078, adopted on June 16, 2026. The 2026-27 ERU fee was calculated in accordance with the formula outlined in Resolution 22880, adopted in 1996, which requires the ERU to be calculated annually based on the Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers for the San Francisco–Oakland–San Jose area (CPI-U) for a 12-month period ending in August. The CPI-U for the most recent 12-month period is 2.49%.

The purpose of the public hearing is to adopt the Report and approve placing the established charges in the Report on the Sonoma County Property Tax Roll for collection. The charges in the Report are based on the ERU charge previously approved by the Council in June 2026. Property owners may protest the placement of the Storm Water Enterprise charges on the Sonoma County Property Tax Roll by either speaking at the public hearing or submitting a written protest. Letters received in protest of placing charges on the tax roll will be provided to the City Council at the Council meeting.

If the Council finds that the owners of a majority of the separate parcels identified in the Report have protested, the Report shall not be adopted, and the charges shall be collected separately from the tax roll.

Pursuant to Health and Safety Code section 5473, an entity may elect to collect charges on the property tax roll by adopting an ordinance or resolution approved by a two-thirds vote of its legislative body. Accordingly, approval by a two-thirds vote of the City Council is required.

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To simplify the payment process for property owners and to reduce collection expenses, the City proposes to collect the charges on the Sonoma County Property Tax Roll. The charges have been collected annually on the tax roll since they were established in September 1996.

Parcels excluded from County billing because the charge is below the County's \$10 billing minimum or because the City is aware of incorrect owner contact information will not be billed separately by the City. The administrative cost of separate billing would exceed the potential revenue. Charges not collected from these parcels will not affect the charges imposed on other parcels.

FISCAL IMPACT

Approval of the proposed action would have no additional impact on the Storm Water Enterprise Fund or General Fund

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378, the proposed action is not a "project" subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because recommending that the City Council adopt the Storm Water Enterprise Charge Report and place the established charges on the Sonoma County Property Tax Roll does not have the potential to result in either a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. In the alternative, the proposed action is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the project may have a significant effect on the environment.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

NOTIFICATION

A notice of the public hearing was published in *The Press Democrat* on July 31, 2026, and will be republished on August 7, 2026.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – [Storm Water Enterprise Charge Report](#)

PRESENTER

Nick Lynn, Research and Program Coordinator