

Los Angeles County Public Works: Sewer Maintenance Districts

SERVICE AND PROPOSED RATE INCREASE *Frequently Asked Questions*



Los Angeles County Public Works (Public Works) administers maintenance services for the Consolidated Sewer Maintenance District (CSMD) and various Sanitary Sewer Zones throughout LA County. The CSMD system serves over 500,000 parcels and a population of over 2 million people within the county's unincorporated areas (excluding Marina del Rey) and 38 cities. The District's system includes over 4,600 miles of sanitary sewers, 87 pump stations, and four wastewater treatment plants.

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What sewer maintenance services does Public Works provide for customers?

Public Works provides various sewer maintenance services to protect the public and the environment in a highly efficient, effective, and responsible manner. The services provided by Public Works are:

Preventative maintenance

- Service requests regarding sewer odors, noisy manholes, insects, etc.
- Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) inspections
- Regulatory requirements compliance
- Sewer manhole inspections
- Sewer line cleanings
- Installing sewer saddles to connect to sewer mains
- Operation, maintenance, and inspection of pump stations

Accumulative capital outlay and conditions assessment

- Sewer line and pump station repair/rehabilitation
- GIS mapping
- Plan review for maintenance needs
- CCTV Condition Assessment Program
- Private Contract (PC)/New sewer acceptance review

24-hour emergency response and service request

- Sanitary sewer overflows
- Service requests regarding sewer odors, noisy manholes, insects, etc.
- Sanitary sewer stoppages or backups
- Pump station malfunctions

I've never noticed Public Works performing these services in my area; why is sewer maintenance necessary?

Proper maintenance services go largely unnoticed by customers and are essential to keeping society and the environment safe! Sewer directly impacts public health, recreation areas, natural spaces, infrastructure, and local businesses – all of which contribute directly to societal and environmental health.

What roles do sewer maintenance services play in our society?

A working sewer system is vital for a clean environment and a healthy society as it allows people to live, travel, and work in cities without worrying about sewage overflows. When sewer systems are not properly maintained, it can cause blockages, flooding, and pollution. Public Works provides sewer maintenance services to protect public health and the environment and to keep our communities safe.



Why does Public Works need to increase its rates for sewer maintenance services?

Public Works is pursuing a rate increase in 2025 to continue funding essential projects and operations and maintenance of the region's sewer infrastructure and to keep pace with rising inflation. The new rates will enable Public Works to continue delivering safe, reliable sewer services to the community.

How does Public Works determine proposed new rates and who will be impacted?

In 2024, Public Works conducted a comprehensive Rate Study for sewer maintenance services. The Rate Study was prepared by an independent, third-party firm. The Study provides a detailed review of Public Works' costs, and the rate structure needed to meet those costs to continue providing safe and reliable sewer maintenance services. The proposed rate adjustments were calculated in compliance with the requirements of Proposition 218, and the overall cost is shared proportionally between the properties receiving sewer maintenance services from Public Works.

How does this affect me?

If your property receives sewer service from Public Works within the Consolidated Sewer Maintenance District, you will receive a Proposition 218 Notice in early May 2025. If the proposed rate increases are approved, you will see the new rates reflected on your property tax bill beginning July 2025.

What is Proposition 218?

Proposition 218 is an initiative passed by California voters in November 1996 designed to allow greater public involvement in rate-setting processes for public agencies. It requires public agencies to mail a public notice to every property owner within their service area when proposing a rate increase. It establishes a protest process for property owners or tenants if they wish to oppose the proposed rates.

Through this process, property owners or tenants can submit a letter of protest to the Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors Board Operations Division before the public hearing date listed on the Proposition 218 notice. During the public hearing, the LA County Board of Supervisors will decide whether to approve or deny the rate increase, considering the number of protest letters submitted and the public outreach efforts carried out by Public Works as part of the Proposition 218 process.

When will property owners receive a Proposition 218 Notice, and what does it include?

All property owners within the service area receiving sewer maintenance services will receive a Proposition 218 Notice from Public Works in Spring 2025. It will detail the proposed rate increase as well as the public hearing date, instructions for submitting a written protest, future open house and webinar dates, links to additional resources, and contact information for any questions or concerns.

What if Public Works receives a Majority Protest?

A majority protest is defined as Public Works receiving letters of protest from more than 50% of the affected property owners. If Public Works receives a majority protest, the rate increase cannot be implemented.

What if Public Works does **NOT** receive a Majority Protest?

The County Board of Supervisors can proceed with approving the rate increase to fund the improvements specified in the notice, and the rate increase will take effect according to the specified timeline.

What might happen if the rate increase is **NOT** approved?

The rate increase will ensure the longevity and effectiveness of the sewer system; if the rate increase is not approved, Public Works may lack sufficient funds to sustain and improve operations, maintain aging infrastructure, and support essential projects to keep the system running smoothly. If aging infrastructure is not properly maintained, it can cause sewer blockages, flooding, and pollution to our environment.

When would the potential rate increase go into effect?

The potential rate increase would go into effect beginning July 2025 and would be reflected as a line item on property tax rolls.

Where can I learn more about Public Works' Sewer Maintenance Services and Proposition 218?



**Public Works'
Sewer Maintenance
Service Information:**

dpw.lacounty.gov/sewer



**Proposition 218
Understanding
Local Changes**

<https://bit.ly/CAProp218>