



**TO:** Hyun Kim, Interim City Manager  
**FROM:** Christina Curran, Assistant Division Manager, ES Rates & Budget  
Ramiro A. Chavez, P.E. PgMP, Director/City Engineer, Environmental Services  
**COPY:** City Council and City Clerk  
**SUBJECT:** Ordinance to Establish an Effective Date for Amendments to Tacoma Municipal Code 12.08B.210 related to Wastewater Residential Rates  
**DATE:** September 15, 2025

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### SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:

An ordinance to amend prior Ordinance No. 29049 establishing January 1, 2026 as the effective date for the previously adopted amendments to Section 12.08B.210 of the Tacoma Municipal Code related to Wastewater Residential Rates, that changed the assumed water usage for customers with incomplete or no winter flow records to 5.0 ccf per month for single-family dwellings and 4.0 ccf per unit per month for multi-family dwellings, from 6.0 ccf and 5.0 ccf respectively.

### BACKGROUND:

**This Department's Recommendation is Based On:** Wastewater rates are a combination of a fixed rate and a variable rate based on water usage during the winter months (December through March) referred to as the Winter Quarter Average (WQA). Customers who do not have flow records during this period or have incomplete records are billed with an assumed flow amount, per the Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC). In August 2025, Council approved Ordinance 29049 amending the assumed flow amounts from 6.0 ccf per month for single-family dwellings and 5.0 ccf per unit per month for multi-family dwellings, to 5.0 ccf and 4.0 ccf respectively. The intent was for the code changes to become effective with already planned rate increases on January 1, 2026.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ CUSTOMER RESEARCH:

WQA data from the last three years was used to evaluate the average flow data for the variable portion of Wastewater bills. Prior data was excluded to avoid COVID-19 impacts that could distort usage data.

### 2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

#### **Equity and Accessibility: (Mandatory)**

This ordinance amends the prior Ordinance No. 29049 and establishes the effective date for the previously approved amendments to the TMC that will lower the wastewater bills for new residential customers in single- and multi-family dwellings when limited or incomplete water consumption history is available.

#### **Economy/Workforce: Equity Index Score: Low Opportunity**

Increase the percentage of people relocating to the city and affordability of housing compared to neighboring jurisdictions.

#### **Explain how your legislation will affect the selected indicator(s).**

For customer bills using the assumed flow rate, this amendment will make the prior amendments to decrease the wastewater bill for single-family dwellings by \$6.34 per month; for multi-family dwellings, by \$6.34 per unit per month effective January 1, 2026, along with other planned rate increases.



**ALTERNATIVES:**

Alternative(s)	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)
1. Status Quo – No Change	New customers immediately receive lower bills.	New customer bills will be created manually by staff until a permanent IT solution is implemented. Implementation timeline is inconsistent with public statements.

**EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:**

Customers counts and flow rates for Wastewater customers will continue to be monitored to ensure the assumed usage rates in the TMC reflect accurate consumption from our customers.

**STAFF/SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:**

Environmental Services Department recommends amending prior Ordinance No. 29049 establishing an effective date of January 1, 2026, for the amendments to Section 12.08B.210 of the TMC to decrease the assumed water usage for customers with incomplete or no winter flow records to 5.0 ccf per month for single-family dwellings and 4.0 ccf per unit per month for multi-family dwellings.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The proposed amendment will decrease revenues for the Wastewater utility due to lower customer bills for those customers with incomplete or no winter flows. This decrease will be less than one half of one percent of projected 2026 total revenues.

Fund Number & Name	COST OBJECT (CC/WBS/ORDER)	Cost Element	Total Amount
1. ES Wastewater Fund 4300	523900	4343150	\$550,000
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$550,000</b>

**What Funding is being used to support the expense?**

The decreased revenues can be absorbed by existing cash balances within the Wastewater Fund.

**Are the expenditures and revenues planned and budgeted in this biennium's current budget?**

**NO, PLEASE EXPLAIN BELOW**

The revenue decrease is not budgeted in the current biennium, but the utility can absorb the change in revenues.

**Are there financial costs or other impacts of not implementing the legislation?**

**No**

**Will the legislation have an ongoing/recurring fiscal impact?**

**YES**



**City of Tacoma**

**City Council Action Memorandum**

**Will the legislation change the City's FTE/personnel counts?**  
**No**