



Ross Valley Sanitary District Sewer Service Charge Overview / Q & A

If you have received the 'Ross Valley Sanitary District Notice of Public Hearing on Proposed Rates for Sewer Service Charges' and have additional questions not addressed in this overview, please contact CustomerCare@NBSgov.com or call **800-676-7516**.

What is a sewer service charge?

A sewer service charge is the annual fee paid by users for their wastewater utility service. The service charge includes collection, conveyance, pumping, treatment, disposal and recycling of residential and commercial wastewater. The service charge funds both the Ross Valley Sanitary District (RVSD) collection system and the Central Marin Sanitation Agency (CMSA) treatment plant operations and capital programs. RVSD partners with the Marin County Assessor's office for billing and collection of your sewer service charge, which is included in your property tax bill.

What is the current year (FY2023/24) sewer service charge?

The sewer service charge varies depending on your service area and property classification:

Ross Valley (RV) Zone

Single Family & Commercial	\$1,212/year per EDU*
Multi-Family	\$1,087/year

Larkspur (LK) Zone (south of Corte Madera Creek)

Single Family & Commercial	\$1,712/year per EDU*
Multi-Family	\$1,533/year

*EDU = equivalent dwelling unit. A single-family residence is 1 EDU.

How is the sewer service charge for each property calculated?

Each property is charged a fixed amount per equivalent dwelling unit (EDU). A single-family residence is 1 EDU, and a multi-family unit (such as an apartment) is 0.9 EDU. The number of units on the property and land use classification is determined by the County of Marin Assessor's office. They can be reached at **415-473-7215**.

How is the sewer service charge for commercial property calculated?

Commercial property charges are based on the most recent winter water usage as provided by Marin Municipal Water District (MMWD). Water use is measured in CCF's. One CCF = 100 cubic feet, or 748 Gallons and covers a two-month period or 60 days. The actual calculation of EDUs is as follows: number of EDUs = CCFs x 748 ÷ 60 ÷ 205 (gallons per day). The number of EDUs is then rounded to the nearest tenth of an EDU. The minimum annual charge is one EDU with water usage and .78 EDU with no flow.

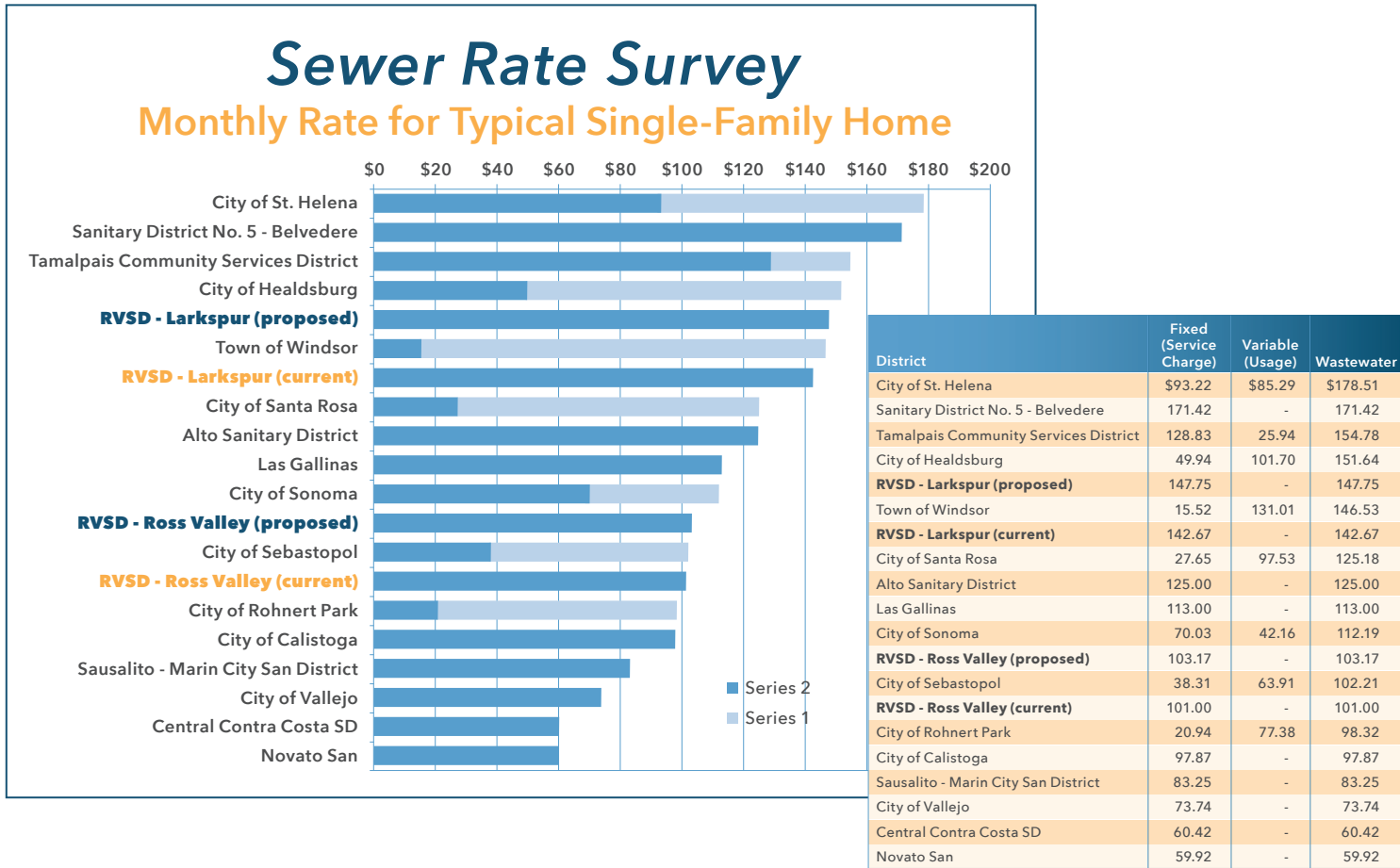
What is a high strength factor and how does it apply to commercial property?

The high strength factor is applied to customers who put greater strain on the wastewater treatment process than the average customer. This factor applies to commercial users such as restaurants, bakeries, and dentist offices. The EDUs calculated in the standard commercial calculation is then multiplied by 2.34 to determine the total EDUs charged.



Who can I talk to if I have questions about my sewer service charges?

To get more information regarding your sewer service charges, please contact NBS at **1-800-676-7516** or email them at: customercare@nbsgov.com.



How are the rates set and by whom?

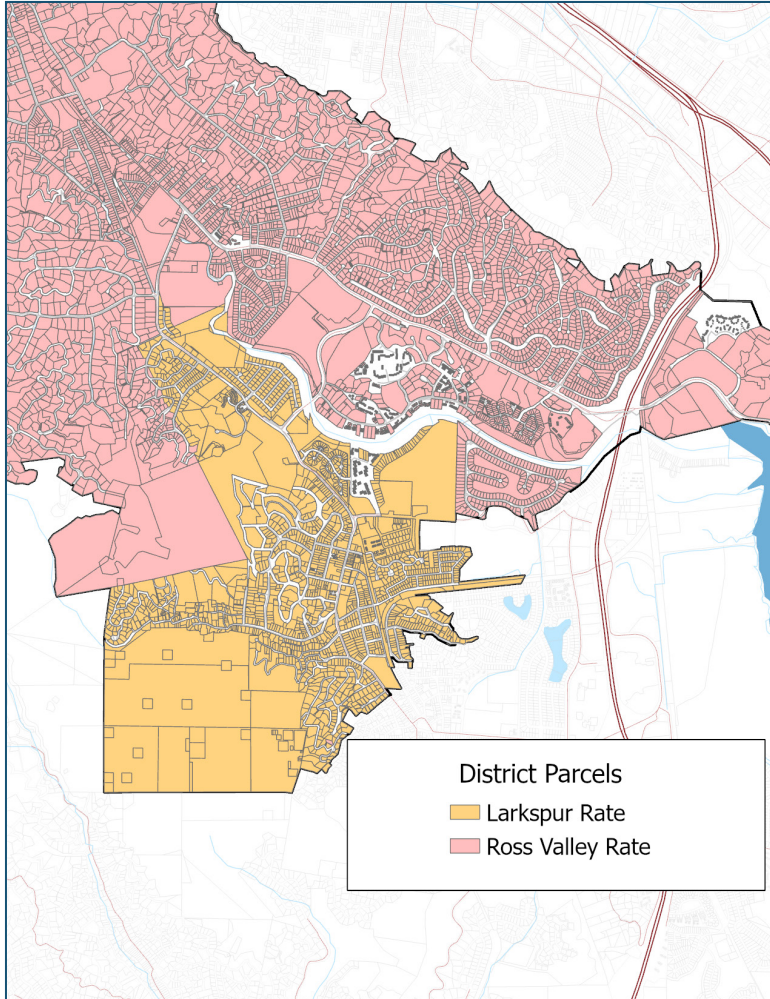
The rates are set by the [Board of Directors](#) (Board) of RVSD. The Board is made up of five publicly elected officials. The rates are set by conducting a study of operating and capital funding needs, usually over a five-year forward-looking period. The most recent cost of service and rate study was completed in 2024. New rates will be adopted following a public hearing and protest vote process as required under State law, Proposition 218. A copy of the [2024 Rate Study](#) is posted on the District website.

How do RVSD’s rates compare to others in neighboring Districts?

RVSD’s rates are average when compared to neighboring wastewater utilities as shown above. Aging wastewater infrastructure is a statewide issue, especially in older communities such as ours. Your sewer service rates help fund extensive capital improvements programs currently taking place at RVSD and CMSA to replace materials and equipment that are reaching the end of their useful life, as well as to comply with regulatory requirements.



Ross Valley Sanitary District



Why are the Larkspur Zone rates higher than Ross Valley?

Properties within the Ross Valley Zone have a small portion of their Marin County property tax, known as an Ad Valorem, allocated for wastewater utility service, which provides funding for the RVSD capital program.

Properties within the Larkspur Rate Zone*, in the city limits south of Corte Madera Creek (except Riviera Circle), do not pay this Ad Valorem tax.

** Shown to left.*

To make up the difference and ensure equitable cost of service, these Larkspur properties are charged for this difference through their sewer service charge.

How do I contact the RVSD Board of Directors?

You can reach the Board of Directors through the Clerk of the Board at **415-259-2949** or clerk@rvsd.org. Monthly Board meetings are open to the public and are regularly scheduled for the third Wednesday of the month. Contact the Clerk to confirm meeting information or check our website at www.RVSD.org.

I'm a single occupant in a small house. Why do I pay the same rate as more occupants in a larger house?

The current billing structure for all residential properties is based on a per unit charge and does not account for use or occupancy. Approximately 90% of the total cost of providing wastewater utility service (operating, maintaining, and replacing the wastewater infrastructure) is made up of fixed costs, which do not vary with the quantity of flow. Therefore, rates are minimally dependent on flow volumes.

My property is on a septic system. Should I be charged for sewer service?

No. If your property is on a septic system you should not be charged for sewer service. If you are being charged and are on septic, this can be confirmed with available records or physical inspection. Contact RVSD to update the necessary property records and correct your billing.



Will sewer rates continue rising in the future?

Sewer rates are set to increase according to the following chart, through Fiscal Year 2028/29. Our current ten-year forecast suggests that future annual increases may be lower and match annual cost-of-living increases as we catch-up on deferred repairs and upkeep.

Rate Zone/Customer Class	FY 2023/24		FY 2024/25		FY 2025/26		FY 2026/27		FY 2027/28		FY 2028/29	
		% change		% change		% change		% change		% change		% change
Ross Valley Rate Zone												
Single Family Residential	\$1,212	5.8%	\$1,238	2.1%	\$1,288	4.0%	\$1,340	4.0%	\$1,391	3.8%	\$1,440	3.5%
Single Family w/ADU	\$1,819	5.8%	\$1,857	2.1%	\$1,932	4.0%	\$2,010	4.0%	\$2,087	3.8%	\$2,160	3.5%
Multi-Family Residential	\$1,087	5.8%	\$1,114	2.5%	\$1,159	4.0%	\$1,206	4.0%	\$1,252	3.8%	\$1,296	3.5%
Commercial	\$1,212	5.8%	\$1,238	2.1%	\$1,288	4.0%	\$1,340	4.0%	\$1,391	3.8%	\$1,440	3.5%
Commercial High-Strength	\$2,797	5.8%	\$2,897	3.6%	\$3,014	4.0%	\$3,136	4.0%	\$3,255	3.8%	\$3,370	3.5%
Commercial Minimum	\$911	5.8%	\$966	6.0%	\$1,005	4.0%	\$1,045	4.0%	\$1,085	3.8%	\$1,123	3.5%
Larkspur Rate Zone												
Single Family Residential	\$1,712	5.8%	\$1,773	3.6%	\$1,844	4.0%	\$1,918	4.0%	\$1,991	3.8%	\$2,061	3.5%
Single Family w/ADU	\$2,568	5.8%	\$2,659	3.5%	\$2,766	4.0%	\$2,887	4.0%	\$2,987	3.8%	\$3,092	3.5%
Multi-Family Residential	\$1,533	5.8%	\$1,596	4.1%	\$1,660	4.0%	\$1,726	4.0%	\$1,792	3.8%	\$1,855	3.5%
Commercial	\$1,712	5.8%	\$1,773	3.6%	\$1,844	4.0%	\$1,918	4.0%	\$1,991	3.8%	\$2,061	3.5%
Commercial High-Strength	\$3,933	5.8%	\$4,149	5.5%	\$4,315	4.0%	\$4,488	4.0%	\$4,659	3.8%	\$4,823	3.5%
Commercial Minimum	\$1,284	5.8%	\$1,383	7.7%	\$1,438	4.0%	\$1,496	4.0%	\$1,553	3.8%	\$1,608	3.5%

What should I do if I think I was overbilled in prior years?

You can request a refund by completing a [refund request form](#). When submitting this form, your property tax bills and supporting documentation for the overbilling must be attached. Per section 11 of Ordinance 101, you can request up to three years of prior payments related to overbillings.

Are there any programs to assist low-income ratepayers?

Yes. A sewer service charge rebate is available to eligible low-income customers. This program provides a 25% discount off sewer service charges. [Click here](#) for more information and to see if you qualify, contact NBS at **1-800-676-7516**, or email them at: customercare@nbsgov.com.

Can I suspend/cancel sewer service if I am selling my house or it will be vacant?

No. If there is a remaining physical connection to the sanitary sewer system, most sewer ordinances do not suspend sewer service charges regardless of occupancy. Most of the costs to operate and maintain sewer and treatment systems are unrelated to wastewater volume, and center on the fixed system of pipes, pumps and treatment processes. Sewer service charges are billed on annual property tax bills. Whoever is listed with the County of Marin as the parcel owner is responsible for the payments. The billing structure does not account for vacancies and therefore all properties are charged regardless of occupancy.

MORE INFORMATION

Visit: www.RVSD.org

Email: customercare@nbsgov.com

Call NBS at 1-800-676-7516

We can assist you with emergency service 24 hours per day, seven days per week at **415-259-2949**.