

**For Immediate Release**

October 13, 2020

Contact: Heather Sumagaysay, Public Information Officer, [hsumagaysay@cityofventura.ca.gov](mailto:hsumagaysay@cityofventura.ca.gov)  
Susan Rungren, Ventura Water General Manager, [srungren@cityofventura.ca.gov](mailto:srungren@cityofventura.ca.gov)

**Ventura Water launches a new engagement tool to encourage public participation in rate study**

**Ventura, Calif.** - Ventura Water recently launched a new digital platform designed to encourage public participation in the City of Ventura's on-going Water and Wastewater Rate Study. The new site allows customers to provide input by responding to surveys, submitting questions, and sharing recommendations on a digital idea-board.

The webpage, [www.VenturaWaterRates.net](http://www.VenturaWaterRates.net), includes an educational video series that highlights investment needs and details the 18-month long rate evaluation process.

"COVID-19 has changed the way we connect and engage with the community. Transparency and enhanced communication remain a priority as we establish new water and wastewater rates," said Ventura Water General Manager, Susan Rungren. "My hope is that this new site will improve customer experience and allow residents to participate in important policy decisions that will serve our community for years to come."

Currently, Ventura Water, with the support from financial experts, is undergoing a cost of service and rate design study to update water and wastewater rates in a fair and equitable manner. As a part of the study, the City's Water Commission will evaluate items such as the City's water rate tiers, water shortage rates, wastewater rate structure, and financing options for major initiatives, such as the State Water Interconnection project and the VenturaWaterPure project.

"Due to prolonged drought, increased regulations, and aging infrastructure, significant investments are needed to improve water quality, meet legal requirements, and secure a reliable water supply," shared Assistant City Manager, Akbar Alikhan. "Our City is faced with complex challenges and difficult decisions as it relates to water and wastewater system needs and public input will be critical in making those decisions."

It is anticipated that recommended rate changes will be presented to City Council in early 2021. If approved, new water and wastewater rates will be implemented in July 2021.

Members of the public are encouraged to get involved in the Rate Study by visiting the new engagement page, participating in the Water Commission's monthly meetings, and attending Neighborhood Community Council meetings in November, where Ventura Water will be providing updates.

For more information on the Water and Wastewater Rate Study visit [www.VenturaWaterRates.net](http://www.VenturaWaterRates.net).