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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: UNION SANITARY DISTRICT
5072 BENSON ROAD
UNION CITY, CA 94587

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Union Sanitary District Proposes New Rates

Union Sanitary District is proposing rate increases over the next five years to cover rising costs associated with providing service and maintaining aging infrastructure. The district recently mailed notices of a January 25, 2016 public hearing on the proposed rate changes to all property owners in Fremont, Newark and Union City.

If adopted, rates for single-family residences, the majority of USD's customers, would increase 1 percent in fiscal year 2017 and 3.5 percent in each of the four following fiscal years. The current annual rate for single-family residences is \$377. If adopted, in FY 2017 the rate would increase by \$3.05 to \$380.05. In the fifth year, the rate would be \$436.12.

The proposed rates are based on the results of a comprehensive study of the cost of providing sewer service from July 2016 through June 2021. They reflect the study's calculations of minimum rate increases for each year that would allow the District to meet its capital, operational, and reserve expense requirements.

In anticipation of lower revenues resulting from California's ongoing drought, the district was able in FY 2016 to modify some operating expenses and delay certain capital projects. These adjustments reduced the overall cost pressure on FY 2017, allowing for a lower rate increase than in the following years. Overall, the rate increases are lower than in previous years and keep USD's rates among the lowest in the region.

"USD's rates are within the lowest 11 percent of 26 Bay Area wastewater service providers surveyed, yet we provide some of the most extensive services," said General Manager Paul Eldredge. "We understand that no one likes a rate increase, and we strive to provide a reliable, essential service as efficiently and cost-effectively as possible. Even with the proposed increases, our rates would remain well below those of other Bay Area agencies."

An informational meeting will be held prior to the public hearing to provide customers the opportunity to meet USD's staff and ask questions about the proposed rates and services the district provides to the Tri-Cities. It will be held from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Tuesday, January 12, 2016 at the Fremont Main Library, 2400 Stevenson Blvd., in Fremont. All members of the community are invited to attend.

USD's mission includes protecting public health and the environment through its stewardship of wastewater infrastructure in Fremont, Newark and Union City. The District manages a large collection of facilities that includes more than 800 miles of sewer lines, seven pump stations, and the buildings and equipment at its Union City wastewater treatment plant.

"The cost of operating and maintaining these facilities continues to rise year after year, often outpacing inflation," Eldredge said. USD is projecting to spend more than \$175 million for improvements to the Tri-City sewer and treatment system infrastructure over the next 10 years.

“Some of our pipelines date back to the early 1900s, and the majority of the current treatment plant was first constructed in 1978,” said Eldredge. “Although our assets are well-maintained, repair and replacement of aging facilities is critical to reliable service and continued protection of public health.”

Property owners may protest the proposed rates via mail, email or fax until 5 p.m. on January 25, 2016, or in-person before the close of the public comment portion of the public hearing, which will be held at 7 p.m. on January 25, 2016 in the District Boardroom, 5072 Benson Road, Union City.

Protests must contain the property owner’s name, the street address or assessor’s parcel number (or other parcel description), and must be signed, unless sent via email, by the property owner. Property owners may submit one protest for each parcel owned.

Protests may be submitted by mail to Union Sanitary District – Rate Protest FY17-21 at 5072 Benson Road, Union City, CA 94587, by email to rates@unionsanitary.ca.gov, or by fax to (510) 477-7501.

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Union Sanitary District operates a 33 million gallon per day wastewater treatment facility in Union City and provides collection, treatment and disposal services to a total population of over 344,000 in Fremont, Newark and Union City, CA. The District maintains over 800 miles of underground pipeline in its service area. For more information about Union Sanitary District, please visit www.unionsanitary.ca.gov.