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**FORT WORTH** — --Correction: An earlier story said that water rates would increase 6.41 percent. The Fort Worth Water Department is seeking a similar revenue increase, it is not clear how it will impact rates.

Fort Worth water and sewer customers would see increases in their rates for 2014 under proposals the water department is putting forth as part of the city's budget process.

In a [report](#) to City Council members as part of their review of the 2014 fiscal year budget, the water department is recommending revenue increases of 6.41 percent in water and 5.27 percent in sewer. The report didn't make it clear what the impact would be on rates.

Mary Gugliuzza, water spokeswoman, confirmed the staff is asking the council to approve retail rate increases for water and sewer and that water director Frank Crumb will lay out the specifics in a Friday presentation to the council.

The council, which gets its first view of the city staff's proposed budget Tuesday afternoon, has the final say on water and sewer rates when it votes on the budget this fall. Last year, it [blocked a water rate increase](#) by a 5-4 vote, worrying about the impact on a range of users, but allowed a 2.6 percent sewer increase.

Fort Worth's cost of providing the service continues to go up, and thus the city has to raise rates, the city's water director, Frank Crumb, told council members in his report.

The city's raw water costs from the Tarrant Regional Water District are going up 14.9 percent in 2014, Crumb told council members. The city's fixed infrastructure costs continue to grow, too, the report said.

Meanwhile, water demand is flat or declining because of customers' conservation, more efficient appliances and better plumbing code requirements, the report said.

Seventeen percent of retail water revenue comes from fixed monthly charges, and 83 percent is based on volume, Crumb said. A consultant hired by the city recommended Fort Worth raise the 17 percent of 25 percent over five years, beginning in 2014, Crumb told council members.

Sewer usage also has declined in recent years, due to conservation and better appliances and codes, Crumb's report said. The city also faces continued sewer infrastructure costs regardless of usage.

"Lower sewer volumes by account were not immediately recognized, resulting in a divide between the volumes used to set the unit rates and the actual billed volumes," the report said.

A group of residential, commercial, industrial, irrigation and super user "stakeholders" told the city last year that it should adjust its rates for lower volumes over three years, with last year's sewer rate increase being the first of three consecutive annual increases.

Crumb's report told the council that the recommended 2014 increase should complete the adjustment, and that none based on volumes should be needed in 2015.

The proposed wholesale revenue increase for the 30 cities that get Fort Worth's water service would be 16.21 percent. The 23 cities that use the sewer service would see a 3.79 percent decrease. Wholesale revenue needs are based on the last completed year, or 2012 in this case, said Kara Shuror, Fort Worth assistant water director.

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