



COUNTY SERVICE AREA 70 W-4

Pioneertown

RATE PRESENTATION

GREG SNYDER

DIVISION MANAGER

THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 2026



"We promote the safety, health and enrichment of the communities we serve by providing essential municipal services along with diverse community-based programs in an efficient and sustainable manner"



OVERVIEW

- Special Districts are created to deliver specialized services essential to health, safety, and well-being of communities. In many areas, communities have no other means of accessing these critical services.
- The Department of Public Works, Special Districts oversees administration, operations, capital improvement and maintenance of 17 water and sanitation Districts throughout the County.
- The last rate increase for County Service Area 70 W-4 Pioneertown was approved by the Board of Supervisors for a 3.5% increase for 2023, 2024, and 2025. Prior to that, customer rates had remained unchanged since 2013, resulting in a prolonged period without inflationary or cost of service alignments.

RATE STUDY

San Bernardino County Special Districts retained NBS Consulting, a California-based public finance advisory firm specializing in municipal utility rate studies and financial planning for local agencies. NBS has extensive experience preparing cost-of-service analyses, long-term financial forecasts, and Proposition 218–compliant rate structures for water, wastewater, and special districts throughout the state.

- NBS evaluated all water and sewer districts for:
 - Cost of providing service
 - Planned capital improvement projects
 - Overall expenses and revenues
- Final Rate Study Report for CSA 70 W-4
Pioneertown
 - 38.2% increase/year for 5 years is needed to sustain operations

A link to the Rate Study will be provided in the Proposition 218 notice you will receive in April 2026.



NOTABLE INCREASES AND EXPENSES

Labor & Equipment

- Board approved labor increases average **3.5%** per year 2024-27*
- Wells, pumps, boosters, electrical components

Materials

- Steel, PVC, Hoses & fittings, chemicals
- Materials Increase **35%****

Outside vendors/contractors

- CA Prevailing Wage Rates up **26%**** from 2017***

* IBEW MOU Increase 2024-2027

** CA CCCI Construction Cost Index 2017-2025

*** California Department of Industrial Relations



OTHER FACTORS INCREASING COSTS

Utility Costs

- Electricity to run buildings, wells & pumps
- Water pumping costs up **83%** since 2014*

Regulatory Obligations

- California Air Resources Board (CARB)
- State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB)
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- San Bernardino County Public Health (EHS)
- San Bernardino County Fire Hazardous Material (CUPA)

*California Public Advocates 2014-2025



HISTORICAL RATE TRENDS & STRUCTURE

Extended Period Without Rate Adjustments:

- No rate increases from 2013 through 2022
- Nearly 10 years without adjustment despite inflation, rising labor/material costs, and regulatory requirements

Water Rate Structure (Historical Context):

- Multi-tier rate structure historically utilized (Tier 1–5)
- Tier 1 increased from \$1.50 to \$7.34
- Higher tiers reached \$9.71 to \$11.16
- Tier 5 eliminated over time

Key Observations:

- Long period of rate stagnation created structural underfunding
- Followed by necessary corrective increases
- Recent adjustments trending 3 to 5% annually



PROPOSED WATER RATES

- Rate increase proposed to ensure service levels are maintained and keep pace with rising costs.
- Rate shifts to a single tier rate.

Current Water Rate Tier 1: \$7.34

- Rate Year 1 - \$9.65 (effective August 1, 2026)
- Rate Year 2 - \$10.61
- Rate Year 3 - \$11.67
- Rate Year 4 - \$12.84
- Rate Year 5 - \$14.12

Current Facilities Charge (FC) 3/4" meter: \$43.24/month

- Rate Year 1 - \$47.55 (effective August 1, 2026)
- Rate Year 2 - \$52.31
- Rate Year 3 - \$57.54
- Rate Year 4 - \$63.29
- Rate Year 5 - \$69.62



CSA 70 W4 PROJECTS

Project Name	Project Scope	Cost Estimate
Master Plan	A long-term strategic framework that evaluates current water infrastructure, forecasts future demand based on growth, and identifies necessary capital improvements	\$150,000
Treatment Feasibility Study	A comprehensive evaluation determining if a proposed treatment facility is technically, economically, and environmentally viable	\$150,000
Treatment Facility	New treatment facility based on the Treatment Feasibility Study	\$1,000,000
Future CIP	To be determined by the Master Plan	\$300,000

SUMMARY

- Special Districts has a duty to maintain financial health of service areas, and is proposing a modest increase to offset increases to labor, materials, equipment, and additional regulatory obligations
- Continued cost escalation is placing sustained pressure on both administrative and operational service levels, reducing the District's ability to maintain reliability, regulatory compliance, and long-term system sustainability



NEXT STEPS

- **April 7, 2026 (Board meeting):** Resolution of Intent for proposed water rate adjustments brought to the Board of Supervisors
- **April 8, 2026:** Department mails Proposition 218 Notices to residents
- **June 9, 2026 (Board meeting):** Conduct Public Hearing and Majority Protest Tabulation (If majority protest does not exist, process will move forward)
- **June 23, 2026 (Board meeting):** Adoption of ordinance implementing revised rates
- **August 1, 2026:** Proposed revised rates go into effect



**THANK
YOU**