

## STONINGTON WATER COMPANY

### PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Stonington Water Company is providing notice to its customers that a Public Hearing will be held on February 20, 2023 at 7:00 PM at the Stonington Town Office at 32 Main Street to discuss and hear comments on a proposed water rate increase. Water rates were last increased in April, 2018. Due to rising operational costs and aging infrastructure, the Water Company must raise rates to both maintain and improve its existing infrastructure and to properly operate the water system. The total amount of the proposed rate increase for all categories is approximately \$95,340 or 25 percent in most categories. For the typical residential customer, the minimum charge for 1200 cubic feet of water usage will increase from \$128 per billing quarter to \$160 per billing quarter or by twenty-five percent. For the typical residential customer, this is an increase of \$32 per billing quarter. The impact to larger meters is a 25% increase from the respective quarterly bill. Usage charges have been increased from \$12 per 100 cubic feet to \$20 per 100 cubic feet due to the need to conserve water. The basis of all usage charges remains as previously designed. Seasonal charges will increase in the same manner. The existing water use allowance benefit for all residential and seasonal customers will remain as currently designed in the existing rate structure. Public Fire Protection rates, determined pursuant to Chapter 69 of the Public Utility Commission rules, will increase from \$77,600 to \$110,500. Rates are proposed to become effective on April 1, 2023.

This rate increase adjustment is required to cover increased operational costs necessary to properly maintain and operate the water system and the existing debt (principal and interest) costs incurred for source water and distribution system improvements. In addition, the increase is necessary to start the process of funding water storage tank improvements/replacement work.

The Water Company is submitting this request for a rate change to the PUC pursuant to Title 35-A M.R.S. §6104. Pursuant to 35-A M.R.S. §6104, a customer has the right to request additional information relating to the present and proposed rates from the Water Company, the right to an open and fair hearing, and the right to assistance from the Public Advocate. Customers also have the right under 35-A M.R.S. §6104 to petition the Maine Public Utilities Commission to suspend and investigate the Company's rates pursuant to 35-M.R.S. Section 310, 15% of the Water Company's customers file with the Stonington Water Company's President, Evelyn Duncan, and with the Public Utilities Commission, State House Station #18, Augusta, ME 04333-0018, a petition or petitions demanding review by the PUC of the proposed rate changes. Signatures on the petitions filed pursuant to Section 7 are invalid unless accompanied by the printed names and addresses of the signers. Upon request, the Water Company will provide customers with petition forms that include space for the signatures and the printed names and addresses of the signers.

A copy of material supporting the proposed rate increase will be available at the Town of Stonington Town Office at 32 Main Street for inspection on or after December 16, 2022. If you have any questions or desire additional information, you may call Annaleis Hafford, Water Department Manager at 223-2232 or Kathleen Billings, Town Manager at 367-2351 (X10), or the PUC at 287-3831. For additional assistance, contact the Public Advocate, State House Station #112, Augusta, Maine 04333-0112, 624-3687.

**PUC CASE NUMBER 2022-00353**