



**PUBLIC REQUEST TO ADDRESS  
THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA**

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

HILDA L. SOLIS  
HOLLY J. MITCHELL  
LINDSEY P. HORVATH  
JANICE HAHN  
KATHRYN BARGER

**Correspondence Received**

Agenda #	Relate To	Position	The following individuals submitted comments on agenda item:	
			Name	Comments
1.		<b>Oppose</b>	A Philipson	I strongly oppose the massive general rate hike without specific considerations to the benefits to the City of Malibu, our community, our county or our region. Residents and businesses are facing threats from climate change and insufficient planning for water use, resiliency and smart technology. Do better than just price gouging without implementing any better usage & infrastructure plans.
			Abraham K Wang	
			adriana vidal	
			alan w armstrong	
			alan w armstrong	
			alan w armstrong	
			Alexander Kim	
			Allen F Fischer	The rates for water service are already extraordinarily high. The proposed increase drastically outpaces any realistic projection of the general rate of inflation.
			alyssa LoVullo	I oppose the water rate hike
			Amy L Wang	
			Andrew Weyman	Special consideration for WUI areas must be addressed.
			Anna Prewett	
			Anne-Marie Tatam Kessenich	
			Anya T Fernald	Strongly oppose. We already pay high water costs.
			Beate Chee	
			Benjamin Levy	
			Benjamin Levy	
			Bogdan Ognyanov	
			brian Merrick	After the palisades fire and the poor performance of the water availability it is too much hardship on the residents with little or no return for the water delivery we get. Please no raise in fees especially the exorbitant increases proposed in this item. Please vote no!
			CAROLYN MAGEE	

As of: 12/16/2025 11:00:02 AM



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1.		<b>Oppose</b>	Carolyn Vos Strache	Oppose water increas
			Carolyn H Evans	I am senior I can't afford that kind of increase. This is absolutely crazy. I have never had this much of an increase in 45 years of living in Topanga.
			Cary Spencer	My neighborhood was ravaged by fire and the personal heartache and expenses are immense. My home survived but is being repaired at great expense and is still not habitable. My wife and my lives have been totally and irreversibly changed. My water bill is already extremely high, even though nobody lives at my home. To now increase water rates substantially is not justified. Also the proposed increases are ridiculously exorbitant. Procedurally, mailing notices of this hearing to addresses of burnt lots and largely uninhabited homes is a calculated, cynical effort to avoid opposition.
			Cassandra Riera	
			Chad Peters	We didn't have water in the hydrants and now we are getting rate increases for the water failures. Being punished poor management of resources.
			Charles R Kane	
			Christina Tidwell	
			Courtney Harmon	A 50%+ increase yoy is completely unreasonable
			Craig Harris	
			Daniel S Treisman	Please see the uploaded letter, which raises serious concerns that must be addressed urgently. No rate increase can be contemplated except as part of a systematic plan to resolve these problems.
			Danielle Berube	Absurd rate hike. Very detrimental to the community.
			Davey Holmes	
			David Frazer	My family opposes this water rate hike. We are still suffering from the palisades wildfire costs and recovery expenses.
			David Ulich	
			David Ulich	
			David J Kessenich	
			Dawn H Cortese	
			Denis M Hannigan	
			Diana Demoff	
			Donald Lehman	



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1.		<b>Oppose</b>	DORIS OHARA	Rate increases are obscene!
			EDWARD MELNICK	THIS IS AN OUTRAGE.....MORE MONEY FROM THE HOMEOWNERS/RESIDENTS!!  ABSOLUTELY NOT!!!!
			Eldrid M ODriscoll	
			Elena A Marchisotto	
			Elizabeth Flynn	I strongly oppose the water rate increase for district 29
			Elizabeth C Herron	I am opposed to the Water Rate Increase. It is an unreasonably high rate increase- up to 76% by the year 2026. In addition, as the rate is so steep, residents who cannot afford it, will begin to stop watering their yards and thereby put the trees and hedges at risk of not surviving. Trees help reduce heat ( evapotranspiration) and contribute to an overall cooling effect and are responsible for reducing the "heat island effect." With a reduction in tree and hedge foliage and the eventual loss of the tree canopy, it will lead to even more hot temperatures and more dry brush and dead foliage which will lead to more fuel for fire. Please re-consider the long term effect of households not being able to afford their water bill.
			Elliott Dolin	
			Evyen J Klean	
			Gayle Pritchett	



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1.		<b>Oppose</b>	Gretchen Smith	In addition to the objections raised in the simultaneously attached the letter from the Malibu Big Rock Mesa Property Owners Association, my family opposes the measure and objects further that the mandatory notice and voting requirements of Proposition 218, 26 and/or other tax related laws have not been complied with. No required general vs special benefit findings have been made, and/or no exceptions have been justified, and/or no clear funding mechanism has been found to fund general benefits that inevitably would from rate increases. Such general benefits must be funded from a non-property owner source. Additionally, further proceeding cannot be held unless/until adequate notice requirements to all property owners have not been made. Consequently, based on the failure to comply with voting tax law requirements, this rate increase constitutes an illegal tax. The timing of this hearing, when so many fire impacted property owners are unable to occupy their properties and mail forwarding has been discontinued, is highly suspect. This is especially true given the failed availability of water during the fires. At a bare minimum, any further hearings on this matter should be renoticed properly and due diligence conducted by the District to ensure all property owners are duly notified when such an extravagant rate increase is being sought at a time when fire impacted communities property can least afford it. Our homes are destroyed and this should not be happening right now when so many are unaware of the scope of the rate increase and when it is clear there is still no plan to improve water services in another fire event.
			Herve Caen	
			Ike Sherman	I object to the proposed water rate increase because ratepayers have not been provided clear evidence that the additional revenue is essential or that existing resources are being managed responsibly. Any increase should only follow a thorough and transparent audit, along with demonstrated efforts to reduce operational inefficiencies.
			Irina Woodburn	
			Isabelle Millar	We can't afford the rate hike, please reconsider. Access to clean water is a basic human right.
			Jake Jesson	
			Janet Fulk	The MAJORITY OF CUSTOMERS KNOW NOTHING ABOUT THIS. How can you use "majority protest" as a criterion when there has not been anywhere near adequate notice to the public, education on the rationale, or multiple ways to make a protest heard. Please, don't be afraid to go out and do what is right and to honestly understand what the majority really feels about this. Not just a flashy brochure asking for written and online comments. You do NOT have majority opinion this way, for sure.
			Janet L Kane	



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1.		<b>Oppose</b>	Jeff Sharpe	
			Jeremy Cohen Hoffing	
			Jessica Cigno	
			Jessica Thompson	Cost of living is already too high. People cannot afford these kinds of increases, suddenly for a basic essential resource.
			Jill Cotu	
			Jill Simons	
			John Farrar	
			Johnathan Ekizian	
			Joseph Marchisotto	Impacts all, especially senior citizens
			Judie Graham-Bell	
			Julie Ann A Taylor	
			july pitschka	
			Jun Hong	
			Kari Hendler	Our concern is that we are all financially strapped from the fire and trying to rebuild our homes. We've been asking for decades to have you fix our water pipes and your timing now seems questionable while we are all dealing with high rebuild costs as well as our insurance costs going up. Also, once you increase our rates, we all doubt that you will ever adjust them down again. You offer no timeline or guarantee of this! We vote no.
			Kathleen Ruchalski	Please see attached letter from Big Rock HOA
			Kathryn Alice	How can you justify this? Very much oppose
			Keith W Wagner	
			Kelly Constantine	
			Kenneth Wheeland	
			Kerry Knuppe	
			kim cunningham	
			Kimberly J Devane	
			Kristen Melnyk	



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1.		<b>Oppose</b>	Kristin Swindal	I oppose the proposed increase on the water bill. This is outrageous.
			Kristine Harris	
			Kyle Ruddick	I absolutely oppose this measure, which is an absorbent increase in rates that will impact me personally as well as the local economy in very negative ways.
			Latz Anderson	
			Laura Dampf	The proposed increase seems tone deaf when residents here are collapsing under the weight of everyday living expenses. Residents are overwhelmed by skyrocketing insurance rates, exorbitant utility bills, student loan/tuition costs, rental/mortgage payments and most other expenses of daily life. Many residents have confided to us that they simply cannot "do it anymore." The cost of living here is too high, and they will have to leave if something is not done to turn the tide on these ever-escalating prices for basic needs. This is a community with a can-do, frontier spirit that does not bow easily in the face of a challenge, but the affordability crisis bearing down on us is hollowing out our community, displacing long-term residents, and turning Topanga into a community that families, seniors, and most young artists, professionals and freelancers cannot afford. Without these groups, Topanga will lose the unique culture that has shaped it into a crucible of community resilience and creativity. Please help Topangans struggling to pay their bills by reducing the allowed amount of the GRI and helping to lead the way on the policy changes that are needed to ensure that we all have access to affordable water in the future. A HUGE RISK is the match stick our area will become because the water rates are so high that no one will be watering around their homes. This will be detrimental to the entire area in terms of fires and mudslides!! There comes a point where policies must be changed!! There is no more money available from residents who are tapping out on all needs including years of HIGH WATER RATES TO BEGIN WITH! Thank you!
			Laura Johnson	



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1.		<b>Oppose</b>	Laurie Cappello	
			Leonard Lanzi	
			LI HUANG	<p>Your inaction has already allowed much of the Big Rock area to burn.</p> <p>To propose water rate increases after such a failure shows a complete lack of accountability and respect for the community.</p> <p>For these reasons, I strongly oppose the proposed Five-Year Financial Plan and any water rate increases associated with it.</p> <p>You should be addressing what went wrong and taking responsibility—not asking residents to pay more.</p>
			Linda Hill	<p>We have the highest rates already.</p> <p>Citizens in our area do not have the highest incomes yet we are burdened with the highest water rates.</p> <p>This rate increase comes on heels of fires, road closures, insurance premium increases etc.</p> <p>The notice of the deadline for protesting increases came as we are still unable to leave our home without hours on the Road. The County should at least delay until homeowners comments can be gathered! We are being silenced unfairly. Our household submitted a protest but it cost nearly \$100 to get it to Alhambra. We did it on behalf of the other residents, many of whom are Seniors. We ask for a “no” vote on water rate increases. Do not rubber stamp this. Give us a fair opportunity to present our side. We are following all recommendations to save water. We are converting to water saving landscaping. We use grey water. We need help, not punitive water rates. Do not push Seniors out of our community by raising this rate beyond our ability to pay.</p>
			Linda Pieper	
			Lindsay Zook	
			Lisa Asterino	
			Lisa Ferns	After losing everything in the fire we don't have money for utilities increased
			Lisa Hall	No one can afford an increase.
			Lisa Hayes	
			Lola Wheeler	
			Lori Webster	

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1.		<b>Oppose</b>	Lucy Ralphs	
			Lydia Stiegler	
			Lyuba C Harris	
			Maia Levi	
			Maia Levy	
			Marc Agostini	
			Maren Orrell	A rate increase of such magnitude in Topanga is not sustainable nor doable for the people who live here.
			Marie Lehman	
			Marie n Brunel	
			Mariko Chouinard	
			Marissa Capello	
			Mark Montygierd	
			Maura Lucas	
			Michael OHARA	
			Michael Shapiro	
			Michael Webber	
			MICHAEL A VAUGHAN	
			Michael D Bina	I oppose adopting the proposed Waterworks District 29 rate increases as presented. Ratepayers need transparent accounting of existing reserves and prior bond proceeds, a near-term prioritized capital plan with clear timelines, and a system-level resiliency plan that addresses fundamental supply and delivery vulnerabilities—not just piecemeal repairs. Please delay or scale the increases until these items are provided with measurable milestones and accountability.
			Michel Shane	## A COMPELLING ARGUMENT AGAINST THE LACWD 29 FIVE-YEAR RATE INCREASE  To: Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Re: Opposition to Proposed Water Rate Increases for LACWD District 29 (2026-2030) Public Hearing: December 16, 2025

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### ### The Core Issue

The proposed 11% rate increase for FY 2026, followed by 6.5% annual increases through 2030, represents a cumulative increase approaching 40% over five years. For a community still recovering from devastating wildfires that destroyed 1,141 homes—15% of the district's customer base—this timing and magnitude raises serious questions about equity, planning, and fiscal responsibility.

### ### Three Critical Arguments

#### #### 1. The Wildfire Survivors Are Being Asked to Subsidize Fire Recovery

The rate study acknowledges that District 29 lost 1,141 accounts due to the January 2025 fires. The financial plan explicitly states its goal is to "reduce the burden on remaining customers" while maintaining reserves—yet the proposed increases do the opposite.

The mathematics are troubling: Fewer customers paying dramatically higher rates means fire survivors and their neighbors shoulder the district's entire \$190.3 million capital plan over five years. This amounts to forcing victims to finance their own recovery infrastructure while simultaneously rebuilding their homes and lives.

Consider a typical 1-inch meter household using 23 hcf monthly in Schedule 2957 (mid-elevation zone):

- Current bill: \$226.12
- Proposed FY 2026 bill: \$318.06
- Increase: \$91.95 per month (40.7%)
- Five-year impact: \$1,103 annually, or \$5,515 over the rate period

For families facing insurance battles, construction inflation, and temporary housing costs, this represents a meaningful financial burden that could delay or prevent reconstruction.

#### #### 2. Structural Changes Disguise the True Impact

The rate study proposes eliminating the 5 hcf monthly allowance while implementing a "uniform consumption rate." This restructuring makes direct comparisons difficult and obscures the actual cost burden shift.

Low-use customers face the steepest increases: The study's own data shows a 15 hcf/month user in Schedule 2954 facing a 56.7% increase (\$84.12 more monthly), while high-use customers (30 hcf) see "only" 26.5% increases. This inverted structure particularly harms:

- Seniors on fixed incomes who've embraced conservation
- Small households practicing responsible water use
- Families already struggling with Malibu's high cost of living



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The message sent is perverse: conservation is penalized, while high consumption is comparatively rewarded.

#### #### 3. The Capital Plan Lacks Transparency and Prioritization

The study justifies rate increases by citing a \$190.3 million capital improvement plan averaging \$30.1 million annually—with virtually no public detail about project prioritization, cost-benefit analysis, or alternatives considered.

Questions that demand answers:

- Which projects are fire-recovery related versus deferred maintenance?
- Has the district explored grant funding for fire-related infrastructure (FEMA, Cal OES, state bonds)?
- Why is debt financing limited when rates could be smoothed over longer repayment periods?
- What's the breakdown between system expansion versus repair/replacement?
- How do these capital costs compare to similar-sized districts?

The Raftelis study projects maintaining reserve balances "above target" throughout the five-year period, even with this aggressive capital program. If reserves remain healthy, why the urgent need for such dramatic rate increases?

#### ### What the Board Should Demand

Before approving these increases, the Board should require:

1. Fire Recovery Bifurcation: Separate fire-related capital costs from routine system improvements. Pursue dedicated state/federal disaster funding for fire recovery rather than placing the entire burden on remaining ratepayers.
2. Graduated Implementation: Phase increases more gradually (3-4% annually rather than 11% + 6.5% structure) and extend the debt financing strategy to reduce near-term rate shock.
3. Conservation Equity: Restructure rates to reward conservation rather than penalize low-use customers. Restore progressive tiering that reflects the district's stated commitment to environmental responsibility.
4. Enhanced Transparency: Publish detailed capital project lists with cost justifications, timeline, and funding alternatives. Allow for public comment on project prioritization.
5. Affordability Analysis: Conduct genuine affordability study considering:
  - Median household income in service area
  - Percentage of income devoted to water costs



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- Comparison to regional water districts
- Impact on low-income and fixed-income households

#### ### The Broader Context

Malibu residents already face:

- Among the highest housing costs in California
- Limited rental housing, forcing many service workers to commute long distances
- Ongoing fire insurance crisis making properties difficult to finance or sell
- PCH safety improvements that have been delayed for years due to funding constraints

Water is not discretionary. When rates increase 40% over five years in a community where median home prices exceed \$2 million but many long-term residents live on modest fixed incomes, you create an affordability crisis that forces people out.

#### ### The Ask

We're not requesting free water or subsidized rates. We're asking for reasonable, equitable, and transparent rate-setting that:

- Reflects the extraordinary circumstances facing this fire-impacted community
- Rewards rather than penalizes conservation
- Demonstrates fiscal responsibility through detailed capital planning
- Spreads costs fairly across all users
- Pursues all available grant and disaster funding sources before maximizing ratepayer burden

The current proposal fails these tests. We urge the Board to reject these increases and direct staff to return with a revised plan that addresses these fundamental concerns.

This is your community. These are your constituents. They deserve better than being told to simply pay more while the details remain opaque and the timing remains tone-deaf to their circumstances.

Millicent B Accardi	Don't raise our water rates!
Nena Goasdoue	The water rates are already too high. An increase is unaffordable and not acceptable.
Nora McGraw	
Paco Moran	
Pamela Conley Ulich	Please do not increase water rates. We are hurting. We need help not price increases. Thank you.
Patricia Neuray	



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Patrick Burke	
Patty Phillips	I think with all the communities hurting, this is not the time to be raising prices. I've seen your financials and you do not need to raise pricing. Maybe cut some of the waist.
Paul E Boulet	It is not Equitable to give us this enormous rate increase without a plan to fix the water infrastructure. Millions of dollars in bonds have been given to the water company, and yet we have a broken infrastructure that caused the burn from the palisade's fire.
Peter Monge	
Peter Norwood	We did not burn we should not pay for the people who did.
RACHEL EDLICH	I am an owner and protest the proposed water increase by LA county Public Works
Richard Weintraub	
Robert Follert	
Robert Husser	
Rosemarie Ihde	Increase is too steep. 10 percent is better
Salwa Wahba	please see attached letter
Sarah Burke	
scott dittrich	I am vice president of our 200 person HOA (our president's home burned and he is currently in Australia). This proposed rate increase is outrageous and insulting. After everything we have suffered from the Palisades and Franklin Fires this is the wrong time for a rate increase. We have had continued rate increases over the years without improvements in our water systems that would make any difference in a wild land fire.. The system is old and repairs are needed but these increases should be postponed. With nearly half of the homes needing to be rebuild adding one more expense at this time is a terrible idea and may directly lead to folks leaving Malibu. Additionally, the new requirements by the Fire Department for sprinklers and the consideration by many of those rebuilding to add roof top sprinklers means additional sources of water exhaustion during major fires. All this should be addressed before higher rates are considered.
Scott Pieper	
Scott R Mcaboy	Protest raising water bills any higher. We already pay an average of 600.00 per month. Enough is enough
Sean Xie	
Sean Xie	
Sigrid Moksness	No

			Sophia Lin	
			STEPHANIE H VAUGHAN	
			stephen Kipner	
			Stephen I Klein	
			Steve Johnson	
			Susan D Landesmann	
			Theresa J Davis	See attached letter
			THOMAS MAGEE	
			Veronique Dorn	This is an absurd abuse of power to a community with already high water rates, who just suffered a major fire! What is wrong with you?
			William A Kane	
			YVONNE H CHANG	
			Zijia Zhang	I protest the water rate increase under prop 218.
			Zoe Frampton	District 29 is asking for an increase in Water Rates by 60–80% Water District 29 is proposing a 60 to 80% increase in water rates to raise 190 million dollars for repairs and maintenance. While we fully recognize the urgent need for investment in the system, the proposed repairs do not address the critically inadequate design of the water sourcing and delivery infrastructure that serves our community and surrounding areas. This is also a devastating blow to families already crippled by rising costs from inflation and the general state of the economy.
		Other	Alan Nino	See attached Public Works response to objection letter.
			Alan Nino	See attached Public Works response to objection letter.
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		Item Total	161	
Grand Total			161	

**BIG ROCK MESAS**  
**PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION**  
ESTABLISHED 1947  
P.O. BOX 1146, MALIBU , CA 90265  
<https://bigrockmesas.org>

November 22, 2025

Los Angeles County Public Works:  
Waterworks Division  
Re: **Protest Prop. 218** – Proposed Water rates

To Whom It May Concern:

The board of the Big Rock Mesas Property Owners Association recently reviewed the November 10<sup>th</sup> Malibu City Council meeting, and District 29 representatives explanation of a proposed increase in water rates.

While we concede the district's claims that the water system is aged and in need of maintenance and repair, we were surprised to hear this proposed five year \$190 million plan did not address the dangerously inadequate design of the water sourcing and delivery system that supplies our community and those surrounding us.

The community of Big Rock, as well as our neighboring communities rely on a finite water source based on a tank/pump configuration. This system incorporates the urban water design where the potable water supply is mingled with the fire abatement hydrant supply. All the water flows through one pipe network.

During a wildfire where multiple homes can simultaneously ignite and burn, that conflagration compromises the home's network of copper tubing and soldered joints, melting the solder, blowing out the copper couplings and tube and exploding into a torrent of water, water that is lost, that now lowers the pressure and contents of that tank on the hill, that now leaves the hydrant dry and firefighters ineffective and at risk.

That system, as it now exists, is riddled with latent leaks. It is a system designed for an urban environment not the Wildfire/Urban/Interface, WUI.

The Palisades Fire is not the first time Big Rock and neighboring communities have run out of water due to these leaky systems. The Topanga Fire of 1993 was another brutal example.

Since the Palisades Fire on January 7, 2025, we have been sounding the alarm on this issue.

With the rebuilding process picking up steam, a new level of weakness is being added. Roof top sprinkler systems and the fire department mandated internal sprinkler systems add another layer of potential leakage.

There are many homeowners considering the roof top fire mitigation systems. These systems, many of which are activated prior to fire front arrival, deplete water pressure early in the wildfire's onslaught. The efficacy of these systems is uneven with much of that precious water instantly evaporated as the fire storm arrives. Presently the fire department is *not* recommending them. But these systems will be coming. Even if they are attached to an independent water source e.g.- a pool with an automatic refill mechanism - again, there will be a consistent pressure drop.

**None of these dangerous risks have been addressed in this rate proposal .**

This deficient system is not unknown to the water department but as the undergrounding of power lines has been to the electric utilities, it is a subject that has been ignored. It can be ignored no longer. Lives and property lie in the balance

The proposal for a rate increase must be tabled until this issue is discussed thoroughly and a solution to a fully resilient, leak free water system in the WUI is designed and funded.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Terry Davis,

President, BRMPOA

Board Members

Janet Fulk, Frank Albino, Jeff Grier, Olivier Fortis, Patty Philips, Jo Drummond, Salwa Wahba and Abe Roy

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The community of Big Rock, as well as our neighboring communities rely on a finite water source based on a tank/pump configuration. This system incorporates the urban water design where the potable water supply is mingled with the fire abatement hydrant supply. All the water flows through one pipe network.

During a wildfire where multiple homes can simultaneously ignite and burn, that conflagration compromises the home's network of copper tubing and soldered joints, melting the solder, blowing out the copper couplings and tube and exploding into a torrent of water, water that is lost, that now lowers the pressure and contents of that tank on the hill, that now leaves the hydrant dry and firefighters ineffective and at risk.

That system, as it now exists, is riddled with latent leaks. It is a system designed for an urban environment not the Wildfire/Urban/Interface, WUI.



The Palisades Fire is not the first time Big Rock and neighboring communities have run out of water due to these leaky systems. The Topanga Fire of 1993 was another brutal example.

Since the Palisades Fire on January 7, 2025, we have been sounding the alarm on this issue.

With the rebuilding process picking up steam, a new level of weakness is being added. Roof top sprinkler systems and the fire department mandated internal sprinkler systems add another layer of potential leakage.

There are many homeowners considering the roof top fire mitigation systems. These systems, many of which are activated prior to fire front arrival, deplete water pressure early in the wildfire's onslaught. The efficacy of these systems is uneven with much of that precious water instantly evaporated as the fire storm arrives. Presently the fire department is *not* recommending them. But these systems will be coming. Even if they are attached to an independent water source e.g.- a pool with an automatic refill mechanism - again, there will be a consistent pressure drop.

**None of these dangerous risks have been addressed in this rate proposal .**

This deficient system is not unknown to the water department but as the undergrounding of power lines has been to the electric utilities, it is a subject that has been ignored. It can be ignored no longer. Lives and property lie in the balance

The proposal for a rate increase must be tabled until this issue is discussed thoroughly and a solution to a fully resilient, leak free water system in the WUI is designed and funded.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Terry Davis,

President, BRMPOA

Board Members

Janet Fulk, Frank Albino, Jeff Grier, Olivier Fortis, Patty Philips, Jo Drummond, Salwa Wahba and Abe Roy

**BIG ROCK MESAS**  
**PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION**  
ESTABLISHED 1947  
P.O. BOX 1146, MALIBU , CA 90265  
<https://bigrockmesas.org>

November 22, 2025

Los Angeles County Public Works:  
Waterworks Division  
Re: **Protest Prop. 218** – Proposed Water rates

To Whom It May Concern:

The board of the Big Rock Mesas Property Owners Association recently reviewed the November 10<sup>th</sup> Malibu City Council meeting, and District 29 representatives explanation of a proposed increase in water rates.

While we concede the district's claims that the water system is aged and in need of maintenance and repair, we were surprised to hear this proposed five year \$190 million plan did not address the dangerously inadequate design of the water sourcing and delivery system that supplies our community and those surrounding us.

The community of Big Rock, as well as our neighboring communities rely on a finite water source based on a tank/pump configuration. This system incorporates the urban water design where the potable water supply is mingled with the fire abatement hydrant supply. All the water flows through one pipe network.

During a wildfire where multiple homes can simultaneously ignite and burn, that conflagration compromises the home's network of copper tubing and soldered joints, melting the solder, blowing out the copper couplings and tube and exploding into a torrent of water, water that is lost, that now lowers the pressure and contents of that tank on the hill, that now leaves the hydrant dry and firefighters ineffective and at risk.

That system, as it now exists, is riddled with latent leaks. It is a system designed for an urban environment not the Wildfire/Urban/Interface, WUI.

The Palisades Fire is not the first time Big Rock and neighboring communities have run out of water due to these leaky systems. The Topanga Fire of 1993 was another brutal example.

Since the Palisades Fire on January 7, 2025, we have been sounding the alarm on this issue.

With the rebuilding process picking up steam, a new level of weakness is being added. Roof top sprinkler systems and the fire department mandated internal sprinkler systems add another layer of potential leakage.

There are many homeowners considering the roof top fire mitigation systems. These systems, many of which are activated prior to fire front arrival, deplete water pressure early in the wildfire's onslaught. The efficacy of these systems is uneven with much of that precious water instantly evaporated as the fire storm arrives. Presently the fire department is *not* recommending them. But these systems will be coming. Even if they are attached to an independent water source e.g.- a pool with an automatic refill mechanism - again, there will be a consistent pressure drop.

**None of these dangerous risks have been addressed in this rate proposal .**

This deficient system is not unknown to the water department but as the undergrounding of power lines has been to the electric utilities, it is a subject that has been ignored. It can be ignored no longer. Lives and property lie in the balance

The proposal for a rate increase must be tabled until this issue is discussed thoroughly and a solution to a fully resilient, leak free water system in the WUI is designed and funded.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Terry Davis,

President, BRMPOA

Board Members

Janet Fulk, Frank Albino, Jeff Grier, Olivier Fortis, Patty Philips, Jo Drummond, Salwa Wahba and Abe Roy

**To:**

Los Angeles County Waterworks District 29  
Attn: Public Comments / Board of Supervisors

**Subject:** Formal Protest Regarding Proposed Rate Increases

Dear Members of the Board,

I am writing to formally protest the proposed rate increases outlined in the LACWD-2025 Water Rate Study. A cumulative 22% increase over the next five years is excessive and unreasonable. Homeowners within Waterworks District 29 do not have any alternative options for water service, which makes such an increase even more concerning. These rate adjustments far outpace inflation and are not supported by transparent cost-reduction or efficiency measures.

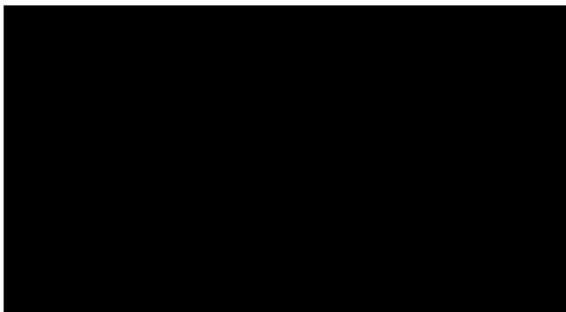
Before any rate adjustments are approved, the District should be required to clearly define and justify the capital projects that are referenced in the LACWD-2025 Water Rate Study. Ratepayers deserve full visibility into what specific infrastructure improvements these funds are intended to support, their projected timelines, and how they will enhance system reliability or efficiency. Simply referencing "capital improvements" without detailed disclosure is not sufficient justification for significant, long-term rate increases.

Furthermore, I would like to understand what specific steps Waterworks District 29 is taking to reduce its operating costs and overhead. Across both public and private sectors, organizations are finding ways to streamline operations and minimize administrative waste. The District should be held to the same standard of financial discipline before seeking additional revenue from residents.

Finally, these proposed increases feel particularly inequitable for homeowners who remained in the community after the Palisades fire. Those of us who did not lose our homes should not be penalized for the District's historical failure to adequately invest in infrastructure capable of supporting and protecting this area.

I respectfully urge the Board to reject or substantially revise the proposed rate plan and instead present a transparent, fiscally responsible alternative that prioritizes accountability, efficiency, and equity for all residents.

Thank you for your consideration.





MARK PESTRELLA, Director

# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

*"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"*

900 SOUTH FREMONT AVENUE  
ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91803-1331  
Telephone: (626) 458-5100  
<http://dpw.lacounty.gov>

ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:  
P.O. BOX 1460  
ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91802-1460

December 12, 2025

IN REPLY PLEASE  
REFER TO FILE: **WW-4**

Mr. Richie Rubin  
[REDACTED]

Dear Mr. Rubin:

### **LOS ANGELES COUNTY WATERWORKS DISTRICT NO. 29 PROPOSED WATER RATE INCREASES**

The Los Angeles County Waterworks District 29 ("District") received your correspondence relating to the proposed water rate increases on November 12, 2025 ("Letter"). The District does not recommend any changes to the proposed water rates as a result of the issues raised in the Letter.

The wildfires in Los Angeles County resulted in catastrophic loss of life and property to many people and parcels served by the District. However, while the reduction in parcels served by the District may result in a reduction in water purchase costs, the vast majority of the District's remaining costs, including administrative, capital projects, and operations and maintenance, remain unchanged. In other words, the District's costs stay largely the same even if demand is reduced.

The District is a not-for-profit entity responsible for providing water service to parcels within its service area. The District recovers the majority of its water service costs through imposing water rates. Water rates are restricted by Proposition 218. Proposition 218 allows the District to impose water rates that are proportional to the cost of providing service to the parcel, and that are designed to recover only enough revenue to cover all costs of providing water service. Importantly, Proposition 218 prohibits the District from imposing fees for water service on a parcel unless water service is actually used by, or immediately available to, the owner of the parcel. California courts have interpreted this limitation to mean that parcels that are physically disconnected from a water system cannot be charged.

Mr. Richie Rubin  
December 12, 2025  
Page 2

Consequently, while the District understands the burden associated with rate increases, the District must also ensure that it remains financially sound and capable of delivering water in a manner that is safe, efficient, reliable, and cost-effective. The water rates are designed to allocate all the fixed costs of providing service proportionately across all parcels to which water service is actually used or immediately available. The variable costs are similarly allocated in a manner proportional to the cost of service, and the actual amount of variable costs allocated has been adjusted to account for the reduced water purchase costs associated with those parcels not currently receiving water service. These actions are consistent with the requirements and limitations of Proposition 218.

While costs have continued to increase and regulation has become more stringent, the District has made significant efforts to find ways to reduce the cost of providing water service. These efforts include investment in energy efficient technology, in digital transformation to reduce labor and operational costs, in asset life extension through preventative maintenance, and operational cost reductions by outsourcing non-core services when cost effective

Thank you once again for the Letter and for engaging with the District on this matter. Please be assured that this Letter will be counted for the purpose of determining whether a majority protest against the water rates exists. If you need further information or have additional questions, please contact Mr. Alan Nino, Waterworks Division, at (626) 300-3392 or [anino@pw.lacounty.gov](mailto:anino@pw.lacounty.gov).

Very truly yours,

MARK PESTRELLA, PE  
Director of Public Works

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carolina T. Hernandez", written in a cursive style.

CAROLINA T HERNANDEZ, PE  
Assistant Deputy Director  
Waterworks Division

RG:yg  
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Clerk of the Board  
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors  
500 W. Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Re: Formal Protest of Proposed Water Rate Increases – Waterworks District 29 (Prop 218)**

Dear Clerk of the Board:

I am the owner of the property located at:

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

I hereby formally protest the proposed Waterworks District 29 rate increases scheduled to take effect beginning January 1, 2026, pursuant to my rights under California Constitution Article XIII-D (Proposition 218).

Proposition 218 requires that any protest be grounded on a factual, cost-of-service basis. Accordingly, my protest is based on the following:

Wildfire account-loss assumptions create a disproportionate burden on remaining Malibu West customers.

According to the District 29 Water Rate Study, the January 2025 wildfire resulted in the loss of 1,141 water service accounts, representing approximately 15% of all District 29 customers. The District states that these accounts are expected to be restored by FY 2030, making the reduction in customer base a temporary condition.

However, the District's financial plan applies a substantial 11% rate increase in FY 2026, followed by 6.5% increases each year thereafter, specifically to offset revenue lost due to these temporarily inactive accounts.

As a resident of Malibu West — a neighborhood not impacted by the wildfire account losses — I object that this approach places an unfair and disproportionate financial burden on customers whose properties were not destroyed and whose service needs have not changed.

This rate structure appears to require unaffected ratepayers to subsidize wildfire-related revenue shortfalls in a manner that is not directly proportional to the cost of providing water service to my parcel, as required under Proposition 218.

For these reasons, I submit this letter as my formal Proposition 218 protest against the proposed rate increases for Waterworks District 29.

Please acknowledge receipt of this protest and include it in the official count.

[REDACTED]

**Craig Enanuel**

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]





MARK PESTRELLA, Director

# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

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ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91803-1331  
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ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:  
P.O. BOX 1460  
ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91802-1460

December 12, 2025

IN REPLY PLEASE  
REFER TO FILE: **WW-4**

Mr. Craig Emanuel  
[REDACTED]

Dear Mr. Emanuel:

### **LOS ANGELES COUNTY WATERWORKS DISTRICT NO. 29 PROPOSED WATER RATE INCREASES**

The Los Angeles County Waterworks District 29 ("District") received your correspondence relating to the proposed water rate increases on December 8, 2025 ("Letter"). The District does not recommend any changes to the proposed water rates as a result of the issues raised in the Letter.

The wildfires in Los Angeles County resulted in catastrophic loss of life and property to many people and parcels served by the District. However, while the reduction in parcels served by the District may result in a reduction in water purchase costs, the vast majority of the District's remaining costs, including administrative, capital projects, and operations and maintenance, remain unchanged. In other words, the District's costs stay largely the same even if demand is reduced.

The District is a not-for-profit entity responsible for providing water service to parcels within its service area. The District recovers the majority of its water service costs through imposing water rates. Water rates are restricted by Proposition 218. Proposition 218 allows the District to impose water rates that are proportional to the cost of providing service to the parcel, and that are designed to recover only enough revenue to cover all costs of providing water service. Importantly, Proposition 218 prohibits the District from imposing fees for water service on a parcel unless water service is actually used by, or immediately available to, the owner of the parcel. California courts have interpreted this limitation to mean that parcels that are physically disconnected from a water system cannot be charged.



Mr. Craig Emanuel  
December 12, 2025  
Page 2

Consequently, while the District understands the burden associated with rate increases, the District must also ensure that it remains financially sound and capable of delivering water in a manner that is safe, efficient, reliable, and cost-effective. The water rates are designed to allocate all the fixed costs of providing service proportionately across all parcels to which water service is actually used or immediately available. The variable costs are similarly allocated in a manner proportional to the cost of service, and the actual amount of variable costs allocated has been adjusted to account for the reduced water purchase costs associated with those parcels not currently receiving water service. These actions are consistent with the requirements and limitations of Proposition 218.

While costs have continued to increase and regulation has become more stringent, the District has made significant efforts to find ways to reduce the cost of providing water service. These efforts include investment in energy efficient technology, in digital transformation to reduce labor and operational costs, in asset life extension through preventative maintenance, and operational cost reductions by outsourcing non-core services when cost effective

Thank you once again for the Letter and for engaging with the District on this matter. Please be assured that this Letter will be counted for the purpose of determining whether a majority protest against the water rates exists. If you need further information or have additional questions, please contact Mr. Alan Nino, Waterworks Division, at (626) 300-3392 or [anino@pw.lacounty.gov](mailto:anino@pw.lacounty.gov).

Very truly yours,

MARK PESTRELLA, PE  
Director of Public Works

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carolina T. Hernandez", written in a cursive style.

CAROLINA T HERNANDEZ, PE  
Assistant Deputy Director  
Waterworks Division

RG:yg  
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Subject: Proposition 218 Protest – Waterworks District 29 Proposed Rate Increases

Clerk of the Board  
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors  
500 W. Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Re: Formal Protest of Proposed Water Rate Increases – Waterworks District 29 (Prop 218)**

Dear Clerk of the Board:

I am the owner of the property located at: [REDACTED]

I hereby formally protest the proposed Waterworks District 29 rate increases scheduled to take effect beginning January 1, 2026, pursuant to my rights under California Constitution Article XIII-D (Proposition 218).

Proposition 218 requires that any protest be grounded on a factual, cost-of-service basis. Accordingly, my protest is based on the following:

Wildfire account-loss assumptions create a disproportionate burden on remaining Malibu West customers.

According to the District 29 Water Rate Study, the January 2025 wildfire resulted in the loss of 1,141 water service accounts, representing approximately 15% of all District 29 customers. The District states that these accounts are expected to be restored by FY 2030, making the reduction in customer base a temporary condition.

However, the District's financial plan applies a substantial 11% rate increase in FY 2026, followed by 6.5% increases each year thereafter, specifically to offset revenue lost due to these temporarily inactive accounts.

As a resident of Malibu West — a neighborhood not impacted by the wildfire account losses — I object that this approach places an unfair and disproportionate financial burden on customers whose properties were not destroyed and whose service needs have not changed.

This rate structure appears to require unaffected ratepayers to subsidize wildfire-related revenue shortfalls in a manner that is not directly proportional to the cost of providing water service to my parcel, as required under Proposition 218.

For these reasons, I submit this letter as my formal Proposition 218 protest against the proposed rate increases for Waterworks District 29.

Please acknowledge receipt of this protest and include it in the official count.

Sincerely,

[Your Name] JAMES P. HAYNES, JR.

Please feel free to use this formal protest letter and share it with your neighbors.

For more information, please visit: [Waterworks Districts Prop 218 - LA County Public Works](#)

Best regards,  
Tracy Weirick



MARK PESTRELLA, Director

# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

*"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"*

900 SOUTH FREMONT AVENUE  
ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91803-1331  
Telephone: (626) 458-5100  
<http://dpw.lacounty.gov>

ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:  
P.O. BOX 1460  
ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91802-1460

December 12, 2025

IN REPLY PLEASE  
REFER TO FILE: **WW-4**

Mr. James Haynes  
[REDACTED]

Dear Mr. Haynes:

### **LOS ANGELES COUNTY WATERWORKS DISTRICT NO. 29 PROPOSED WATER RATE INCREASES**

The Los Angeles County Waterworks District 29 ("District") received your correspondence relating to the proposed water rate increases on December 8, 2025 ("Letter"). The District does not recommend any changes to the proposed water rates as a result of the issues raised in the Letter.

The wildfires in Los Angeles County resulted in catastrophic loss of life and property to many people and parcels served by the District. However, while the reduction in parcels served by the District may result in a reduction in water purchase costs, the vast majority of the District's remaining costs, including administrative, capital projects, and operations and maintenance, remain unchanged. In other words, the District's costs stay largely the same even if demand is reduced.

The District is a not-for-profit entity responsible for providing water service to parcels within its service area. The District recovers the majority of its water service costs through imposing water rates. Water rates are restricted by Proposition 218. Proposition 218 allows the District to impose water rates that are proportional to the cost of providing service to the parcel, and that are designed to recover only enough revenue to cover all costs of providing water service. Importantly, Proposition 218 prohibits the District from imposing fees for water service on a parcel unless water service is actually used by, or immediately available to, the owner of the parcel. California courts have interpreted this limitation to mean that parcels that are physically disconnected from a water system cannot be charged.

Mr. James Haynes  
December 12, 2025  
Page 2

Consequently, while the District understands the burden associated with rate increases, the District must also ensure that it remains financially sound and capable of delivering water in a manner that is safe, efficient, reliable, and cost-effective. The water rates are designed to allocate all the fixed costs of providing service proportionately across all parcels to which water service is actually used or immediately available. The variable costs are similarly allocated in a manner proportional to the cost of service, and the actual amount of variable costs allocated has been adjusted to account for the reduced water purchase costs associated with those parcels not currently receiving water service. These actions are consistent with the requirements and limitations of Proposition 218.

While costs have continued to increase and regulation has become more stringent, the District has made significant efforts to find ways to reduce the cost of providing water service. These efforts include investment in energy efficient technology, in digital transformation to reduce labor and operational costs, in asset life extension through preventative maintenance, and operational cost reductions by outsourcing non-core services when cost effective

Thank you once again for the Letter and for engaging with the District on this matter. Please be assured that this Letter will be counted for the purpose of determining whether a majority protest against the water rates exists. If you need further information or have additional questions, please contact Mr. Alan Nino, Waterworks Division, at (626) 300-3392 or [anino@pw.lacounty.gov](mailto:anino@pw.lacounty.gov).

Very truly yours,

MARK PESTRELLA, PE  
Director of Public Works

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carolina T. Hernandez", written in a cursive style.

CAROLINA T. HERNANDEZ, PE  
Assistant Deputy Director  
Waterworks Division

RG:yg  
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December 1, 2025

Clerk of the Board  
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors  
500 W. Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
FILED

2025 DEC -5 A 8:18

**Re: Formal Protest of Proposed Water Rate Increases – Waterworks  
District 29 (Prop 218)**

Dear Clerk of the Board:

I am the owner of the property located at:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

I hereby formally protest the proposed Waterworks District 29 rate increases scheduled to take effect beginning January 1, 2026, pursuant to my rights under California Constitution Article XIII-D (Proposition 218).

Proposition 218 requires that any protest be grounded on a factual, cost-of-service basis. Accordingly, my protest is based on the following:

Wildfire account-loss assumptions create a disproportionate burden on remaining Malibu West customers.

According to the District 29 Water Rate Study, the January 2025 wildfire resulted in the loss of 1,141 water service accounts, representing approximately 15% of all District 29 customers. The District states that these accounts are expected to be restored by FY 2030, making the reduction in customer base a temporary condition.

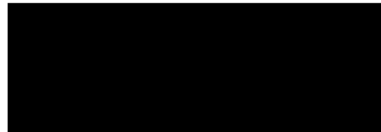
However, the District's financial plan applies a substantial 11% rate increase in FY 2026, followed by 6.5% increases each year thereafter, specifically to offset revenue lost due to these temporarily inactive accounts.

As a resident of Malibu West — a neighborhood not impacted by the wildfire account losses — I object that this approach places an unfair and disproportionate financial burden on customers whose properties were not destroyed and whose service needs have not changed. Why should we bear the burden of less demand...we were never rebated when demand increased in the past. And...less water will be used as a result of lost customer base.

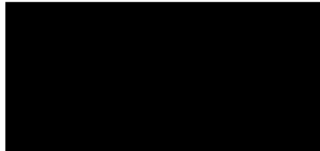
This rate structure appears to require unaffected ratepayers to subsidize wildfire-related revenue shortfalls in a manner that is not directly proportional to the cost of providing water service to my parcel, as required under Proposition 218. To my knowledge other districts did not received substantial increases after our neighborhoods were impacted by the Woosley Fire....and now you're asking us to pay!

For these reasons, I submit this letter as my formal Proposition 218 protest against the proposed rate increases for Waterworks District 29.

Please acknowledge receipt of this protest and include it in the official count.

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of Mark Gruskin.

**Mark Gruskin**

A black rectangular box redacting the address of Mark Gruskin.





MARK PESTRELLA, Director

# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

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ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91803-1331  
Telephone: (626) 458-5100  
<http://dpw.lacounty.gov>

ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:  
P.O. BOX 1460  
ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91802-1460

December 12, 2025

IN REPLY PLEASE  
REFER TO FILE: **WW-4**

Mr. Mark Gruskin  
[REDACTED]

Dear Mr. Gruskin:

### **LOS ANGELES COUNTY WATERWORKS DISTRICT NO. 29 PROPOSED WATER RATE INCREASES**

The Los Angeles County Waterworks District 29 ("District") received your correspondence relating to the proposed water rate increases on December 5, 2025 ("Letter"). The District does not recommend any changes to the proposed water rates as a result of the issues raised in the Letter.

The wildfires in Los Angeles County resulted in catastrophic loss of life and property to many people and parcels served by the District. However, while the reduction in parcels served by the District may result in a reduction in water purchase costs, the vast majority of the District's remaining costs, including administrative, capital projects, and operations and maintenance, remain unchanged. In other words, the District's costs stay largely the same even if demand is reduced.

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Mr. Mark Gruskin  
December 12, 2025  
Page 2

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While costs have continued to increase and regulation has become more stringent, the District has made significant efforts to find ways to reduce the cost of providing water service. These efforts include investment in energy efficient technology, in digital transformation to reduce labor and operational costs, in asset life extension through preventative maintenance, and operational cost reductions by outsourcing non-core services when cost effective

Thank you once again for the Letter and for engaging with the District on this matter. Please be assured that this Letter will be counted for the purpose of determining whether a majority protest against the water rates exists. If you need further information or have additional questions, please contact Mr. Alan Nino, Waterworks Division, at (626) 300-3392 or [anino@pw.lacounty.gov](mailto:anino@pw.lacounty.gov).

Very truly yours,

MARK PESTRELLA, PE  
Director of Public Works

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carolina T. Hernandez", written in a cursive style.

CAROLINA T HERNANDEZ, PE  
Assistant Deputy Director  
Waterworks Division

RG:yg  
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December 2, 2025

Waterworks District 29  
P.O. Box 1460  
Alhambra, CA 91802-1460

Clerk of the Board  
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors  
500 W. Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Re: Formal Protest of Proposed Water Rate Increases – Waterworks District 29 (Prop 218)**

Dear Clerk of the Board:

I am the owner of the property located at:

[REDACTED]

I hereby formally protest the proposed Waterworks District 29 rate increases scheduled to take effect beginning January 1, 2026, pursuant to my rights under California Constitution Article XIII-D (Proposition 218).

Proposition 218 requires that any protest be grounded on a factual, cost-of-service basis. Accordingly, my protest is based on the following:

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specifically to offset revenue lost due to these temporarily inactive accounts.

As a resident of Malibu West — a neighborhood not impacted by the wildfire account losses — I object that this approach places an unfair and disproportionate financial burden on customers whose properties were not destroyed and whose service needs have not changed.

This rate structure appears to require unaffected ratepayers to subsidize wildfire-related revenue shortfalls in a manner that is not directly proportional to the cost of providing water service to my parcel, as required under Proposition 218.

For these reasons, I submit this letter as my formal Proposition 218 protest against the proposed rate increases for Waterworks District 29.

Please acknowledge receipt of this protest and include it in the official count.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

**Alfred N. Roven**

[REDACTED]



MARK PESTRELLA, Director

# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

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ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91802-1460

December 12, 2025

IN REPLY PLEASE  
REFER TO FILE: **WW-4**

Mr. Alfred N. Roven  
[REDACTED]

Dear Mr. Roven:

### **LOS ANGELES COUNTY WATERWORKS DISTRICT NO. 29 PROPOSED WATER RATE INCREASES**

The Los Angeles County Waterworks District 29 ("District") received your correspondence relating to the proposed water rate increases on December 8, 2025 ("Letter"). The District does not recommend any changes to the proposed water rates as a result of the issues raised in the Letter.

The wildfires in Los Angeles County resulted in catastrophic loss of life and property to many people and parcels served by the District. However, while the reduction in parcels served by the District may result in a reduction in water purchase costs, the vast majority of the District's remaining costs, including administrative, capital projects, and operations and maintenance, remain unchanged. In other words, the District's costs stay largely the same even if demand is reduced.

The District is a not-for-profit entity responsible for providing water service to parcels within its service area. The District recovers the majority of its water service costs through imposing water rates. Water rates are restricted by Proposition 218. Proposition 218 allows the District to impose water rates that are proportional to the cost of providing service to the parcel, and that are designed to recover only enough revenue to cover all costs of providing water service. Importantly, Proposition 218 prohibits the District from imposing fees for water service on a parcel unless water service is actually used by, or immediately available to, the owner of the parcel. California courts have interpreted this limitation to mean that parcels that are physically disconnected from a water system cannot be charged.

Mr. Alfred N. Roven  
December 12, 2025  
Page 2

Consequently, while the District understands the burden associated with rate increases, the District must also ensure that it remains financially sound and capable of delivering water in a manner that is safe, efficient, reliable, and cost-effective. The water rates are designed to allocate all the fixed costs of providing service proportionately across all parcels to which water service is actually used or immediately available. The variable costs are similarly allocated in a manner proportional to the cost of service, and the actual amount of variable costs allocated has been adjusted to account for the reduced water purchase costs associated with those parcels not currently receiving water service. These actions are consistent with the requirements and limitations of Proposition 218.

While costs have continued to increase and regulation has become more stringent, the District has made significant efforts to find ways to reduce the cost of providing water service. These efforts include investment in energy efficient technology, in digital transformation to reduce labor and operational costs, in asset life extension through preventative maintenance, and operational cost reductions by outsourcing non-core services when cost effective

Thank you once again for the Letter and for engaging with the District on this matter. Please be assured that this Letter will be counted for the purpose of determining whether a majority protest against the water rates exists. If you need further information or have additional questions, please contact Mr. Alan Nino, Waterworks Division, at (626) 300-3392 or [anino@pw.lacounty.gov](mailto:anino@pw.lacounty.gov).

Very truly yours,

MARK PESTRELLA, PE  
Director of Public Works

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carolina T. Hernandez", written in a cursive style.

CAROLINA T. HERNANDEZ, PE  
Assistant Deputy Director  
Waterworks Division

RG:yg  
P:\wwpub\Admin\Letters\2025\Objection letters\Objection Letter Template.docx

Clerk of the Board  
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors  
500 W. Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Re: Formal Protest of Proposed Water Rate Increases – Waterworks District 29 (Prop 218)**

Dear Clerk of the Board:

I am the owner of the property located at:

[REDACTED]

I hereby formally protest the proposed Waterworks District 29 rate increases scheduled to take effect beginning January 1, 2026 - pursuant to my rights under California Constitution Article XIII-D (Proposition 218).

Proposition 218 requires that any protest be grounded on a factual, cost-of-service basis. Therefore I base my protest upon the following:

Wildfire account-loss assumptions create too large a burden on remaining Malibu West customers.

According to the District 29 Water Rate Study, the January 2025 wildfire resulted in the loss of 1,141 water service accounts, representing approximately 15% of all District 29 customers. The District states that these accounts are expected to be restored by 2030, making the reduction in the customer base only temporary.

However, the District's financial plan applies a quite large 11% rate increase in year 2026, followed by 6.5% increases each year thereafter, specifically to offset revenue lost due to these temporarily inactive accounts.

As a resident of Malibu West — a neighborhood where there were no wildfire account losses — I object that the water district's plan places an unfair financial burden on customers whose properties were not impacted by the January fire, and for that reason our service needs have not changed.

The proposed rate structure is requiring unaffected ratepayers to subsidize wildfire-related revenue shortfalls - that have nothing to do with the cost of providing water service to my parcel.

I submit this letter as my formal Proposition 218 protest against the proposed rate increases for Waterworks District 29.

Please acknowledge receipt of this protest and include it in the official court.

Sincerely,  
**Deborah Sinensky**

[REDACTED]



MARK PESTRELLA, Director

# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

*"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"*

900 SOUTH FREMONT AVENUE  
ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91803-1331  
Telephone: (626) 458-5100  
<http://dpw.lacounty.gov>

ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:  
P.O. BOX 1460  
ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91802-1460

December 12, 2025

IN REPLY PLEASE  
REFER TO FILE: **WW-4**

Ms. Deborah Sinensky



Dear Ms. Sinensky:

### **LOS ANGELES COUNTY WATERWORKS DISTRICT NO. 29 PROPOSED WATER RATE INCREASES**

The Los Angeles County Waterworks District 29 ("District") received your correspondence relating to the proposed water rate increases on December 8, 2025 ("Letter"). The District does not recommend any changes to the proposed water rates as a result of the issues raised in the Letter.

The wildfires in Los Angeles County resulted in catastrophic loss of life and property to many people and parcels served by the District. However, while the reduction in parcels served by the District may result in a reduction in water purchase costs, the vast majority of the District's remaining costs, including administrative, capital projects, and operations and maintenance, remain unchanged. In other words, the District's costs stay largely the same even if demand is reduced.

The District is a not-for-profit entity responsible for providing water service to parcels within its service area. The District recovers the majority of its water service costs through imposing water rates. Water rates are restricted by Proposition 218. Proposition 218 allows the District to impose water rates that are proportional to the cost of providing service to the parcel, and that are designed to recover only enough revenue to cover all costs of providing water service. Importantly, Proposition 218 prohibits the District from imposing fees for water service on a parcel unless water service is actually used by, or immediately available to, the owner of the parcel. California courts have interpreted this limitation to mean that parcels that are physically disconnected from a water system cannot be charged.

Ms. Deborah Sinensky  
December 12, 2025  
Page 2

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While costs have continued to increase and regulation has become more stringent, the District has made significant efforts to find ways to reduce the cost of providing water service. These efforts include investment in energy efficient technology, in digital transformation to reduce labor and operational costs, in asset life extension through preventative maintenance, and operational cost reductions by outsourcing non-core services when cost effective

Thank you once again for the Letter and for engaging with the District on this matter. Please be assured that this Letter will be counted for the purpose of determining whether a majority protest against the water rates exists. If you need further information or have additional questions, please contact Mr. Alan Nino, Waterworks Division, at (626) 300-3392 or [anino@pw.lacounty.gov](mailto:anino@pw.lacounty.gov).

Very truly yours,

MARK PESTRELLA, PE  
Director of Public Works

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carolina T. Hernandez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Carolina" being more prominent.

CAROLINA T HERNANDEZ, PE  
Assistant Deputy Director  
Waterworks Division

RG:yg  
P:\wwpub\Admin\Letters\2025\Objection letters\Objection Letter Template.docx

---

**RANDY SINQUEFIELD**

[REDACTED] | [REDACTED] | [REDACTED]

Subject: Proposition 218 Protest – Waterworks District 29 Proposed Rate Increases

Clerk of the Board  
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors  
500 W. Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Re: Formal Protest of Proposed Water Rate Increases – Waterworks District 29 (Prop 218)**

Dear Clerk of the Board:

I am the owner of the property located at:

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

I hereby formally protest the proposed Waterworks District 29 rate increases scheduled to take effect beginning January 1, 2026, pursuant to my rights under California Constitution Article XIII-D (Proposition 218).

Proposition 218 requires that any protest be grounded on a factual, cost-of-service basis. Accordingly, my protest is based on the following:

Wildfire account-loss assumptions create a disproportionate burden on remaining Malibu West customers.

According to the District 29 Water Rate Study, the January 2025 wildfire resulted in the loss of 1,141 water service accounts, representing approximately 15% of all District 29 customers. The District states that these accounts are expected to be restored by FY 2030, making the reduction in customer base a temporary condition.

However, the District's financial plan applies a substantial 11% rate increase in FY 2026, followed by 6.5% increases each year thereafter, specifically to offset revenue lost due to these temporarily inactive accounts.

As a resident of Malibu West — a neighborhood not impacted by the wildfire account losses — I object that this approach places an unfair and disproportionate financial burden on customers whose properties were not destroyed and whose service needs have not changed.



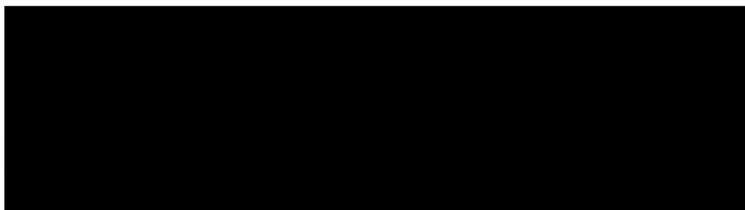
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This rate structure appears to require unaffected ratepayers to subsidize wildfire-related revenue shortfalls in a manner that is not directly proportional to the cost of providing water service to my parcel, as required under Proposition 218.

For these reasons, I submit this letter as my formal Proposition 218 protest against the proposed rate increases for Waterworks District 29.

Please acknowledge receipt of this protest and include it in the official count.

Sincerely,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

**Randolph Sinuefield**

Two horizontal black rectangular redaction boxes covering the address lines.



MARK PESTRELLA, Director

# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

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ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:  
P.O. BOX 1460  
ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91802-1460

December 12, 2025

IN REPLY PLEASE  
REFER TO FILE: **WW-4**

Mr. Randolph Sinuefield



Dear Mr. Sinuefield:

### **LOS ANGELES COUNTY WATERWORKS DISTRICT NO. 29 PROPOSED WATER RATE INCREASES**

The Los Angeles County Waterworks District 29 ("District") received your correspondence relating to the proposed water rate increases on December 8, 2025 ("Letter"). The District does not recommend any changes to the proposed water rates as a result of the issues raised in the Letter.

The wildfires in Los Angeles County resulted in catastrophic loss of life and property to many people and parcels served by the District. However, while the reduction in parcels served by the District may result in a reduction in water purchase costs, the vast majority of the District's remaining costs, including administrative, capital projects, and operations and maintenance, remain unchanged. In other words, the District's costs stay largely the same even if demand is reduced.

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Mr. Randolph Sinquefield  
December 12, 2025  
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Thank you once again for the Letter and for engaging with the District on this matter. Please be assured that this Letter will be counted for the purpose of determining whether a majority protest against the water rates exists. If you need further information or have additional questions, please contact Mr. Alan Nino, Waterworks Division, at (626) 300-3392 or [anino@pw.lacounty.gov](mailto:anino@pw.lacounty.gov).

Very truly yours,

MARK PESTRELLA, PE  
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CAROLINA T. HERNANDEZ, PE  
Assistant Deputy Director  
Waterworks Division

RG:yg  
P:\wwpub\Admin\Letters\2025\Objection letters\Objection Letter Template.docx

**BIG ROCK MESAS  
PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION**

ESTABLISHED 1947  
P.O. BOX 1146, MALIBU , CA 90265  
<https://bigrockmesas.org>

December 14, 2025

Los Angeles County Public Works:  
Waterworks Division

Re: **Protest Prop. 218** – Proposed Water rates

To Whom It May Concern:

The board of the Big Rock Mesas Property Owners Association recently reviewed the November 10<sup>th</sup> Malibu City Council meeting, and District 29 representatives explanation of a proposed increase in water rates.

While we concede the district's claims that the water system is aged and in need of maintenance and repair, we were surprised to hear this proposed five year \$190 million plan did not address the dangerously inadequate design of the water sourcing and delivery system that supplies our community and those surrounding us.

The community of Big Rock, as well as our neighboring communities rely on a finite water source based on a tank/pump configuration. This system incorporates the urban water design where the potable water supply is mingled with the fire abatement hydrant supply. All the water flows through one pipe network.

During a wildfire where multiple homes can simultaneously ignite and burn, that conflagration compromises the home's network of copper tubing and soldered joints, melting the solder, blowing out the copper couplings and tube and exploding into a torrent of water, water that is lost, that now lowers the pressure and contents of that tank on the hill, that now leaves the hydrant dry and firefighters ineffective and at risk.

That system, as it now exists, is riddled with latent leaks. It is a system designed for an urban environment not the Wildfire/Urban/Interface, WUI.

The Palisades Fire is not the first time Big Rock and neighboring communities have run out of water due to these leaky systems. The Topanga Fire of 1993 was another brutal example.

Since the Palisades Fire on January 7, 2025, we have been sounding the alarm on this issue.

With the rebuilding process picking up steam, a new level of weakness is being added. Roof top sprinkler systems and the fire department mandated internal sprinkler systems add another layer of potential leakage.

There are many homeowners considering the roof top fire mitigation systems. These systems, many of which are activated prior to fire front arrival, deplete water pressure early in the wildfire's onslaught. The efficacy of these systems is uneven with much of that precious water instantly evaporated as the fire storm arrives. Presently the fire department is *not* recommending them. But these systems will be coming. Even if they are attached to an independent water source e.g.- a pool with an automatic refill mechanism - again, there will be a consistent pressure drop.

**None of these dangerous risks have been addressed in this rate proposal.**

As stated initially, we are aware of District 29's claim that their water system needs repair but to repair a system designed to fail communities dependent on a reliable source of water during disaster conditions is flushing \$190 million down the drain. It is time to spend that money to build a system designed for all the needs of communities located in the WUI and especially for the one need, that infrequent need, which could determine the survival of lives, homes and community.

Until this issue is addressed, resolved, and included, we will oppose any rate increase.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Terry Davis,

President, BRMPOA

Board Members

Janet Fulk, Frank Albino, Jeff Grier, Olivier Fortis, Patty Philips, Jo Drummond, Salwa Wahba, and Abe Roy

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December 14, 2025

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Board Members

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Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors  
500 W. Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

12-8-25  
Via USPO  
JSE

Subject: Proposition 218 Protest – Waterworks District 29 Proposed Rate Increases  
Clerk of the Board

**Re: Formal Protest of Proposed Water Rate Increases – Waterworks District 29 (Prop 218)**

Dear Clerk of the Board:

I am the owner of the property located at:

**30707 Manzano Drive, Malibu 90265**

APN: [4469 034 001]

We, hereby, formally protest the proposed Waterworks District 29 rate increases scheduled to take effect beginning January 1, 2026, pursuant to my rights under California Constitution Article XIII-D (Proposition 218).

Proposition 218 requires that any protest be grounded on a factual, cost-of-service basis.

Accordingly, my protest is based on the following:

Wildfire account-loss assumptions create a disproportionate burden on remaining Malibu West customers.

According to the District 29 Water Rate Study, the January 2025 wildfire resulted in the loss of 1,141 water service accounts, representing approximately 15% of all District 29 customers. The District states that these accounts are expected to be restored by FY 2030, making the reduction in customer base a temporary condition.

However, the District's financial plan applies a substantial 11% rate increase in FY 2026, followed by 6.5% increases each year thereafter, specifically to offset revenue lost due to these temporarily inactive accounts.

As a resident of Malibu West — a neighborhood not impacted by the wildfire account losses — I object that this approach places an unfair and disproportionate financial burden on customers whose properties were not destroyed and whose service needs have not changed.

This rate structure appears to require unaffected ratepayers to subsidize wildfire-related revenue shortfalls in a manner that is not directly proportional to the cost of providing water service to my parcel, as required under Proposition 218.

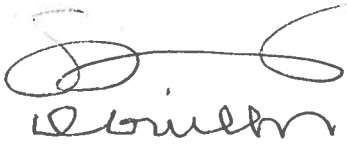
Guilbert

172

For these reasons, I submit this letter as my formal Proposition 218 protest against the proposed rate increases for Waterworks District 29.

Please acknowledge receipt of this protest and include it in the official count.

Respectfully submitted,



12-8-25

Lynn and David Guilburt  
30707 Manzano Drive  
Malibu, CA 90265  
310-892-9808

Guilburt

292

Clerk of the Board  
Los Angeles County  
Board of Supervisors  
500 W. Temple St.  
Los Angeles CA 90012

Re: Formal Protest of  
Proposed Water Rate Increases  
Waterworks District 29  
(Prop 218)

Dear Clerk of the Board:

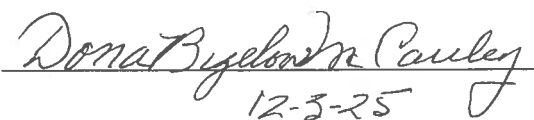
I am the owner of the property located at 30652 La Sonora Dr. Malibu Ca

I hereby formally protest the proposed Waterworks District 29 rate increases scheduled to take effect January 1 2026, pursuant to my rights under California Constitution Article XIII-D (Proposition 218).

My protest is based on the following: Wildfire account -loss assumptions create a disproportionate burden on remaining Malibu West customers . According to the district 29 Water Rate Study the January 2015 wildfire loss of their customers would be restored by 2030 making the customer base **temporary** and yet the District's financial plan applies a 11% rate Increase in FY 2026 plus 6.5% increase each year thereafter .

Malibu West was not impacted by the wildfire account losses . I therefore submit this letter as my formal protest to the propose rate increases for Waterworks District 29. Please include my protest in the official count.

Dona Bigelow McCauley  
30652 La Sonora Dr.  
Malibu Ca 90265

  
12-3-25



December 1, 2025

Attn: Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors  
500 W. Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Re: Proposed Water Rate Increase, Formal Protest – Waterworks District 29 (Prop 218)**

Dear Clerk of the Board:

We are the owners of the property located at:  
6204 Paseo Canyon Drive, Malibu, CA 90265

We are writing to formally oppose the proposed Waterworks District 29 rate increases scheduled to take effect on January 1, 2026, pursuant to our rights under Article XIII-D of the California Constitution (Proposition 218).

Proposition 218 requires that any protest be supported by factual, cost-of-service-based reasons. Our protest is based on the following:

**Wildfire account-loss assumptions unfairly shift costs onto Malibu West customers.**

According to the District 29 Water Rate Study, the January 2025 wildfire caused the loss of 1,141 water service accounts—approximately 15% of all District 29 customers. The District further states that these accounts are expected to be restored by FY 2030, indicating that this reduction in the customer base is temporary.

Despite this, the District's financial plan imposes a significant 11% rate increase in FY 2026, followed by 6.5% annual increases in subsequent years, specifically to make up for revenue lost from these temporarily inactive accounts.

As Malibu West residents — in a neighborhood that did not lose service connections due to the wildfire — We object to a rate structure that places an undue and disproportionate financial burden on customers whose properties were not destroyed and whose service usage has not changed.

This approach appears to require unaffected ratepayers to subsidize wildfire-related revenue shortfalls in a way that is not directly tied to the actual cost of providing water service to my parcel, contrary to the cost-of-service requirements of Proposition 218.

For these reasons, We hereby submit this letter as our formal Proposition 218 protest to the proposed rate increases for Waterworks District 29.

Please confirm receipt of this protest and ensure it is included in the official count.

Best,



Marcia Maizel-Clarke and Douglas Clarke