



St. James Parish Council

Ryan Louque
Chairman

P. O. Box 176
Vacherie, Louisiana 70090
(225) 562-2400
FAX (225) 562-2401
TDD: (225) 562-8500
council@stjamesla.com

Vondra Etienne-Steib
Vice-Chairwoman

Linda Hubbell
Secretary

PUBLIC NOTICE NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the following entitled ordinance was introduced at a regular meeting of the Parish Council of the Parish of St. James, State of Louisiana, on July 17, 2024, and laid over for publication of notice:

PROPOSED ORDINANCE 24-16 ST. JAMES PARISH COUNCIL

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 114 ARTICLE II, NATURAL GAS, OF THE ST. JAMES PARISH CODE OF ORDINANCES TO CLEARLY DEFINE THE CATEGORIES OF CONSUMER, MANDATORILY LINK (FLAT) RATES TO THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX, AND INCREASE THE GAS SYSTEM RATES CHARGED BY THE ST. JAMES PARISH UTILITIES DIVISION TO MEET THE COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE DISTRIBUTION OF NATURAL GAS

WHEREAS, St. James Parish Government operates and maintains a natural gas and water utility system for residential, commercial, and industrial consumers within St. James Parish, Louisiana,

WHEREAS, the utilities division of St. James Parish Government is considered an enterprise resource organization and taxes or millages do not exist to support its funding; and,

WHEREAS, the costs of operating and maintaining the St. James Parish gas and water utility system is funded solely by fees collected for products and services provided to consumers; and,

WHEREAS, the cost of operating the St. James Parish natural gas distribution system continues to increase due to inflation, required maintenance, and system upgrades; and,

WHEREAS, the cost of operating the St. James Parish natural gas distribution system continues to rise due to stricter regulatory requirements and the need to maintain minimum standards in accordance with federal and state doctrine; and,

WHEREAS, there have been recent, numerous, and costly modification projects completed throughout the natural gas distribution system that increased the gas supply to meet the demand of all St. James Parish consumers: and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED, BY THE ST. JAMES PARISH COUNCIL, that Chapter 114, Article II, Section 114-27 of the St. James Parish Code of Ordinances shall be amended as described in Exhibit A attached hereto:

Todd Poche	Courtney Long	Ryan Louque	Neal Poche	Anthony Jasmin	Vondra Steib	Donald Nash
District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	District 7

EXHIBIT A

Sec. 114-27. - Natural gas rates established.

- (a) **Unit rates** charged for natural gas service by the gas and water distribution system **of the St. James Parish Utilities Division shall be determined by actual or averaged consumption per month and are hereby categorized to be:** Residential, Commercial, and Industrial.
- (b) All such unit rates shall be established by the St. James Parish Council **and automatically adjusted annually in accordance with the Consumer Price Index identified in Sec. 114-28.**
- (c) **Unit rates shall be calculated using the Weighted Average Cost of Gas (WACOG) methodology as illustrated in Sec. 114-29 of this ordinance.**
- (d) **System charges (flat rates) for both the water and natural gas distribution systems shall be equal, standardized, and automatically adjusted annually in accordance with the Consumer Price Index identified in Sec. 114-28 and Sec. 114-49 of this ordinance.**
- (e) Reconnection fees, shut-off fees, or any other fees not specifically addressed by this section shall be as established by the **St. James Parish** Council.
- (f) **The basic natural gas service rates** for commercial or industrial **consumers** shall be negotiated with the parish utilities division **on a case-by-case basis**, but in no way shall **the rates** be less than the rates established in this section.
- (g) All utility rates shall be established by the St. James Parish Council using a phased increase as illustrated in the chart below:

Utility Rate Phased Increases					
Rate Type	Current Rate	10/1/2024	1/1/2025	4/1/2025	7/1/2025
Water Unit Rate	\$3.00	\$3.25	\$3.50	\$3.75	\$4.00
Water System Rate (Flat)	\$11.00	\$13.25	\$15.50	\$17.75	\$20.00
Gas Unit Rates	Gas unit rates will be established using the WACOG methodology illustrated in Sec. 114-29 of this ordinance.				
Gas System Rate (Flat)	\$8.50	\$11.37	\$14.25	\$17.13	\$20.00
Remarks	Using the phased method listed above, St. James Parish utility rates will increase 25% per quarter until the target rates are reached on July 1, 2025. Rate increases thereafter will be in accordance with the appropriate consumer price index identified in this ordinance.				

NOTICE IS HEREBY, FURTHER, GIVEN that the Parish Council of said Parish will meet at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, August 7, 2024, in the Council Chambers of the Parish Courthouse, 5800 Hwy 44, Convent, and on Wednesday, August 21, 2024 in the Council Chambers of the Parish Courthouse Annex, 2631 Hwy 20, Vacherie, at which time there will be a public hearing on the adoption of the aforesaid ordinance.

s/ Ryan Louque
Chairman

s/Linda Hubbell
Secretary

***Note:** St. James Parish will provide, upon request, reasonable accommodation to any disabled individual wishing to attend the meeting. Anyone requiring reasonable accommodation is requested to contact 1-800-846-5277 (TDD), 1-800-947-5277 (Voice) or 562-2400 (Handicapped) to discuss the particular accommodation needed.*

Todd Poche	Courtney Long	Ryan Louque	Neal Poche	Anthony Jasmin	Vondra Steib	Donald Nash
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