

# Understanding Water Rights

## A CLOSER LOOK

We're reaching out to share vital information about our city's water rights and how changes will impact our community. It's important we all understand these changes to ensure Pasco continues to thrive.

## WHAT ARE WATER RIGHTS?

Water rights allow us to use water from sources like the Columbia River. In Pasco, we're fortunate to have the right to utilize about 18,883 acre-feet of water annually for municipal drinking water purposes. For reference, an acre-foot of water can fill an acre of land one foot deep – that's a lot of water!

## WHY UPDATE WATER RIGHTS RULES?

Our city is growing fast! In 2022 alone, we treated and sent to customers about 15,873 acre-feet of water. To keep up with the increasing demand for more water, especially for new homes and businesses, we need to ensure continued management of the city's water rights.

## THE NEW CHANGES:

**Water Rights Acquisition Fee:** This fee helps us buy more water rights. Due to rising market values, we need to increase this fee from \$1,725 to \$4,150 per acre-foot. This big jump is because the value of water rights has increased by 140.6% since 2014.

**Encouraging Water Rights Transfer:** We prefer developers transfer existing water rights to the city. Then no fees are required. This helps us ensure there will be enough water rights to supply the new developments.

## IMPACT ON CURRENT RESIDENTS & BUSINESSES:

**Residents:** No change in your water bills. These fee adjustments affect new developments only.

**Businesses:** Property developers will encounter these updated fees and regulations. This ensures that new developments contribute fairly to our shared water resources.

**Why is This Necessary?** It's all about preparing for our future. As more people and businesses choose Pasco, we must ensure there are enough water rights to provide safe drinking water for everyone. Remember, an adequate water rights supply is key to our community's health, growth, and success.

**Your Role:** Your understanding and support are crucial. We're all in this together, and by staying informed and engaged, we can ensure that Pasco remains a vibrant, thriving community.

For any questions or further details, contact us below. You may also scan the QR code to learn more and access the online commenting form.

