

Understanding Water Rights

WHAT DEVELOPERS NEED TO KNOW

Pasco is growing, and with this growth comes the need for sustainable water management. As part of our commitment to ensure an abundant water supply for our expanding community, significant changes are being made to the city's water rights policies.

WHY THE CHANGE?

- **Rising Demand:** As Pasco develops, the demand for water increases. In 2022, our potable water usage was around 15,873 acre-feet, close to our current potable water rights capacity of 18,883 acre-feet. Our irrigation water usage was around 10,490 acre-feet, which is over our irrigation water rights capacity of 8,660 acre-feet. When combined, the available water rights for new development is a mere 1,830 acre-feet. Not enough to sustain the growth Pasco continues to experience.
- **Market Value Increase:** The market value of water rights has surged since 2014, necessitating adjustments in our acquisition fees to reflect current costs.

KEY CHANGES:

- **Increased Water Rights Acquisition Fee:** The fee has been raised from \$1,725 (adopted in 2014) to \$4,150 per acre-foot, aligning with the 140.6% market increase.
- **Water Rights Transfer:** Existing water rights are required to be transferred to the City if water rights are available. If water rights are not available, a fee will be incurred. This will secure long-term water availability for new developments. We can help customers fill out the necessary Ecology forms to make these transfers seamless.

IMPACT ON DEVELOPERS:

- **New Developments on Property with Existing Water Rights:** Transfer to the City the necessary amount to serve your new development and no fee is required.
- **New Developments on Property with No Existing Water Rights and no Water Rights within the last 10 years:** The new fee is required to be paid based on the amount of water necessary to serve your new development.
- **New Development on Property with no Existing Water Rights but had Water Rights within the last 10 years:** The new fee plus a surcharge is required to be paid based on the amount of water necessary to serve your new development.

NEXT STEPS FOR DEVELOPERS:

- **Review Your Plans:** Assess how the new fees and regulations impact your current and future projects.
- **Transfer Water Rights:** Code changes require you to transfer your water rights.
- **Stay Informed:** Keep up-to-date with ongoing changes and opportunities in Pasco's water rights policies.

We're Here to Help! For more information or to discuss how these changes affect your specific projects, please contact us below or use the QR Code to comment online:

