



Judge Reichley denies Allentown's request to stop Lehigh County Authority from implementing monthly water & sewer rates

ALLENTOWN, Pa. (September 25, 2018) – Lehigh County Authority (LCA) learned today that Lehigh County Court of Common Pleas Judge Douglas Reichley has denied the City of Allentown's request for an injunction to stop LCA's progress to implement monthly billing.

The change to monthly billing is expected to cost city customers about \$160 more each year for water and sewer service, which LCA says is needed to properly maintain the city's aging infrastructure and pay the \$308 million bonds it issued to fund the 50-year lease agreement in 2013.

While the judge's ruling allows LCA to implement the monthly rates included in the lease agreement, the municipal authority says it will still be necessary to work with the city to resolve outstanding disputes and to ensure financial sustainability.

According to CEO Liesel Gross, "LCA continues to believe there are ways to address the needs of the system and offer rate stability for the city citizens through the next 45 years of the lease. LCA and the city should work together to find the best long-term solution for the benefit of the citizens and the system."

Now that the judge's ruling has been received, LCA will finalize its plans in the days ahead, and customers will be notified directly of the changes in their billing schedule and due dates. A specific implementation schedule is not yet available. Additional details will be made available on LCA's website: www.lehighcountyauthority.org.

When LCA bid on the 50-year lease of the city water and sewer systems in 2013, it touted its unique qualifications for the job as a non-profit, local organization with a regional focus. However, operating revenues must be adequate to address both current and future system needs. LCA continues to believe that it offers the best long-term value for the city and its residents for the provision of safe and reliable utility services. Protection of public health and the environment are LCA's primary goals along with maintaining and enhancing the quality of life in the community. Operating in a financially sustainable manner is the key to achieving the long-term rate stability that both LCA and the city seek.

About Lehigh County Authority (LCA):

LCA was founded in 1966 by the County of Lehigh and is governed by a nine-member Board of Directors appointed by the County. As a municipal authority, LCA is a non-profit public agency, and we provide water and wastewater services to more than 55,000 homes and business in 17 municipalities in Lehigh and Northampton counties in eastern Pennsylvania. LCA began operation of the Allentown water and sewer systems in 2013 after the city put the systems up for competitive bid to address its significant outstanding pension debt. LCA's mission is to deliver exceptional value to our existing and future customers through our high-quality, affordable and reliable water and wastewater services. For more information, please visit: www.lehighcountyauthority.org