

See my comments – highlighted below - on behalf of the Queens Chamber of Commerce opposing the Water Board's rate gouge. I testified on May [6](#) and [10](#).

[TimesLedger](#)

## **Board agrees on 7.5% water**

*First single-digit increase in 5 years*

*By Rich Bockmann Thursday, May 19, 2011 11:11 AM EDT*

Get ready to pay more for your water.

On Friday, the city Water Board voted unanimously to approve the 7.5 percent water rate increase proposed by the city Department of Environmental Protection.

It is the first single-digit increase in five years, but 35 percent less than the figure the department had projected last year.

State Assemblyman David Weprin (D-Little Neck) said that while the increase was preferable to the proposed 11.5 percent, it is still too high.

“Had there been reasonable increases in the past, this would be not so outrageous,” he said. “But these increases all add up. It gets compounded each year.” Weprin has introduced a bill that would limit each year’s water rate increase to 5 percent.

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One Queens resident said she was having trouble paying her bill. Carol Courtines, a retired school teacher living on a pension, said her bill had gone up from \$62.94 from the second quarter of 2008 to \$366.74 in first quarter of 2011.

**Corey Bearak spoke on behalf of the Queens Chamber of Commerce in opposition of the increase.**

**“Everyone knows that the water and sewer hikes really function as tax hikes in all but name,” he said. “This use of so many millions of dollars to cover costs outside the water system and the outrageous practice of the city charging itself rent to operate its water and sewer system make clear how the Water Board functions as a cash cow for City Hall.”**

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The new water rate goes into effect July 1. Customers who sign up for electronic billing can save an extra 2 percent on their bill.

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View the entire article [here](#).