

After nine years of no water rate increase in the city of La Crosse, you'd almost expect a big rate hike to be coming.

And the city's not disappointing that expectation. The city council will vote on a rate boost next month that would increase the average home user's water bill by 32%. That's a bunch, agrees public works director Dale Hexom but the state's Public Service Commission would actually prefer a larger rate increase. He says the PSC wants water utilities to have enough cash flow so that extensive borrowing isn't required to keep water systems in good working order.