

CITY OF NEW PORT RICHEY, FLORIDA
5919 MAIN STREET, NEW PORT RICHEY, FL 34652

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING FOR ADOPTION OF STREET LIGHTING SERVICE ASSESSMENT

NOTICE DATE: JUNE 26, 2012

*****NOTICE TO PROPERTY OWNER*****

Dear City of New Port Richey Property Owner:

As required by Section 197.3632, Florida Statutes, and City Ordinance No. 2012-1985 notice is given by the City of New Port Richey that an annual assessment for street lighting services may be levied on your property for Fiscal Year October 1, 2012 - September 30, 2013 and future fiscal years. **THIS IS NOT A NEW ASSESSMENT PROGRAM; THE STREET LIGHTING ASSESSMENT HAS BEEN IMPOSED SINCE 2003.** The original street lighting assessments were imposed and collected on the November 2003 tax bill and subsequent years. However, since the City recently updated the street lighting assessment program it must provide this notice to all property owners of the updated assessment program.

Street Lighting assessments are based upon the parcel's classification and total number of "equivalent residential units" or "ERUs" attributable to that parcel. The City has determined that the average single-family residence in the City includes 1,860 building square feet, which is the value of one ERU or "ERU Value." Single-family residential units, mobile home units and residential condominium units are charged one ERU. For general parcels, such as commercial parcels, the number of ERUs has been calculated individually for each parcel of property by dividing the total building square footage by 1,860 square feet.

The annual Street Lighting Service Assessment rate for Fiscal Year 2012-13 will be \$36.24 for each ERU. The maximum Street Lighting Service Assessment rate that can be imposed without further mailed notice for future fiscal years is \$36.24 for each ERU. It is estimated that the City will collect \$376,772 from the Street Lighting Service Assessments for Fiscal Year 2012-13. The below referenced parcel has been assigned the following ERUs and assessment amounts:

Number of Equivalent Residential Units (ERUs): [ERU]

The FY 2012-13 annual street lighting assessment for the above parcel is: \$[Amount]

The maximum annual street lighting assessment that can be imposed without further notice for future fiscal years is \$[Amount]

The City Council will hold a public hearing at 7:00 p.m., or soon thereafter, on July 17, 2012, in the City Council Chambers located at City Hall, 5919 Main Street, New Port Richey, Florida. Comments will be received on the proposed Street Lighting Service Assessments, including their collection on the ad valorem tax bill. You are invited to attend and participate in the hearing. You may also file written objections with the City Council within twenty (20) days of the date of this notice. Please include your name, parcel number, and the reason you object to the assessment on all written objections. Objections should be forwarded as follows: City Clerk; Objections to Street Lighting Non-ad Valorem Assessments; 5919 Main Street, New Port Richey, Florida 34652. If you decide to appeal any decision made by the City Council with respect to any matter considered at the hearing, you will need a record of the proceedings and may need to ensure that a verbatim record is made, including the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be made. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need a special accommodation or an interpreter to participate in this proceeding, please contact the City Clerk at (727) 853-1024 at least 4 days prior to the date of the hearing. If there is a mistake on this notice, it will be corrected. If you have any questions regarding the number of ERUs assigned to your property or the amount of the Street Lighting Service Assessment, please contact Customer Service by telephone at (727) 853-1061.

Unless proper steps are initiated in a court of competent jurisdiction to secure relief within 20 days from the date of City Council action at the above hearing (including the method of apportionment, the rate of assessment and the imposition of assessments), such action shall be the final adjudication of the issues presented.

Copies of the City Ordinance, the Initial Assessment Resolution, and the preliminary assessment roll are available for inspection at the City Clerk's office in City Hall, located at 5919 Main Street, New Port Richey, Florida, or on the City website at cityofnewportrichey.org. The Street Lighting Service Assessment will be collected by the Tax Collector of Pasco County, pursuant to Chapter 197, Florida Statutes; Florida law provides that failure to pay the Street Lighting Service Assessment will cause a tax certificate to be issued against the assessed property which may result in a loss of title.

*****THIS IS NOT A BILL*****

[Owner Name]
[Address1]
[Address2]
[City, State Zip]

Parcel:
[ParcelNumber]
Property Description:
[Class Description]

Why Did I Receive This Notice?

In September 2003, the New Port Richey City Council established a street lighting fee that created a means of recovering costs incurred by Progress Energy in providing street lighting services throughout the City. The street lighting consists of the illumination of the City streets, right-of-ways and parks for the safety & welfare of everyone. We all benefit when we drive throughout the City and visit the City parks and facilities during the evening hours. Please note:

- This is not a new program
- It has been imposed since 2003
- The rate has been \$26.07 since 2007

The streetlight assessment fees are paid by all developed properties in the City. If this fee was paid only with the property taxes, then those properties that are tax-exempt (governments, non-profit organizations, churches, etc.) would not be paying for this service. All of these costs are a direct pass-through of what the city pays to Progress Energy. The sole purpose of setting up the street lighting program was to fully fund the cost of providing street lighting throughout the City.

The Annual Fee:

The proposed rate in the street lighting fee for fiscal year 2012-2013 is \$36.24 per Equivalent Residential Unit. The non-residential ERU calculation is the building square feet divided by 1,860 ERU value = total ERU's.

- For the average single family/mobile home/condo homeowner, the new street lighting fee per year will be:
 $\text{OLD FEE } \$26.07 \text{ INCREASE } + \$10.17 = \text{NEW FEE PER ERU } \36.24
- The \$10.17 annual increase works out to be about the cost of a dinner for 2 at McDonalds
- This will bring the program to 100% cost recovery which is what was attempted for the past 3 fiscal years.

What Services Will the Streetlight Assessment Provide?

- The costs of street lighting services for developed residential and commercial properties in the city
- The ongoing annual operating costs of the street lighting program within the city which includes the rental, maintenance and energy costs paid to Progress Energy.
- Besides the associated operation and maintenance costs for the streetlights, the assessment includes costs for adding streetlights for areas that are found by staff to have inadequate street lighting.

While we regret the City has to look toward increasing this assessment; we are obligated to pay the bill, otherwise we would have to look to decreasing street lighting service in areas of the City. This would not be a popular choice as many property owners request streetlights to provide security and safety in the neighborhoods and enhance the values, use and enjoyment of their property.