



TOWN OF VALDESE

NORTH CAROLINA'S FRIENDLY TOWN



MAYOR CHARLES WATTS

(828) 879-2125 | MAYOR@VALDESENC.GOV | TOWNOFVALDESE.COM

102 MASSEL AVENUE SOUTH WEST, P.O. BOX 339

VALDESE, NORTH CAROLINA 28690-0339

June 30, 2025

Dear Valdese Citizens,

The first half of 2025 has brought many successes to Valdese and I am happy to share the good news with you. As your mayor, I would like to thank our citizens, employees, volunteers, boards, and council members for their efforts and dedication on the following:

- Town Manager, Todd Herms was hired on May 1st, 2025.
- Councilwoman Melinda Zimmerman was appointed to fill the Ward 2 seat
- Received \$3,236,775 in grants for special projects ranging from utility infrastructure to pool covers due to efforts of town employees
- Plan in place for a pool cover for the Valdese Aquatics Center and the project estimated completion is late September.
- The Old Rock School renovation project was completed, preserving the building for future generations. The project was funded with \$1.4 million in grants, over \$200,000 in private donations, and \$216,000 from the Town of Valdese. The rededication celebration and ribbon cutting was held in November of 2024.
- In conjunction with the Water Plant Upgrades project, Valdese entered a 40-year interlocal agreement with the City of Lenior to provide water to supplement their water system. This will begin once the interconnect project is complete, and provides reciprocal resiliency to the Valdese water system.
- Full recovery from Hurricane Helene which caused nearly \$1,000,000 in damages to Town assets. Staff has worked with FEMA to recover these costs and repair or replace the damaged assets.
- Citizen Input Survey – 761 participants – Conducted by Western Piedmont Council of Governments
 - Top priorities for residents are community input, homelessness taskforce advice, and street maintenance review.
 - Citizens would like more market rate housing
 - Events: Citizens would like for Independence Day to be held on July 4th for 2026, Summer concerts should be kept at Temple Field every Friday night June-August, and the Waldensian Festival should continue to be held in August annually.
 - Citizens voted that the most convenient way to receive Town news is through social media and water bill inserts.

The property tax rate will remain the same for the 2025-2026 budget year and I am happy to report the approved budget will provide the following:

- New contract with Simply Green for trash and recycling collection resulting in a \$28,000 annual cost savings and no increase to current recycle / sanitation rates. I anticipate a better service experience overall than what we previously had with Republic.
- Support our employees with a 5% Cost of Living Adjustment

The underlying good news is that the Town's reserves fund balance is expected to be around \$7,000,000, for future investment in our town and unanticipated needs.

As we continue into the second half of 2025, we hope to have further information on these items at year-end.

- Public Safety Building project: D.R. Reynolds was hired to pursue three options for Town Council consideration.

We appreciate input from our citizens, business owners, visitors, friends, and neighbors. As your mayor, I am proud to serve you and if there is any way I can be of assistance, please feel free to contact me. I am happy to help.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charles Watts". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly informal style.

Mayor Charles Watts



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Utility Rate Informational Notice

Dear Valued Utility Customer,

In our ongoing commitment to maintaining a balance between meeting the needs of our customers, ensuring the vitality of the Town's utility system, and complying with regulatory standards, we conduct an annual review of our rate structure. We recognize that utility rates directly impact the lives of our customers and the broader economic landscape. Therefore, when updating rates, we meticulously consider these factors to ensure fairness and affordability in service delivery.

Our annual utility rate study, conducted by an independent party and available at the conclusion of the adopted budget document, is a comprehensive assessment that outlines the anticipated requirements of our utility system over the next decade.

For our residential customers within the Town limits, there will be a small increase in the base fee for water of \$1.50. The base fee for sewer services will be adjusted an additional \$3.25. According to the Environmental Finance Center at the University of North Carolina School of Government, even after this increase, the Town of Valdeese's residential water and sewer rates remain 24.8% lower than the North Carolina state average for the previous fiscal year.

We are pleased to report that both the sanitation and recycle fee will not have an increase and remain unchanged.

For our residential customers outside the Town limits who solely receive water services, the base fee will be increased \$9.85 reflecting 1.75 times the rate applied to inside customers. This adjustment aligns with industry norms, acknowledging the higher costs associated with maintaining water lines further out in the system. It is anticipated that future rate increases will follow the same as inside customers to maintain the 1.75x inside rate.

The adopted rates and fees for all other utility customer categories, as well as details on all Town services, can be conveniently accessed on our website at www.townofvaldeese.com.

In arriving at these rate adjustments, Town management and Council meticulously weighed various factors, including the escalating costs of maintenance and operation of the utility system, the imperative to replace aging infrastructure, and the ongoing upkeep of our water and sewer plant facilities.

With a steadfast commitment to providing safe and dependable water to all 5,450 customers we serve, these adjustments are deemed necessary to ensure the continued quality of our utility services.

Thank you for your continued partnership as we strive to uphold the highest standards of service excellence.

Warm regards,

Wm. Todd Herms
Town Manager