

WATER

Water is an enterprise fund, meaning it is structured to be a self-sufficient fund. It is a service for a fee structure, so the rates charged are all the income received. The water department creates their own income and pays their own bills. The water rate impacts all projects, maintenance, and improvements they are able to provide our county residents.

Q: Why are you proposing water rate adjustments now?

A: To fund immediate and long-term needs, including critical infrastructure rehabilitation, ongoing replacements, system expansion, rising operating costs (energy, pumping, treatment), and compliance with stricter regulatory requirements.

Q: What specific projects will the rate increases support?

A: Rehabilitation of the Sonora tank, repair/replacement of aging mains and components, pump station and PRV maintenance, and **expansion to serve residents without municipal water while also maintaining and upgrading fire suppression.**

Q: How do rising energy and pumping costs affect rates?

A: Energy and pumping are major operating expenses. As those costs rise, the system needs more revenue to maintain service levels and avoid deferred maintenance or reduced reliability.

Q: What regulatory or compliance costs are driving rate changes?

A: Enhanced sampling, more frequent valve exercising, increased system flushing, and other regulatory-driven activities require additional staff time, laboratory testing, and equipment — all increasing operational costs.

Q: How will these investments improve service reliability and water quality?

A: Planned rehabilitation and maintenance reduce breakdowns, improve pressure stability, lower contamination risk, and ensure consistent compliance with drinking water standards.

Q: Will everyone in the county pay more?

A: The rate structure is a 5% increase based on your current rate for the next 5 years. Some areas or new connections may have different fees. Revenues will support expansion projects and fund service to currently unserved residents.

Q: How will I know the exact amount my bill will change?

A: The bill you receive in September will reflect the new rates.

Q: When was the last increase?

A: 2016

For any questions, please contact the water department at 740-453-0678.

SEWER

Sewer is an enterprise fund, meaning it is structured to be a self-sufficient fund. It is a service for a fee structure, so the rates charged are all the income received. The sewer department creates their own income and pays their own bills. The water rate impacts all projects, maintenance, and improvements they are able to provide our county residents.

Q: Why are sewer rate increases being proposed?

A: To fund replacement and rehabilitation of aging infrastructure, upgrades to lift stations, ongoing maintenance, and rising operating costs (energy, labor, equipment, parts) needed to maintain reliable, safe service.

Q: What specific infrastructure projects will the increases support?

A: Full replacement of end-of-life South system mains, relining or replacing clay-tile mains in the North system, manhole rehabilitation, and upgrades to older lift stations.

Q: Why can't you just patch repairs instead of replacing mains?

A: Patch repairs are temporary for systems at or beyond useful life. Full replacement or relining prevents frequent failures, reduces infiltration, and lowers long-term costs and service disruptions.

Q: How do lift station upgrades improve service?

A: Upgraded lift stations increase reliability, reduce sewage overflows, improve energy efficiency, and lower maintenance needs through modern pumps and controls.

Q: Will these rate increases protect public health?

A: Yes—investing in sewer infrastructure and maintenance reduces risk of spills, backups, and contamination, protecting public health and the environment.

Q: Will all customers see higher bills?

A: The rate structure is a 5% increase based on your current rate for the next 5 years. Revenues will support expansion projects and fund service to currently unserved residents.

Q: How will I know the exact amount my bill will change?

A: The bill you receive in September will reflect the new rates.

Q: When was the last increase?

A: 2011

For any questions, please contact the sewer department at 740-452-4940.