



UTILITY BILLING FAQ

Why did the City increase my utility bill?

We increased utility bills to cover our operational needs. This increase does not include any money for capital projects intended for the 2020-2021 fiscal year.

The increase breakdown is as follows:

One unit= 1,000 gallons, Average Residential Customer = 4 units or 4,000 gallons

Rate Type	July 2018	June 2020
Water Charge – zero unit	\$2.18	\$2.42
Water Charge – per unit	\$3.81	\$4.23
Water Capital Improvement – per unit	\$2.69	\$2.99
Sewer Charge – zero units	\$3.55	\$3.94
Sewer Charge – per unit	\$5.38	\$5.97
Sewer Capital Improvement – per unit	\$.73	\$.81

Why would you increase this now? COVID-19 has affected my income and I'm concerned.

Ideally, we would like to wait, but costs to run a utility continue to increase beyond our control: increased regulations, cost of equipment and chemicals, health care costs for our employees, etc. It's necessary to cover our costs in order to sustain our system. If we fail to do so, the State will eventually step-in to manage the utility, which will ultimately be more expensive for our users with no local control on rates.

Could tax dollars be used to pay for the water and sewer utility costs?

The Water and Sewer Fund is an Enterprise Fund. An Enterprise Fund is a self-supporting fund, meaning all revenue generated from providing services and user charges must pay for the expenditures of the system.

What happened to the projected large utility rate increase that was discussed this winter?

Prior to COVID-19, the City was in the final stages of completing a water and sewer rate study based on our required large capital projects. The required large capital projects include moving the Public Works facility to allow for the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) to be expanded in the floodplain. This expansion is due, in part, to be in line with the Consent Order from the State to improve our Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) due to discharges into the creek during high rain events.

The increase was planned for this July and was anticipated to be just under 40% to address operational increases, the Lead and Copper Rule, rebuilding and expanding the Wastewater Treatment Plant, and relocating the Public Works Facility. All of these items are required under the permits the City has with the State. These capital projects have been delayed and removed from the 2020-2021 budget to avoid a large increase during COVID-19. The final costs and usage may vary and will be evaluated at the time that this project is resumed to determine the necessary utility rates.

How do our rates compare to other communities?

Community size, contracting for services, age of equipment, level of service, asset management, lead lines, water source, etc. affect every community's utility rates. Every system is unique; therefore, it is not recommended to compare rates. However, a rate comparison chart is below for reference.

Please note: Rates are as of January 2020; based on data provided by the community or their website. All rates are converted to monthly billing and gallons rates are based on 5/8" meter and residential charges.

Community (How it is similar to Mason)	Population	Water Total @ 4,000 gallons	Sewer Total @ 4,000 gallons	Total Water & Sewer
Williamston (location)	3,960	\$48.83	\$47.77	\$96.60
Delhi (location)	25,877	\$34.06	\$50.76	\$84.82
Flushing (population)	7,915	\$52.28	\$31.87	\$84.15
BW&L/Lansing (location)	118,427	\$34.06	\$49.43	\$83.49
Grand Ledge (location)	7,854	\$38.80	\$44.42	\$83.22
St. Johns (location)	7,865	\$28.95	\$52.03	\$80.98
Lapeer (population)	8,621	\$30.42	\$47.36	\$77.78
Chelsea (population)	5,474	\$31.52	\$45.86	\$77.38
Marshall (population)	6,996	\$37.26	\$39.52	\$76.78
East Lansing (location)	48,844	\$30.52	\$42.91	\$73.43
Charlotte (location)	9,088	\$25.44	\$44.98	\$70.42
Leslie (location)	1,884	\$36.07	\$32.52	\$68.59
Hillsdale (population)	8,049	\$26.04	\$39.44	\$65.48
Tecumseh (population)	8,390	\$24.44	\$37.22	\$61.66
Alma (population)	8,920	\$23.28	\$37.86	\$61.14
Howell (population)	9,618	\$29.59	\$30.07	\$59.66
Mason - NEW RATES		\$30.83	\$27.12	\$57.95
Dewitt (location)	4,511	\$34.06	\$23.24	\$57.30
Brighton (population)	7,657	\$14.80	\$39.47	\$54.27
Mason- CURRENT RATES	8,458	\$27.95	\$24.44	\$52.39
Hastings (population)	7,315	\$18.54	\$33.53	\$52.07
Hudsonville (population)	7,349	\$19.30	\$28.45	\$47.75
Meridian (location)	42,636	\$24.08	\$23.36	\$47.44
Delta Charter Twp. (location)	32,408	\$25.40	\$18.40	\$43.80

Resources: More Questions? Please Contact our Customer Service Desk at 517.676.9155.