



## TOWN OF MAYNARD Department of Public Works

MUNICIPAL BUILDING

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### **Water & Sewer Utility Rate Questions**

#### WHY ARE WATER AND SEWER RATES BEING INCREASED AT THIS TIME?

The utility reviews and updates the Water and Wastewater System Capital treatment Plans to both react to current circumstances, while proactively identifying and planning for future needs. The Capital Plans identify numerous critical improvements necessary to ensure the future sustainability and reliability of both systems. The critical needs include the replacement and rehabilitation of aging infrastructure and to ensure compliance of required regulatory mandates to protect public health and safety. The rate increases enable the Town to make important investments in the systems over the next year, while also keeping up with the impacts of inflation in the general operation of the systems, and maintaining our commitment to the town's future growth and sustainability.

#### WHEN IS THE LAST TIME WATER AND SEWER RATES WERE INCREASED IN MAYNARD?

Rates were last adjusted in July of 2020. Annual incremental rate modifications allows' the utility to avoid large increases and avoid a reactive approach to our system. Minor annual increases reduces' long term cost burden to utility customers.

#### WHY IS THERE A DIFFERENCE IN WATER AND SEWER RATE INCREASES?

The water and sewer utilities are two separate funds that do not overlap. The proposed increases are designed to fund maintenance, operations, and specific infrastructure improvement projects as they are scheduled to occur over the next fiscal year. The cost of the maintenance, operations, and projects are specific to each fund, and the rates per fund are adjusted accordingly.

#### HOW DID THE TOWN DETERMINE THE AMOUNT OF THE PROPOSED WATER AND SEWER RATE ADJUSTMENTS?

In 2017, the Town hired Pioneer Consulting, an experienced, independent accounting consultant in the water and sewer utility industry, to conduct a cost of service study that examined current and future revenues, as well as evaluated operation and maintenance expenses, and determined

an adequate funding level for Maynard's utilities. Pioneer began a comprehensive cost of service study to determine whether existing rates were enough to meet the system rehabilitation and replacement needs as well as the Town's operational costs for the water and sewer systems. Our rate structure was also assessed for compliance with industry best practices.

The utility has determined annual rate increases are necessary over the next seven years in order to continue providing reliable and sustainable sewer and water services into the future.

The proposed increases to sewer and water rates are triggered by many factors including:

- Identified infrastructure improvements necessary to address rehabilitation, replacement, and new demand utility projects
- Significant escalation of construction costs
- Inflationary increases in supply, material, labor, and utility costs

### HOW WILL RATE AND FEE REVENUES BE USED, AND CAN THEY BE USED FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSES?

State law requires that customer-based fees/revenues must be used only to pay the costs associated with operating and maintaining the water and sewer utilities in compliance with State and Federal regulations. Revenues may not be used to pay for other Town services such as streets, parks, or snowplowing.

### WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WATER AND SEWER UTILITY RATES AND IMPACT FEES?

Revenue from utility rates supports the costs of maintaining, operating, and supporting our existing system, funding for capital projects, and covering debt service on the bonds issued to fund the capital improvement program. Impact Fees are a one-time fee applied to new construction to provide revenue to the utility to finance all or a part of the capital improvements needed to serve and accommodate new customer growth.

### WHAT CAN I DO TO KEEP MY UTILITY BILL AS LOW AS POSSIBLE?

The amount of water you use affects your usage charge. When you use less water, you pay less. For most households, much of the water is used indoors. You can get the biggest water savings in your home by installing efficient fixtures and fixing leaks. A constantly running toilet may waste about 8 gallons per hour, or 200 gallons per day. Left unnoticed, a running toilet could waste over 6,000 gallons per month. Ensure you are only watering the lawn when needed, and adjust your sprinkler system, so you are not watering the gutters.

### WHAT IF I STILL HAVE QUESTIONS?

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=dq9Yg\\_jlsUc&t=69s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dq9Yg_jlsUc&t=69s) [www.youtube.com/watch?v=m5Z1VmlDPTU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m5Z1VmlDPTU)

**For more information, please visit the Town of Maynard Water and Sewer website at:**

<http://www.townofmaynard-ma.gov/dpw/water-and-sewer> For questions regarding Water

and Sewer services please contact Maynard Public Works office at (978) 897-1317 or email at [DPW@townofmaynard.net](mailto:DPW@townofmaynard.net)