

City of Beaverton

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Beaverton, MI 48612
Manager
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Raymond Nau, City Mayor
Kimberly Hines, City

Janelle Keen, Clerk

Memo

Date: June 20, 2022

To: City of Beaverton Residents

From: Kimberly Hines, City Manager

RE: Follow up on Water/Sewer Rate Questions from City Council Meeting on May 25, 2022

As promised, I wanted to follow-up by addressing some of the questions that residents asked at the last City Council meeting.

1. **“I heard 4000 gallons is the minimum gallon water usage charge, is that true? And if not, what is?”**
 - *1000 gallons is the minimum billable amount on a water/sewer bill per month. If a resident only uses 700 gallons, the resident will receive the “Ready to Serve” fee, however the system won’t bill the consumer for water or sewer gallons used for that bi-monthly cycle. What will happen if that same consumer uses 1400 gallons on the next bi-monthly read the bill will reflect the “Ready to Serve” fees that are on each bi-month’s bill and 2000 gallons of water and sewer billed. (As $700 + 1400 = 2100$) The 100 gallons left over will carry over to the next bi-monthly calculation. So, in summary the bills are generated per 1000 gallons, with anything over 1000 not reaching the next 1000 will, be added to the following bi-monthly calculation.*

2. **“If I water my yard or need to fill my pool up, can I get a break on the sewer gallon usage charge?”**
 - *Yes. Through the months of June, July, August, and September any resident that “Opts In” by July 10, 2022 by filling out a “Seasonal Watering Program Opt-In” form put out by the City of Beaverton and turns it in personally to the Treasurer at City Hall, will have their water bills manually averaged going over the past two years comparing summer usage to other months usage and if the average during summer months amounts to 1000 gallons above normal usage from other months, the sewer portion of the resident’s bill will be adjusted down. All water usage will be billed at*

metered rate according to the actual amount of water used, but sewer will be based upon an average that may reflect a smaller usage rate.

- *Only residents who turn in the “Seasonal Watering Program Opt-In” Form by July 10, 2022 will be eligible for any sewer adjustments.*

3. “I had a water leak and didn’t realize it, therefore when my bill came it was very high. Can I get help with my bill since I didn’t realize I had a leak?”

- *Yes. The city is always willing to work with residents to rectify leaks and unexpected high bills due to those leaks. If you suspect that you have a leak;*
 - i. Immediately either fix the problem personally or have someone come in and fix the leak.*
 - ii. You must notify the city during the first billing cycle following the leak, before the bill is paid, showing the increased water gallon usage. The bill will be looked at by the City Manager and she will have the Treasurer average the last two years usage for the same months and if the bill shows a significant increase in gallons used and it is in the same billing cycle as when the leak occurred the City Manager has the discretion to have the Treasurer adjust the bill.*

Please Note: The adjustment will be a one-time courtesy, so it’s imperative that any suspected leak get fixed immediately.

4. What does the “Ready to Serve” fee on my bill mean?

- *The “Readiness to Serve” fee is the fixed-rate cost applied to cover system maintenance, supporting customers, and the portion of the Department of Public Works that is reserved for water. Every property where there is a water meter present and connected to the system is assessed a Readiness to Serve fee, whether its occupants are utilizing water or not.*

5. Approximate meter dates, bills sent and due dates are listed below for the remainder of 2022:

<u>Meter Read*</u>	<u>Bills Sent*</u>	<u>Due Date</u>
7/11/22	7/19/22	8/21/22
9/12/22	9/19/22	10/21/22
11/13/22	11/19/22	12/21/22

**Approximate dates.*

6. The following organizations offer financial assistance programs to help residents if they need help with their bills. There may be income restrictions attached, but please feel free to contact any of the organizations listed below if you need help:

- Gladwin County DHS – (989) 426-3300
- Gladwin County Community Action Agency (989) 426-2801
- Sacred Heart Mission (989) 426-4661 (Copay IS REQUIRED)

- Salvation Army – Referral from Social Worker Required

If you are seeking assistance, the City of Beaverton must hear from the PROVIDER five (5) before the shut off date to prevent any disconnection.

If you know you will be late with your bill payment, please contact the city and we can set up a payment plan for you. We are willing to work with all residents as long as there are no “failed” payment arrangements within the last 3 billing cycles. (989) 435-3511.

Lastly, I would like to tell residents, I know as the new City Manager that the increase of water/sewer bills over the past five years have been difficult on each of your personal finances. I am dedicated to work with residents to help navigate ways to improve water quality, affordability and transparency with rate increases. With inflation being at an all-time high I know it’s difficult to weigh which bills you can afford to pay each month especially if you are trying to make ends meet on a fixed income.

If you know you are going to have a problem making the bi-monthly payment, **PLEASE** reach out to one of the organizations above or call Jodie at the City and she will work with you setting up a payment plan. As we navigate these difficult times, please know everyone here at City Hall including Council Members are very passionate and driven to find future solutions to the city’s high water/sewer rates. Let’s all work together though diligence, respect and transparency to find ways to conserve, improve and make our water resources affordable for everyone in the community.

