

SHETEK AREA WATER & SEWER DISTRICT

2500 28TH STREET, PO BOX 57, SLAYTON, MN 56172

August 15, 2021

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**For maintenance issues,
please call: Dave Brown
(507) 760-0071**

Utility rate decrease as of January 1, 2022

At their June meeting, the SAWS Board reviewed an inspection report from Quality Flow's annual lift station inspections. These inspections are generally routine; however, this year, some large infrastructure repairs were found during their annual inspections. These repairs are necessary to preserve the integrity and functionality of the lift stations and are currently estimated to cost between \$120,000 and \$200,000.

Therefore, when the Board conducted their annual review of Operation & Maintenance (O&M) costs, Debt Service needs, and evaluation of sewer rates on August 9, 2021, it was necessary to consider the cost of these unexpected infrastructure repairs. During the review, they determined that continuation of \$10 per month debt service surcharge was no longer needed after the December 2021 billing. However, a 6% utility rate increase was necessary for 2022 to replace O&M funds expended on these large infrastructure repairs over the next few years and prevent the District from having to borrow additional funds from Murray County.

Even with a 6% utility rate increase, this still results in an overall reduction in monthly utility costs. Please note that this 6% increase includes the minimum 3% annual future rate increase originally approved in 2019 to help cover increasing O&M costs of aging infrastructure. The 2022 utility rates are below along with probable future utility rates predicted through 2026.

Year	Rates				
	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
	(6%)	(3%)	(3%)	(3%)	(3%)
Pump type					
Residential	\$71.00	\$73.00	\$75.00	\$77.00	\$79.00
Commercial					
Single - Low	\$87.00	\$90.00	\$93.00	\$96.00	\$99.00
Single - High	\$159.00	\$164.00	\$169.00	\$174.00	\$179.00
Double - Low	\$248.00	\$256.00	\$264.00	\$272.00	\$281.00
Double - High	\$318.00	\$328.00	\$338.00	\$348.00	\$358.00

When do the new rates go into effect?

The new increased rates are proposed to go into effect on January 1, 2022; the first time you will notice an increase will be on your January 2022 bill.

Board Commended for Improving Fund Balances

On April 14, 2021, the SAWS Board reviewed the 2022 Rate Evaluation completed by an independent financial analyst. Within the report, the Board was commended for "initiating the user rate adjustments and the monthly sur-charge in 2019." While this was not an easy decision and there were many unhappy property owners, it was vital in order to continue to pay the increasing operation and maintenance costs without acquiring more debt. The rate evaluation showed that this decision "clearly impacted the current rate review with stabilized rates and has avoided drastic rate increases or borrowing from Murray County, and has enabled full repayment of funds borrowed from the County."

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Flush your grinder station to help reduce corrosion.

When closing your cabin for the season or leaving for an extended period of time, run about 30 gallons of water into the grinder station to activate the pump. This will pump the sewage out of the grinder basin and help reduce grinder corrosion.

Keep the power on to protect your investment.

Leave the power on to the grinder at all times even in winter. It is better for the pump and will help protect against sewer backups.

Think before you flush to help prevent sewer clogs.



Mark your station location for easier maintenance.

Before the snow flies, please mark your grinder station so it can be easily located if maintenance is required over the winter.

Pump sounding louder than normal?

Please call the maintenance provider at 507-760-0071 to run a check on your pump.

Sign up for auto pay to avoid unnecessary late fees

Ever misplaced a bill only to find it the day after it's due? Avoid potential late fees by signing up for automatic payments. If interested, please call the Murray County Auditor's Office at 507-836-1154.

Questions?

Please contact any of the Board members listed on the front side of this newsletter.