

City of Lancaster – Bureau of Wastewater
Filing of Rate Increase for Sewer Service to Properties Outside of the City

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. 1.: Why is the City increasing my sewer rates?

There are several reasons that Lancaster determined that a request for a rate increase was necessary to recover the cost of sewer services provides to customers located outside the City's municipal boundaries.

The City's last rate increase for sewer customers outside of the City was in 2013. Since then, the City has made significant capital improvements in the overall sewer system and has filed for a rate increase in part to cover the cost of these capital improvements.

Second, Lancaster seeks to recover a more reasonable rate of return on its investment in its sewer system that are being recovered under current rates.

Third, it has been approximately seven (7) years since Lancaster's rates for customers outside of the City have been increased. During that period, Lancaster has experienced many increased costs associated with operating the sewer system, costs for employee salaries and wages, employee benefits, insurance, treatment chemicals, testing, other operating expenses, and debt service. Lancaster seeks to recover those increases in costs through proper rates that are related to the actual cost to provide sewer services to our customers.

Finally, Lancaster seeks to promote the financial integrity of the sewer system and to place it on a more sound financial footing, from the perspective of both present operations and future needs, including consideration by the lenders of the sewer system's internal financial conditions for future borrowings, which will be necessary to fund capital additions and improvements.

Q. 2.: Who will be affected by this rate increase?

A: This specific filing applies only to City of Lancaster Sewer customers whose properties are outside of the City limits. Rates for these customers must be approved by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC). The City's rate increase filing with the PUC is the first step in this rate approval process. This increase is proposed to take effect on September 17, 2019. It is likely that the PUC will take action to review the City's rate increase request that will result in any rate increase going into effect later than the proposed effective date of September 17, 2019.

Q. 3.: I live inside the City. Will my sewer rate increase also?

A: Yes, we do expect that rates for customers inside the City will need to be raised after the PUC rules on this filing to increase sewer rates for customers outside of the City.

Q. 4: I live outside of the City. How much can I expect to pay if the City’s rate request is approved?

A: Sewer bills can vary greatly customer to customer and are based on a customer’s metered water usage. An average residential household using 12,000 gallons of water will see their quarterly sewer bill increase from \$52.25 to \$75.66.

Even with the proposed rate increase, the cost of City sewer service will remain at a reasonable rate for our customers when compared to comparable sewer services provided throughout Lancaster County. If the City’s rate increase is approved, the cost for residential customers will be \$6.31 for each 1,000 gallons of a customer’s wastewater being treated. For an average residential customer, the proposed rate increase would result in a quarterly sewer bill of \$75.66.

Commercial and industrial sewer customers will also see an increase in their sewer bills. More information about the impact of the proposed rate increase on these customers can be found in the City’s [Notice of Proposed Rate Changes](#) and in the City’s revised sewer tariff at [Supplement No. 39 to Tariff Sewer-Pa. P.U.C. No. 7](#).

Q. 5.: How do the City’s proposed rates compare to other sewer rates in Lancaster County?

A: Below is a chart showing the rates for residential sewer service in various Lancaster County communities. The rates shown in this chart are based on a residential property using 12,000 gallons/quarter.

Lancaster County Sewer Rate Survey

Usage = 12,000 Gallons	
Manheim Area Water & Sewer Authority	\$230.73
Mount Joy & West Donegal Townships*	\$150.00
Denver Borough	\$133.80
Suburban Lancaster Sewer Authority*	\$125.00
Leola Sewer Authority*	\$120.00
Lititz Borough	\$112.29
Mount Joy Borough	\$110.04
Millersville Borough Residential*	\$110.00
Lancaster Area Sewer Authority*	\$96.99
East Lampeter Sewer Authority*	\$95.00
Elizabethtown Borough*	\$92.00
Warwick Township*	\$77.00
New Holland Borough	\$76.00
Lancaster City - Proposed Outside	\$75.66

*Flat rate charge not based on consumption

Q. 6.: How can I find out more about the City's rate filing?

A: More detail about the rate increase filing is included in a document titled [Supplement No. 39 to Tariff Sewer-Pa. P.U.C. No. 7](#). This document provides detailed information about the proposed rates, including customer and consumption charges. The Tariff also provides rules and regulations for, among other things, dealing with disputed accounts and discontinuance of service.

For more detailed information on your rights relating to the City's filing, please refer to the City's [Notice of Proposed Rate Changes](#). One can also contact the City of Lancaster's Customer Service office at (717) 735-3425 or go to the City Clerk's office to view a copy of the filing.