

Recently the Township raised water rates significantly. Basic service was increased from \$11.50 to \$17.00 for 462 cubic feet or 3,456 gallons.

That decision was guided by a much-needed rate study from a consultant hired by the Grand Traverse County DPW to provide each township with financial projections based on the previous rates.

Our water and sewer systems are "Enterprise Funds" and are completely funded by the users and developers. It would be unfair for taxpayers who are well & septic users to pay for something they don't even use.

We contracted for the study because a series of things caused big increases in the system's expenses. The Flint Water Crises was the first, it caused the state and federal regulators to increase the work required by water systems. Next the City water plant began catching up on deferred maintenance. Since we buy water from the city on a cost-plus basis, our budget was hit. East Bay Township was the first to be studied. Then, Covid hit - shutting down many operations and delaying study results. Federal spending, inflation and supply chain issues dramatically increased the price of pipe and mechanical components and affected our bottom line.

Just to put things in perspective, here are the current rates of our neighboring municipalities:

Acme Sewer - \$35.00/month

East Bay Sewer - \$26.42/month

East Bay Water - \$23.36/month 600 cu. ft., \$2.65/hundred over minimum

Elmwood Greilickville Sewer - \$23.00/month

Elmwood Greilickville Water - \$28.99/month 600 cu. ft., \$3.55/hundred over minimum

Elmwood Timberlee Water - \$31.00/month 468 cu. ft., \$1.75/hundred over minimum

Garfield Water - \$17.00/month 462cu. ft., \$2.70 per 100 cu.ft.

Garfield Sewer - \$20.90/month

Peninsula Sewer - \$29.78/month

Peninsula Water - \$45.34/month 600 cu. ft., \$4.00/hundred over minimum

Whitewater Sewer - \$25.00/month

Traverse City Sewer - \$47.00/month, \$53.00/1,000 cu ft over minimum

Traverse City Water - \$16.00/month, \$20.00/1,000 cu ft over Minimum

(Traverse City Customers who live outside the city pay 150% of the city residents rates)

It has always been our wish to keep rates as reasonable as possible, and that is still the case. Please feel free to send us a letter, email or call if you have any other questions.

Sincerely,

Chuck Korn, Supervisor
Garfield Charter Township

We just received our May water bill and it was substantially higher than we are used to. Here is a list of suggestions that may help reduce the additional expense of maintaining a healthy lawn.

The fact is, an established lawn needs only 1 inch of water per week in the growing season, so pouring on the water can actually harm your turf, as well as the environment—and your budget.

Here are the water-saving steps you can take:

Let the grass grow longer by raising your lawn mower's cutting height. Longer blades of grass help shade each other, reducing evaporation, so keep your grass between 3 and 4½ inches tall.

Reduce fertilizing; it only promotes new growth. When you mow, leave grass clippings on the lawn to retain moisture and add nitrogen. If you use a sprinkler, direct the spray to the grass and garden and not the sidewalk and street.

Don't use water to clean off your driveway, steps, or deck. Sweep them instead or use a leaf blower. Wash your car with water from a bucket or go to a commercial car wash that recycles water.

When it rains, collect the water in barrels or install gutters and downspouts that direct the runoff to your plants and trees.

Reduce the size of your lawn. Consider replacing grass with mulch, ground cover, drought-tolerant plants, or ornamental grasses. Weeds compete with other plants for water, so weed regularly and ditch any water features unless they use recycled water. To find the best plants for your region, consult your county cooperative extension or a local nursery.

Use soaker hoses or drip irrigation, if watering is permitted, to apply water slowly and evenly. Buy a hose nozzle with an automatic shutoff. Water early in the day when evaporation rates are low and more water is absorbed.

Consider a moisture sensor in your irrigation system, they claim to reduce unneeded water use.