

Frequently Asked *Questions*



Why are sewer rate increases necessary?

There are several reasons Hartland Township was required to adjust sewer rates.

1. Despite cost increases for infrastructure, labor, power and materials, Hartland Township worked diligently to not increase rates for sanitary sewer for over 12 years and non-residential user rates had not previously risen in more than 22 years prior to July 2008.
2. Hartland Township's sewer system is now owned and operated by the Livingston County Drain Commissioner's Office, and the wastewater is treated by Genesee County. The Drain Commissioner's Office realized a significant increase in costs when they took over the system due to underbidding by the previous contractor for operation of the system. Genesee County also experienced a cost increase for treatment that required study and adjustment.
3. The original sanitary sewer system failed to comply with requirements of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) and required mitigation, which led to the transfer to the Livingston County Drain Commissioner's Office and treating the wastewater in Genesee County. While a significant portion of the new infrastructure costs were funded through the addition of new users and future additions to the system, part of these costs were appropriately intended to be borne by the existing customers as necessary to the continued existence of the system.
4. During the last two fiscal years, the Township has experienced a deficit in the Sewer Fund and is required by the State of Michigan to take corrective action. Quarterly rate increases are expected to continue into future years until the sewer system's financial integrity is ensured.

How are sewer rates calculated?

Sewer rates are calculated based on the cost of treating the wastewater by Genesee County, the pumping costs required to bring the wastewater out of lower elevations and to Genesee County, labor costs, testing, materials costs and other operating expenses associated with repairing and maintaining the sewer system by the Livingston County Drain Commissioner's Office. While the Township Auditor recommended rate increases as high as 95%, the Township endeavored to identify other revenue sources and use available funds to dramatically lower these increases over time.

What is the "Base Charge"?

The base charge is a fixed quarterly charge that is based on your Residential Equivalent Units (REUs). One (1) single-family home equals one (1) REU. The base charge primarily pays for the fixed overhead expenses and bond payments for a portion of the new infrastructure costs. This charge to existing customers was originally intended as part of the project in 2005, but the Township delayed the additional cost for residents.

What are the new and approved rates adjustments?

Per Quarter	Old Rates	New and Future Approved Rates			
	(1986-2008)	4/1/2010	7/1/2010	10/1/2010	1/1/2011
Base Charge (per REU)	-	12.87	12.99	13.12	13.26
Metered (per 1,000 gallons)	3.62	4.72	4.86	5.01	5.16
Non-Metered Flat Rate	59.46	87.85	92.24	96.85	101.70
Grinder Pump Surcharge	25.02	27.77	28.00	28.20	28.35

How do Hartland Township rates compare to other communities in the county?

Hartland Township rates are lower across the board than most of the other communities in Livingston County.