

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Posted on: July 15, 2024

Planned sewer rate increase takes effect in August

Customers using the city of Dexter sewer service will see a planned rate increase beginning August 1, 2024, in order to pay for the replacement of the city's non-compliant sewer treatment system.

A new wastewater treatment plant is being designed to replace the two aerated lagoon systems currently being used by the city. This new treatment plant is necessary to remain in compliance with federal Clean Water Act regulations and the Missouri Department of Natural Resources. The city of Dexter contracts with Continental Utility Solutions, Inc. (CUSI) for sanitary sewer services billing. Customers will start to notice a change on their August bills.

Sewer rates are based on a combination of a flat fee plus a component of water consumption calculated each month from the water meters located at each tap into the water supply system. This is because most of the residents' water goes down drains and toilets and ends up in the wastewater system.

The current rate for sewer service in the City of Dexter is calculated as a base rate charge of \$7.25 plus one dollar ninety-five cents (\$1.95) per one thousand (1000) gallons of water used per month. To avoid burdening the citizens of Dexter with a significant increase to their bill all at once, the city is taking a considerate approach to our citizens' finances by implementing the voter-approved increase gradually. The increase in the sewer rate will include a two dollar (\$2) per month increase each month for the next eighteen (18) months.

The city has been struggling with a failing treatment system for several years. In 2009, the Department of Natural Resources notified the city that their current system was not providing an adequate level of treatment. In November 2021, the city was issued an Abated Order of Consent from the Department of Natural Resources and was referred to the Enforcement Division for possible daily fines. Since April 2023, the city has been working with the engineering consultant Allgeier, Martin and Associates Inc. from Joplin to evaluate the existing system and design a new one. The recommendation from the consultant was to construct a concentric basin mechanical plant on the west side of town and consolidate all treatment and discharge at one location. The estimated construction cost for this improvement is \$32 million dollars.

On April 2, 2024, the voters of Dexter approved a proposition for the issuance of bonds for this improvement with a 72.2% approval rate. During the July meeting, the Dexter City Council approved the sewer rate increase. The city continues to work with USDA Rural Development to secure the best funding package available for the planned improvement.

For more information about city improvements, visit www.cityofdexter.org or call City Administrator David Wyman at 573-624-5959.