

2022 Utility Rates Support Ongoing Reinvestment

Sewer, stormwater and water utility fees for 2022 were recently approved by the Columbus Sewer and Water Advisory Board and Columbus City Council, following a public hearing. The rate structure will allow the department to continue to provide quality water and sewer services and reinvest in Columbus' water and sewer infrastructure. It will sustain an ongoing capital improvement program, which helps the quality of life in neighborhoods and also supports economic growth in the central Ohio area.

Infrastructure reinvestment continues at the city's three drinking water plants and also at the Hoover and O'Shaughnessy dams. Backup power capability and ultra-violet light treatment were just added to the Dublin Road and Hap Cremean water treatment plants. The replacement/rehabilitation of aging waterlines continues, to reduce breaks and improve reliability. Planning has begun on a fourth water plant, which will be in design by 2023.

In the Division of Sewerage and Drainage, many wet weather management plan improvements will continue in order to meet consent order requirements with the state to reduce sewer overflows. Projects under the Blueprint Columbus program, the OEPA-approved green alternative to the original plan, are underway and in planning in several Columbus neighborhoods. The Lower Olentangy Tunnel sewer project began in 2021 and will run through 2026. Other reinvestments include upgrades to the city's sanitary and stormwater collection systems.

This year's rate structure includes: a 4% increase in water, a 5% increase in sewer, and a 3% increase in Columbus stormwater rates. An in-city customer using 30 ccf (hundred cubic feet), an average for a family of 4, would go to \$316.24 for a quarterly bill in Columbus, an increase of \$13.60, or 4.49% over 2021. Smaller households would see an increase of around \$8.80 a quarter. Approved low-income customers will see an average increase of 4.48% or \$7.58 - \$11.42 a quarter, depending on household size and consumption. Outside-Columbus contracting suburban communities would see a 4.52% increase, or \$9.78 - \$15.06 more a quarter. Differences in



bills vary based on actual water consumption. Columbus' water and sewer rates remain among the lowest in the region, lower than Cleveland, Indianapolis and Pittsburgh. Columbus' tap water -- meeting or surpassing all state and federal drinking water standards -- remains a great value at less than a penny a gallon.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic that began in 2020 and its associated economic challenges, many customers fell behind on paying their bills. If you are one of them, please visit <https://www.columbus.gov/payassist> to learn more about the resources available. Assistance is available for qualifying residents and businesses, and payment plans can be arranged regardless of income level.

Additionally, our low income and senior discount programs will continue for those that qualify. Income eligibility is based on 150% of the current federal poverty level, and approved customers receive 20% off future water and sewer consumption charges. Current income maximum levels are on our website at the above address. If you qualify, an application is on the reverse side.

For questions, call 614-645-8276 weekdays 7 AM - 6 PM or email UtilityLeadRep@columbus.gov.

Conservation tips are on our web site at columbus.gov/utilities/conserves. Everyone can save money on water/sewer bills by limiting usage.



2022 LOW INCOME WATER/SEWER DISCOUNT APPLICATION

Please note: if you are age 60 or older and qualify for the Low Income Discount Program, you may also qualify for a Senior Citizen Discount. For questions regarding the discount programs or your bill, please contact Customer Service at 614-645-8276, email UtilityLeadRep@columbus.gov or visit columbus.gov/utilities.

Name: _____
Last First Middle

Address: _____
Number Street/Road Apartment #

City State Zip Code

Phone: _____ - _____ - _____

Email Address: _____

Number of people in household: _____

Account number (from water bill): _____

To be eligible for the low income discount program, applicants must have an active City of Columbus water or sewer account for their residence in their name (or spouse's name) and must meet at least one of the following requirements:

1. You must have a total income of less than 150% of the U.S. Bureau of Census poverty level. For current maximum income #s, visit <https://www.columbus.gov/payassist>, call 614-645-8276 or email UtilityLeadRep@columbus.gov. You must provide current proof of household income with the following for all household members over 18 (must be dated and include name):
 - Income Tax Return
 - W-2 Forms
 - Benefit Letter from Social Security
 - Pension Award Statement *or*
2. You must be currently enrolled in a qualifying low income program and provide current letter of participation from one of the following programs (must be dated and include name):
 - Food Stamp Benefits
 - Ohio Medicaid
 - Low Income Energy Assistant (LIHEAP)
 - Home Energy Assistance (HEAP)
 - Ohio Works First
 - Public Housing Benefits

Please send copies only of the above and this application to (copies will not be returned):

Columbus Department of Public Utilities
Customer Service Center
910 Dublin Road
Columbus OH 43215

The information associated with this application has been examined by me, and is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, true, correct and complete.

Applicant signature: _____

Date: _____

Prepared by signature (if different from applicant): _____