



Investing in Gladstone's Water and Sewer Infrastructure

Introduction

The City of Gladstone is responsible for maintaining a system of over 70 miles of water and sewer pipelines, 5 pumping stations, and 3 storage tanks within the City. This infrastructure is getting older, with portions of the system over 50 years old.

As the drinking water piping system ages, the pipes break more frequently. Pipe failures create service outages and cause damage to City streets and private property. The City's sewer pipelines are also aging. As they get older, they leak more, allowing groundwater to enter the sewers and mix with the wastewater in the pipes. The City then has to pay to have that groundwater treated along with the wastewater at the wastewater treatment plant. This problem is called inflow and infiltration (I&I). Older pipes also get blockages more frequently, leaving wastewater to flood streets and basements and overflow to the river.

Investing in Our Water and Sewer Systems

The City has kept water and sewer rates low for years, which has only provided enough funds to operate the system—there hasn't been enough money for proactive ongoing maintenance. During those years the backlog of old or failing pipelines and other infrastructure has been growing and addressing these problems only gets more expensive over time. **City Council has made a commitment to investing in our water and sewer systems, to maintain the health and long-term vibrancy of the City.**

A high priority is to raise water and sewer rates slowly over time to pay for fixing failing pipelines, pump stations, and storage tanks. A two-year increase was approved by City Council on September 12, 2017 and will go into effect in January 2018 and January 2019.

The average combined residential water and sewer bill will increase around \$7 to \$10 in 2018.

The amount depends on which sewer treatment provider area you are in. The typical household bill will increase from \$50.45 to \$57.69 per month. Our regional water and sewer treatment providers have also increased their rates. Those rates are included in your utility bill, but the funds get passed through to the regional providers to pay for maintenance and operations of their water and wastewater treatment facilities. **Even with the increase, Gladstone's water and sewer rates are still low compared to neighboring communities.**



Public Works crews repair a water pipe blowout—one of more than 34 since May 2016. Implementing a pipe replacement program will greatly reduce service interruptions for our customers.

What does your utility bill pay for?

- ✓ **Clackamas River drinking water filtration** (A passthrough charge for service provided by North Clackamas County Water Commission)
- ✓ **Safe drinking water delivered to your home** (pipes, pumps, reservoirs)
- ✓ **Fire protection** (fire hydrants)
- ✓ **Wastewater treatment** (A passthrough charge for service provided by three regional sewer treatment providers, depending on where you are in the City)
- ✓ **Wastewater removed from your home** (pipes, pumps)
- ✓ **Stormwater system managed to reduce flooding and keep river and streams clean** (pipes, storm drains)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Where does our drinking water come from?

Gladstone gets its drinking water from the Clackamas River. The water is treated at the North Clackamas County Water Commission water treatment plant, which is partly owned by the City. More information on the quality and source of our drinking water is available in the public works section of our website.

Who is my sewer treatment provider?

Regional sewer districts convey wastewater from the City's piping system through a series of larger pipelines to facilities where it is treated then discharged to rivers. Most of the City is served by Tri-City Sewer District. Portions of the north and northeast of Gladstone are served by Clackamas County Service District No. 1 or Oak Lodge Water Services.

How much will my bill increase?

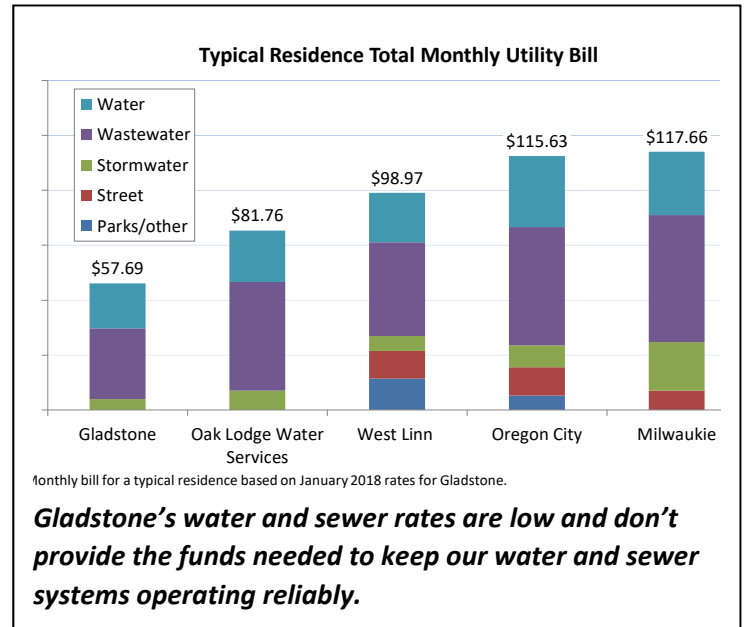
The typical household utility bill will increase from \$50.45 to \$57.69 per month. The City's portion of your utility bill will increase by around \$2 per month. Those funds help pay to maintain and repair local pipelines, pump stations, and storage tanks. Our regional water and sewer treatment providers have also increased their rates. Passthrough costs are increasing \$5 to \$7 per month, depending on which sewer treatment provider area you are in.

When is the increase happening?

The two-year increase was approved by City Council on September 12, 2017 and will go into effect in January 2018 and January 2019. You will see the increased rates for the first time on the bill you receive in February 2018.

What is the money used for?

Funds will be used to maintain and replace the City's aging water and sewer infrastructure. The City has been deferring maintenance costs for many years. Now is the time to start making needed investments to keep the system in good working order for our community. There also is a portion of the increase that is passed through to



our regional water and sewer treatment providers to fund needed upgrades to regional pipelines and treatment facilities.

How much did rates go up last year?

Rates did not go up last year. Gladstone has kept water and sewer rates very low for the past 30+ years, neglecting the local infrastructure needed to reliably operate our water and sewer systems. Low increases in the past were only enough to operate the system, leaving no money to proactively maintain and replace aging facilities.

Why is the City raising rates now?

City Council is committed to investing in our water and sewer systems, to maintain the health and long-term vibrancy of the City. Even with the planned rate increases, rates do not collect enough funds to catch up on deferred maintenance. The City is taking an incremental approach, raising rates slowly over time to give residents and businesses time to adjust to needed increases.

Learn More

www.ci.gladstone.or.us/publicworks

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