
Northampton: How much would you pay for water, sewer under proposed fee changes?



Northampton City Hall on Main Street. (Flickr Creative Commons)

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NORTHAMPTON — City residents and businesses could see big changes in their water and sewer fees come July through a proposed fixed-rate system that would give higher bills to customers who use above a designated limit.

The City Council is scheduled to hold a public hearing at 7 p.m. Monday in the council chambers to discuss the proposed adjustments.

The City has launched an [online calculator](#) that gives residents a look at how their rates may change under the new structure.

An order put forward by Northampton Mayor David Narkewicz earlier this month recommends separate sets of rates for residents and businesses, effective July 1.

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As it stands, Northampton charges a flat rate of \$5.58 per 100 cubic feet for water, \$6.08 per 100 cubic feet for sewer as well as minimal fixed quarterly fees. For perspective, there are 7.48 gallons in 100 cubic feet of water.

The new system would charge extra fees to those who use beyond a set water limit as part of a city effort to promote conservation, according to officials. The fixed quarterly fees would also go up significantly.

Properties with smaller meters would see a rate of \$4.73 per 100 cubic feet for the first 1,600 cubic feet, and \$6.21 per 100 cubic feet for anything above that amount. Those with larger meters -- mostly restaurants and industrial buildings -- would pay a fixed rate of \$6.09 per 100 cubic feet.

Customers who qualify for a low-income exemption on real estate or the Community Preservation Act will receive an exemption on their water and sewer bill that's equivalent to the fixed charge, the City said.

The City Council's finance and public works and utilities committees will look at and discuss the new rate system before sending it back to the council for a vote.

To read more about the changes, visit the city's [website](#).

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