



VILLAGE OF SCARSDALE

March 11, 2019

2019 Village of Scarsdale Water & Sewer Rate Changes

In order to keep pace with the significant needs associated with maintaining water and sewer infrastructure, the Village Board of Trustees has approved certain sewer and water rate increases detailed below. Importantly, the Village has endeavored to keep our rates among the lowest in Westchester County while also generating adequate revenue to make necessary infrastructure repairs and upgrades, as detailed in the FY 19/20 Capital Budget and highlighted on page two of this notification. Implementation of water conservation strategies provided with this notice will help to reduce water consumption, translating to lower quarterly bills.

A new rate tier, [Excess Rate Tier 2](#), has been implemented in order to encourage increased water conservation amongst the highest volume water users, those using in excess of 125 units in a single quarterly cycle. These water customers represent the top 10% to 15% during the peak usage periods.

The new fees and charges depicted in the tables below with the heading of “New Rate” will commence with quarterly water bills dated August 01, 2019, for water used during portions of the months of March through June. Monthly water customers will be billed at the new rates starting with the May 2019 water bills, representing water used in March.

Scarsdale Quarterly and Monthly Accounts

	Current Rate	New Rate
Base Rate (First 50 Units*)	\$3.20	\$3.50
Excess Rate Tier 1 (51-125 units)	3.0 x Base Rate	3.0 x Base Rate
Excess Rate Tier 2 (125+ units)**	N/A	3.5 x Base Rate
Sewer Rent Charge	\$0.65/CCF x Base Water Use	\$0.75/CCF x Base Water Use

*One unit = approximately 749 gallons (or one hundred cubic feet)

Eastchester Quarterly and Monthly Accounts and Non-Scarsdale, Non-Eastchester Quarterly Accounts

	Current Rate	New Rate
Base Rate (First 50 Units*)	\$4.39	\$4.80
Excess Rate Tier 1 (51-125 units)	3.0 x Base Rate	3.0 x Base Rate
Excess Rate Tier 2 (125+ units)**	N/A	3.5 x Base Rate

*One unit = approximately 749 gallons (or one hundred cubic feet)

Ready to Serve Charges, Based on Water Meter Size (Billed Quarterly to All Accounts)

	5/8"	3/4"	1"	1 1/2"	2"	3"	4"	6"
Current Rate	\$9.00	\$13.50	\$18.00	\$45.00	\$58.50	\$108.00	\$180.00	\$360.00
New Rate	\$12.00	\$18.00	\$24.00	\$60.00	\$78.00	\$144.00	\$240.00	\$480.00

Infrastructure Needs: Why Raise the Rates?

Unfortunately, Scarsdale's aging water distribution infrastructure has become increasingly unreliable over time. Many of our water mains are over 100 years-old and we often experience valve failures impeding our ability to undertake emergency water main repairs. As a result, water main breaks are very costly to repair, often requiring overtime, specialized contractual support, and unscheduled roadway excavation, which reduces the life of our road surfaces. Additionally, Water Department personnel are often confronted with shut-off valves that will not properly operate, which further complicates emergency repairs and causes temporary water outages with broader community impact than would otherwise be necessary with functional valves. Furthermore, the Village pays New York City for all water we receive, whether it is billed to a customer or not. Therefore, it is imperative that we undertake an aggressive leak detection program to locate water loss associated with underground leaks and water main breaks.

As it relates to sanitary sewer infrastructure needs, regulatory requirements mandate the Village continue to identify and repair infrastructure issues contributing to "inflow and infiltration," of sanitary sewerage entering separate stormwater sewers, ultimate draining to the Long Island Sound and contributing to the declining health of this important regional water body. This effort involves studying our system, identifying defects, performing the necessary repairs, and providing for continuing maintenance thereafter.

By addressing our potable water and sanitary sewer infrastructure needs, we will comply with regulatory requirements while reducing emergency repairs, system water loss, and Village costs.

While the Capital Budget details all Water Enterprise Fund and sanitary sewer infrastructure expenditures, examples of the work identified for funding over the next five years and beyond include:

- Rehabilitation of the Boniface Water Storage Tanks;
- Cement relining portions of the approximately 100 miles of water mains;
- Various distribution network rehabilitation work, including water valve replacements;
- Identification and repair of sanitary sewer infrastructure defects;
- Combating sanitary sewer inflow and infiltration through the preparation and implementation of an appropriate preventative maintenance ("CMOM") program; and
- Additional Sanitary Sewer Evaluation Studies & CMOM programs for all Scarsdale Sewer Districts.

All funding for these capital improvements is budgeted through revenues obtained through the sale of water or sewer rent fees. Any debt incurred through borrowing will be paid over the life of the bond through these annual revenue sources as well, and will not impact property taxes. Grants are also sought when available.

As previously mentioned, the new rate schedule includes a new [Excess Rate Tier 2](#), which is activated when consumption exceeds 125 units per billing quarter. The new Tier was created to encourage greater water conservation amongst the Village's highest-use customers, representing roughly 10% to 15% of all customers during peak usage periods. As added background, in 2014, the New York City Water Board identified the Village of Scarsdale as one of the top ten highest volume water users in the region. In response, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection completed a Water Demand Management Plan of Scarsdale's Water Utility, having targeted a 5% reduction in total consumption by October 1, 2022. The Excess Rate Tier 2 should help in attaining this prescribed goal for reduced system-wide consumption.

Should you have any questions regarding these changes please call the [Scarsdale Water Department](#) at (914)-722-1138.

Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

Water Conservation Tips

Key Concept: Outdoor irrigation is associated with the highest water bills in Scarsdale, which can be *very high* in comparison to average quarterly water usage.

Tip: One of the simplest ways to decrease water used for irrigation is to limit the turf areas that require a large amount of water, along with other plants that have moderate to high water needs. Replace such plants and turf areas with hearty, local, [native plants](#) that can survive with less water *and* less maintenance.

Tip: If you must irrigate, invest in the latest [smart irrigation system controllers](#) that account for such things as soil moisture, the weather forecast, soil and plant types, and other important variables. Save a lot of money by reducing unnecessary sprinkling!

Tip: Ask your landscaper about [grasscycling and mulch mowing of leaves](#) to help reduce water loss through evapotranspiration; this may also reduce the use of lawn fertilizers, as well as the overall cost of your landscaping service contract.

Tip: Consider rainwater capture as a means to reduce consumption associated with outdoor watering. Rain barrels are one option, but larger capacity solutions are available. Countries like Australia are far ahead of the United States in deploying rainwater harvesting strategies, yet many American communities not only use excessive quantities of drinking water for non-drinking purposes, but also suffer adverse consequences associated with stormwater runoff that could be captured on-site and used productively, instead.

Key Concept: Water leaks are expensive. Knowing your usage is critical to recognizing when your money is “running down the drain” – don’t wait for your bill to alert you of a problem.

Tip: Use real-time leak detection linked to your mobile device. A variety of commercial products will not only generate alerts when usage deviates from your norm, but also help you to gather data necessary to understanding how much water you use and when – all key touchpoints for understanding how best to conserve, and therefore reduce your water bill.

Tip: If you do not have real-time leak detection, you can read your home's water meter before and after a two-hour period when no water is being used. If the meter does not read exactly the same, there is a leak.

Tip: Put a little food coloring in your toilet tank. If, without flushing, the color begins to appear in the bowl within 30 minutes, you have a toilet leak that should be repaired promptly.

Key Concept: Over 80% of routine in-home water consumption is associated with the following: toilets (27%), clothes washers (22%), showers (17%), and faucets (16%).

Tip: Invest in [EPA WaterSense](#) labeled products, which perform as well as their counterparts, but with at least 20% less water use. Installing low flow shower heads and aerator screens on faucets can also help to reduce water consumption without changing one’s behavior. Consider investing in an “instant hot water heater,” rather than relying on inefficient hot water tanks.

Tip: Change your behavior. Pay attention to the small things, e.g., turn off the water while brushing your teeth, take a shorter shower and turn off the water while washing, take a brief shower instead of a bath, etc.