



**SPRINGFIELD WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION
P.O. BOX 995, SPRINGFIELD, MA 01101**

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Contact: Katie Shea, Educational Outreach Manager
Springfield Water and Sewer Commission
katherine.shea@waterandsewer.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Springfield Water and Sewer Commission Adopts FY25 Rates

Updated Rates in Effect as of July 1, 2024

The Board of Commissioners of the Springfield Water and Sewer Commission adopted Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25) rates at its regular monthly meeting on June 13, 2024, following a public hearing held on May 30, 2024. The revised proposed rates for combined water and sewer represent an increase of 6.3% for residential customers. The new rates take effect July 1, 2024.

The rate increases support the annual costs of delivering essential water and wastewater services, as well as the ongoing Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Renewal Program (WWIRP). The WWIRP includes over 20 critical water and wastewater infrastructure upgrade projects, including the new West Parish Water Treatment Plant, which is scheduled to start construction later this year. The average rate increase for residential customers will be \$7.99/month.

Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Renewal Program

The WWIRP was launched in 2021 and is supported by a \$250 million loan from EPA along with low-interest state Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) loans. These competitive, low-interest loans are expected to save ratepayers a combined \$60 million in borrowing costs over the next 30 years. These loan programs also provide access to loan forgiveness programs associated with the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 (also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law). The Commission secured \$12.9 million in loan forgiveness in FY24 and anticipates \$6.5 million in loan forgiveness in FY25.

The loans enable the Commission to accelerate infrastructure renewal within 6 years, reducing risk and delivering more reliable and resilient service sooner than would be possible without them. Maintaining predictable and stable rate increases is a top priority of the Commission, and similar rate increases are anticipated in the coming years to support the implementation of the WWIRP. Rate increases are expected to become more modest once the WWIRP is complete.

“Maintaining affordability for our essential services is a top priority for the Commission,” said Executive Director Josh Schimmel. “This year’s rate increase correlates with last year’s projections, reflecting the budgetary discipline the



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Commission has maintained while undertaking generational reinvestment in our water and wastewater systems. Ratepayers can already see the return of their investment in the completion of two major projects last year; the new York Street Pump Station and Connecticut River Crossing Project, and the new Backwash Facility, which represents the first phase of the new West Parish Water Treatment Plant.”

The new West Parish Water Treatment Plant is a cornerstone project of the WWIRP and will address ongoing water quality issues associated with disinfection byproducts, which are occurring due to the existing plant’s outdated filtration technology. Design of new plant was completed in January, and the construction contract is anticipated to be awarded in July. Construction will begin later this year, and is scheduled to be complete in September 2028.

Rate Impact

The proposed FY25 combined water and sewer rate will raise the average residential bill by \$7.99/month. The residential water rate will increase from \$4.75 per 100 cubic feet (CCF) to \$5.15 per CCF, an 8.5% increase. The residential sewer rate will increase from \$7.51 per CCF to \$7.85 per CCF, a 4.5% increase. The proposed rate increases will be applied to water and sewer use beginning July 1, 2024, with increases reflected in bills issued in August 2024.

Customer Assistance Programs

The Commission offers several financial assistance programs to help customers manage their water and sewer bills, including payment plans and programs for low-income customers. For FY25 the Commission will increase its discount for senior, disabled, and disabled Veteran homeowners from \$99/year to \$108/year. Its low-income Customer Assistance Program (CAP) continues to provide an annual credit of up to \$250. The CAP is available to single-family/owner-occupied homeowners that qualify for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). In FY25, the Commission issued CAP credits to approximately 700 customer account holders.

About the Commission

Established in 1996, the Springfield Water and Sewer Commission is an independent, public regional utility. The Commission serves 250,000 customers in the lower Pioneer Valley with safe and reliable drinking water and wastewater service. The Commission provides retail drinking water service to Springfield and Ludlow; regional drinking water treatment to Agawam, Longmeadow, and East Longmeadow; and emergency/peak service to Westfield, Southwick, West Springfield, Chicopee, and Wilbraham. The Commission provides retail wastewater service to Springfield and regional wastewater treatment to West Springfield, Agawam, Longmeadow, East Longmeadow, Wilbraham, and Ludlow.

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