



VILLAGE OF  
*Stratford*  
WISCONSIN

August  
2019  
Newsletter

## Sanitary Sewer Rate Increase - 10/1/19

At the Village Board's monthly meeting held on June 11<sup>th</sup>, the Board approved an increase to the sanitary sewer rates from the current \$9.10 per thousand gallons of wastewater to \$10.88 per thousand gallons. This increase will take effect on the Stratford Water & Electric bill to be mailed on October 1, 2019 (August to September meter readings). Sanitary sewer charges are based on your metered water usage. Average household water usage is approximately 1,000 gallons per person per month. The October 1<sup>st</sup> increase will affect a household using 5,000 gallons of water by \$8.90 per month.

The Board's monthly meeting included a public hearing regarding an update of the *Sewer User Charge System (SUCS) for the Cost Recovery of Operation, Maintenance, Replacement & Capital Debt*, provided by Tom Kispert, P.E., of McMahon Associates. The original SUCS was developed for the 1988 construction of the Village's Waste Water Treatment Facility (WWTF), and subsequently updated in 1996. Over the years, the Village has relied on internal review of the operation costs when determining a need to raise sewer rates. This 2019 engineer's review of the SUCS involved a very detailed look at expenses incurred for collecting and treating the current annual flow of nearly 27 million gallons of sewage. The local WWTF presently serves approximately 610 customers (residential, commercial, industrial, and public authority), along with a limited amount of waste from three local septic haulers.

Municipal sanitary sewer systems treat wastewater prior to its discharge into Wisconsin waters. This point-source discharge requires a permit issued by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, with federal oversight by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The Village Board is working with McMahon Associates to develop a plan for future compliance with DNR phosphorus discharge limits, in anticipation of our 2020 permit renewal.

### Contributing factors for the upcoming sewer rate increase include:

- Increased maintenance and operations costs (chemicals, facility and equipment repairs, operator training and labor costs).
- The DNR requires 110% financial coverage of annual Clean Water Fund (CWF) debt payments. The Village was issued a CWF loan for the 2016 utility upgrades in the downtown and former East Elm Street areas. Annual debt service is appx. \$22,000 on the CWF loan from 2018 - 2036.
- A condition of CWF financing is to maintain a sufficient balance in an Equipment Replacement Fund (ERF) for future facility needs. The ERF was nearly depleted in 2014 when the plant's original aerators were replaced with new energy-efficient, variable-drive models. We are currently replenishing the ERF balance from monthly sewer revenues.
- In recent years, infiltration of groundwater has been greatly reduced by fitting the oldest sewer mains with fiberglass liners. Though the lining process is costly, it is important to seal broken pipes and correct defective pipe joints so that "clear" water does not unnecessarily reach the treatment facility.

The 2019 updated SUCS is available at the municipal building during business hours or can be found on the Village's website at [www.stratfordwi.com](http://www.stratfordwi.com) (select "Departments and Services", then "Utilities"). Questions?...Contact the Village office or any Village Board member.

Are you interested in getting involved in the community?

## Heritage Trail Committee

The Heritage Trail is a source of pride in Stratford. With miles and miles of trails winding its way around the Village, the trail links the various community parks, ball fields, and school athletic venues.

We're looking for community members who are passionate about our trail system and would like to see it maintained and grow. This could include planning, trail work, events, and fundraising. A major obstacle the Village faces in growing the trail is cost. An active committee that can generate interest, increase use, and secure funding will help keep our Heritage Trail a valued treasure.

**Join us for an open meeting at the Village Office on August 15th at 6pm to be a part of the Trail's future.**



## Utility Bill Pay

Do you use your bank's bill pay feature?

Don't forget to update the addresses associated with that account. While the utility's mailing address is still PO Box 12, we've seen many bank checks still showing your old address. Make sure you update it to reflect your new six-digit address.

# Let's Talk About Power Outages



Power outages are a frustrating part of life. Whether it's a result of extreme weather or a curious raccoon, outages can happen any time of the year. The majority of the time, outages last no longer than a couple hours. But while Stratford was fortunate to avoid extended outages in late July, many in Central Wisconsin were out of power for days. Rest assured that utility crews work as hard and quickly as possible. If you're without power, it's very possible their home is as well.

**Did you know?** - The WPS substation near the school's athletic complex is what feeds electricity to Stratford. Our electric utility's infrastructure then distributes the power around town. If something happens at that substation, or leading to it on WPS's side, the Village experiences an outage. If the outage originates from the WPS side, it's up to WPS's team to restore it. If it happens on our side, our crew is out in force to fix the issue. Whether it's a fallen tree or a car versus pole, we appreciate your patience as the crews work.

**How to prepare?** - Pack a seasonal (winter vs summer) "go bag" for everyone in your home, including pets. If a storm is coming, plan ahead. Get the flashlights ready, gather your essentials (medication, insurance paperwork, etc...), consider what food you have or need to prepare without electricity, charge your cell phone, get extra cash, and gas up your vehicle. Do you have necessary medical equipment? Get a battery back up system or generator.



*If Stratford would've been out of power for a week like others in our region, would you have been prepared?  
A bit of preparation before an emergency will go a long way.*

**The power's out, now what?** - The first thing to do is check your home's breaker box. Confirm the outage is not just a popped breaker from the hairdryer and vacuum running at the same time. Is the power out in the whole neighborhood? Are the street lights out as well? Answer these questions, then call our Public Works shop. Be sure to listen to the full voicemail message for the on-call worker's number. Don't message us on Facebook or call the Village clerk's office outside of business hours. A power outage is generally not a law enforcement emergency. Leave emergency lines open for those who need it.

We know outages are frustrating, but power will be restored as soon as possible. We need our crew working on the problem so don't expect call backs or personal updates.

For more information about emergency preparedness, visit: [www.RedCross.org](http://www.RedCross.org) and [www.Ready.gov](http://www.Ready.gov).

*Clip and stick this on your refrigerator for reference.*



## POWER OUTAGE



Did you check your breaker box?

Does the rest of your neighborhood have power?

**Call the Public Works shop - 715-687-4118**

**\*Listen to the full message for the on-call worker's number, then call them.\***

If you must leave a message, give your name, address and phone number, but do not expect call backs or updates.

Grab your "go bag" and assemble the essentials, like flashlights and medications. Keep your refrigerator closed. Use generators safely. Leave at least one light on to know when power is back.

**LOT FOR SALE**  
**Residential Building Site**

**213628 PEACEFUL LN**

**\$28,000 - 2015 Appraisal**

**118' frontage x 350' depth**

**.95 Acres**

**Served by Water, Electric,  
Sewer & Gas**

For more information,  
contact the Village Clerk's  
office at 715-687-4166 or  
visit [www.StratfordWI.com](http://www.StratfordWI.com)