



The Connection

December 2021

106 N. Main St. P.O. Box 92 Canton, MN 55922 (507) 743-5000



The Sidewalk Scoop

The return of winter means the return of snow removal duties. The City of Canton has an ordinance on required sidewalk maintenance following a taste of Old Man Winter.

ORDINANCE 92.01 ASSESSABLE CURRENT SERVICES

"The owner and the occupant of any property adjacent to a public sidewalk shall use diligence to keep the walk safe for pedestrians. No owner or occupant shall allow ice, snow, dirt or rubbish to remain on the walk longer than 24 hours after its deposit thereon. Failure to comply with this section shall constitute a violation."

In other words, when the snow stops falling, you have 24 hours to remove it from the sidewalk. The City will continue its past practice of enforcing this ordinance on Main Street, from Hudson Avenue to US 52. It applies to residential and commercial properties.

Failure to voluntarily keep sidewalks clear may result in the City taking on the task. Property owners will be charged a minimum of \$65 for the city's time and labor. That's in addition to any police-issued citations for the violation. The City is not required to give you advanced notice of its intent to clear your snow-covered sidewalk.

New water and sewer rates take effect January 1 *Most users will experience an increase under \$0.50/day*

Stating the obvious need to replenish reserve funds, the Canton City Council approved a utility rates adjustment plan at its November meeting. Utilities Committee members Josh Nordsving and Cindy Shanks presented two proposals for council consideration. One option included flat, across-the-board rate adjustments for all municipal users, while the other provided a tiered payment system based on water consumption per user. On a four to one vote, the council approved the flat rates option, with Councilman Randy Gossman voting against the motion. He favored the tiered system option.

Beginning January 1, 2022, the monthly service charge for sewer will increase from \$33.00 to \$35.00, with the usage charge increasing from \$2.44 per thousand gallons used to \$3.00 per thousand gallons used. The monthly service charge for water will increase from \$28.50 to \$38.00, with the usage charge increasing from \$4.84 per thousand gallons to \$5.00 per thousand gallons. The new fee schedule eliminates commercial water and sewer rates.

Planning and budgeting for the rates adjustment

Based on 2020 water usage, nearly 80% of accountholders use 4,000 or fewer gallons per month. Under the current fee schedule, monthly charges associated with 4,000 gallons of water total \$90.62. The new rates will increase the monthly total to \$105.00. That represents a monthly increase of \$14.38 and an annual increase of \$172.56. For personal planning and budgeting purposes, that means the user of 4,000 gallons will need to come up with an additional \$0.47 per day for water and sewer services in 2022.



Water & Sewer Rates Adjustment Begins January 1, 2022

Gallons Used	2021 Rates	2022 Rates	Monthly Increase	Annual Increase
1,000 Gallons	\$68.78	\$81.00	\$12.22	\$146.64
2,000 Gallons	\$76.06	\$89.00	\$12.94	\$155.28
3,000 Gallons	\$83.34	\$97.00	\$13.66	\$163.92
4,000 Gallons	\$90.62	\$105.00	\$14.38	\$172.56
5,000 Gallons	\$97.90	\$113.00	\$15.10	\$181.20
6,000 Gallons	\$105.18	\$121.00	\$15.82	\$189.84
7,000 Gallons	\$112.46	\$129.00	\$16.54	\$198.48
8,000 Gallons	\$119.74	\$137.00	\$17.26	\$207.12
9,000 Gallons	\$127.02	\$145.00	\$17.98	\$215.76
10,000 Gallons	\$134.30	\$153.00	\$18.70	\$224.40



You could say Christmas came early for the City of Canton! We are the recipient of nearly \$25,000 in grant awards from the Arlin Falck Foundation. Our fire department received a \$15,000 grant to assist with the replacement of outdated turnout gear (the protective clothing worn by firefighters). The City was awarded almost \$9,500 to replace the front doors at the town hall with automatic swing doors for easier access. Our sincerest appreciation goes out to the Arlin Falck Foundation for these generous gifts of money. Since 2019, the City of Canton has been awarded nearly \$33,000 in grants from the Foundation.

REMINDER

Snow or no snow, alternate side street parking is now in place between the hours of 2 a.m. and 8 a.m. Under this parking system, no vehicle is permitted to be parked on the even-numbered side of any street on even-numbered days, and no vehicle can be parked on the odd-numbered side of any street on odd-numbered days. Remember, you are parking for the calendar day at 2 a.m. Offenders may receive a \$25 citation per offense; only the city council can waive a citation. Please contact city hall if you have questions about alternate side parking. Thanks, in advance, for making it easier and safer for snow removal crews to do their jobs.

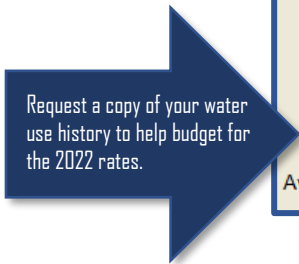
New rates continued from P.1

The additional revenue generated

Based on budget forecasts, the 2022 rates adjustment is expected to generate an additional \$19,800 for the Water Fund and an additional \$5,300 for the Sewer Fund. As noted, the lion's share of the adjustment is to create additional revenue for the Water Fund. 2021 resulted in the complete depletion of Water Fund reserves. The council authorized use of these funds to cover the costs associated with the unexpected and unbudgeted repairs to Well #1. Additional maintenance is also required at the wastewater treatment facility. Nearly \$22,000 will be spent to replace aging and obsolete equipment between 2021 and 2022. That will likely require the use of Sewer Fund reserves, leaving an estimated \$27,000 remaining for future sewer system needs.

Preparing for the rates change

As previously mentioned, the new rates will take effect January 1 – for services incurred in 2022. That means you will receive one more billing under the present rates structure – for December 2021 water and sewer services. **Your first bill, reflecting the adjusted rates, will arrive in early-February. Remember: You are billed for the previous month's services.** As of now, residential garbage and recycling rates will remain the same in the new year. The City's current contract with Richard's Sanitation ends July 31, 2022. Our new billing system allows us to easily provide you with your monthly water usage history. This information can help you plan and budget for the rates adjustment. We'll happily provide you with a copy your 2021 history. Stop by city hall or contact Deputy Clerk Barb Kerns at deputyclerk@cantonmn.com.



PERIOD	USAGE
1	1449
2	1493
3	1782
4	1833
5	1483
6	1544
7	2752
8	2464
9	2270
10	1686
11	
12	
Total	18756
Average	1876

Other business on the November meeting agenda

- On a four to one vote, the council approved COVID-19 paid leave for employees. The action allows employees to use up to one workweek of allocated hours for absences related to COVID-19 in this calendar year.
- The council approved the \$55,000 purchase of new turnout gear (bibs, boots and jackets) for the 20-member fire department. Grants, community donations and a contribution from the Fire Relief Association will cover the majority of the costs, with the appropriately \$10,000 remaining balance coming from the Fire Department Fund.
- After months of discussion, and no interest expressed in the position, the council voted to eliminate the designation of an animal control officer for the City. Animal-related concerns now become the responsibility of property owners, which should be handled in accordance with existing animal ordinances.
- It was noted the next court appearance for former city clerk Lolly Melander is January 3, with a jury trial scheduled to begin January 24.

The next regular city council meeting is December 8 at 6 p.m. in the Canton Town Hall. The 2022 final operating budget and tax levy will be approved during this meeting. As always, the public is encouraged to attend, with a designated time for comments on the agenda. ★