

# Sewer Rate Increase 2024

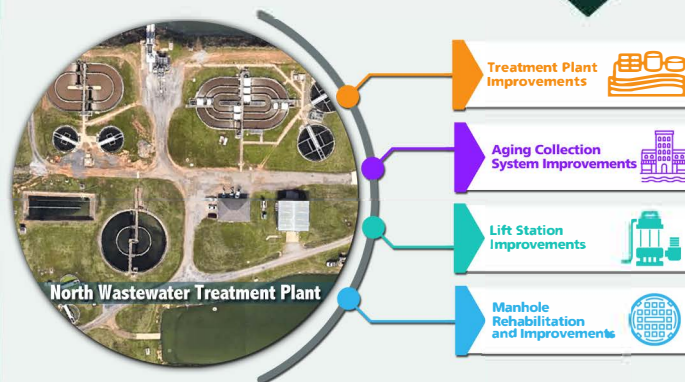
## User Explanation Guide

(Updated February 20, 2024)

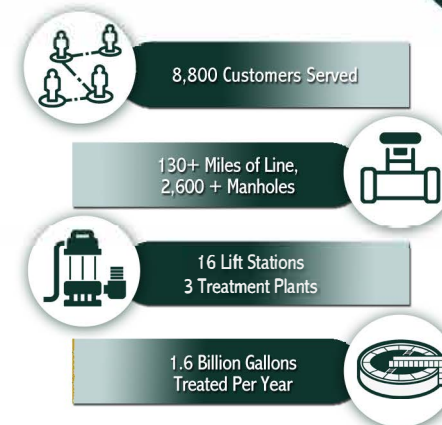


City of Van Buren Municipal Utilities  
 2806 Bryan Road ▪ Van Buren, Arkansas ▪ 72956  
 Ph: (479) 474-5067  
 Office Hours: M-F, 8:00am - 5:00pm  
 Website: [www.vbmu.org](http://www.vbmu.org)

## Upcoming Sewer Projects



## Sewer System Overview



## Quick Facts

- **When will the new sewer rates take effect?** April 1, 2024.
- **What is the estimated rate increase?** Inside City Users with an average monthly usage of 4,000 gallons will see their monthly sewer bill increase by approximately \$6 per month.
- **Why are my rates increasing?**
  - **New Legislation:** Arkansas Act 605 of 2021 tasked sewer providers with additional financial responsibilities for managing their systems.
  - **Aging Infrastructure:** The Arkansas Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has identified challenges within the Van Buren Sewer System that can cause sewer backups and overflows. DEQ issued a Consent Administrative Order (CAO) in 2015, which mandates that Van Buren address these challenges.
  - **Tightening Regulatory Requirements:** Regulations from the Arkansas Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ) require higher-quality wastewater treatment and tighter restrictions on contaminants allowed into the environment. These regulations are necessary to ensure the safety of the environment, but also require treatment equipment upgrades to meet the regulations.
- **How will the additional revenue be used?** Additional funds will be used for collection system and lift station upgrades required by Arkansas DEQ and Treatment Plant improvements to meet Arkansas DEQ permit requirements.
- **How do Van Buren's sewer rates compare to surrounding communities?** Sewer rates in Van Buren are comparable to Arkansas communities with similar population and sewage collection and treatment systems.

## Rate Increase Summary

Average Residential Charges at 4,000 Gallons Sewer Only	January 2016 - March 2024	April 2024	Increase	Average Cost of Sewer/Day
Larger residential, commercial, and industrial customer class charges will vary based on size of meter and amount of sewer used				
Sewer volume charge (4,000 gallons)	\$16.56	\$27.60	\$11.04	
Fixed Charge (Base)	\$8.06	\$3.50	(\$4.56)	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$24.62</b>	<b>\$31.10</b>	<b>\$6.48</b>	<b>\$1.02</b>

\*To view Rate Schedules & Ordinances online: [vbmu.org/waterandsewerates](http://vbmu.org/waterandsewerates)

# Water Rate Increase 2024

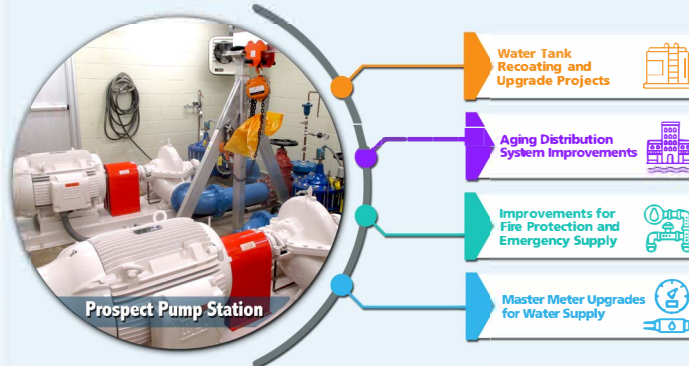
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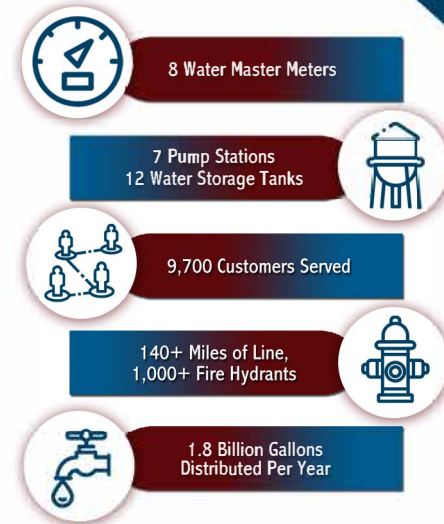


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## Upcoming Water Projects



## Water System Overview



## Quick Facts

- **When will the new water rates take effect?**  
April 1, 2024.
- **What is the estimated rate increase?** Inside City residential users with an average monthly usage of 4,000 gallons will see their monthly water bill increase by approximately \$8 per month.
- **Why are my rates increasing?**
  - **New Legislation:** Arkansas Act 605 of 2021 tasked water providers with additional financial responsibilities for managing their systems.
  - **Aging Infrastructure:** 130-year-old water lines, low pressure zones, and areas without looped (redundant) water supply for fire protection.
  - **Rising Costs:** Challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic, rising inflation, increasing costs of maintenance, and escalating energy prices are driving this rate increase. An anticipated purchased water rate increase from Fort Smith will necessitate an additional Van Buren water rate increase later in 2024 and beyond.
- **How will the additional revenue be used?** Additional funds will be used for needed infrastructure upgrades to

ensure a consistent and safe water supply and for operating reserves as required by new Arkansas laws.

- **How do Van Buren's water rates compare to surrounding communities?** Water rates in Van Buren are comparable to Arkansas communities with similar population and water distribution systems.

## Rate Increase Summary

Average Residential Charges at 4,000 Gallons Water Only	January 2016 - March 2024	April 2024	Increase	Average Cost of Water/Day
Larger residential, commercial, industrial, & wholesale customer class charges will vary based on size of meter and amount of water used				
Water volume charge (4,000 gallons)	\$17.56	\$23.20	\$5.64	
Fixed Charge (Base)	\$4.75	\$6.80	\$2.05	
Arkansas Drinking Water Fee	\$0.40	\$0.40		
Sales Tax	\$2.06	\$2.78	\$0.72	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$24.77</b>	<b>\$33.18</b>	<b>\$8.41</b>	<b>\$1.09</b>

\*To view Rate Schedules & Ordinances online: [vbmu.org/waterandsewer/rates](http://vbmu.org/waterandsewer/rates)  
 \*\*Does NOT include increased costs of purchasing water from the City of Fort Smith expected sometime in 2024. Water volume charges will be adjusted when the City of Fort Smith water purchase rate increase is implemented.