

Sturtevant Increases Sanitary Sewer Fees

Sturtevant will be increasing its sanitary sewer fees for the 2009 second quarter billing. The customer service charge will be increase from \$20.00 to \$30.00 per quarter for all customers. The standard single family residential charge will increase by \$10.00 to \$90.00 per quarter. Commercial and industrial rates will also be increase to \$5.25/ 1,000 gallons. The rates were approved by the Village Board on May 19, 2009. The trustees realize that any increase in rates during these difficult economic times will be unpopular.

It is important to remember certain facts in regard to the Village's sewer fees and what determines these sewer fees. The most important fact in this determination is that Sturtevant does not own or operate a sewage treatment plant. When a resident runs a dishwasher, flushes a toilet, or runs a shower, that water runs through Sturtevant pipes and then runs through pipes belonging to the Village of Mt. Pleasant and the City of Racine and then runs down to the City of Racine Sewage Treatment Plant on the shore of Lake Michigan. Sturtevant gets charged fees from both the City of Racine and Mt. Pleasant for this sewage flow. Sturtevant has no control over what either the City of Racine or Mt. Pleasant charges the Village. In fact, by contract, Sturtevant is charged a flat rate per quarter for each residential unit in the northern part of the Village by Mt. Pleasant. In order to pay Mt. Pleasant, the Village of Sturtevant has adopted a flat rate per residential unit and that rate is set to cover the rate that Mt. Pleasant charges Sturtevant. In addition to the fees that Sturtevant pays to Racine and Mt. Pleasant there are other costs that Sturtevant incurs. When sewer pipes break, men and equipment must be sent out to fix the problem. The sewer lines need to periodically be inspected and cleaned and sometimes replaced. Equipment must be maintained. Sturtevant also must pay debt service costs and revenue sharing payments which were part of the sewer agreement with the City of Racine. These costs are for the overall system. These costs must be paid by Sturtevant whether a particular house sends large amounts or small amounts of waste down the sewer line. The Sturtevant Sewer Utility must cover its costs and this is the reason for this rate increase. No one looks forward to receiving their sewer bill just like no one looks forward to receiving their cable bill or their heating bill. The Village is certainly aware of concerns over sewer costs and attempts to keep any increase in rates to the minimum that is necessary. The water charge in Sturtevant is set by the Racine Water Utility.