



Southwest Delaware County Municipal Authority

UPDATES FROM SWDCMA

January 2021

BUDGET AND BILLING RATES

The Authority's annual budget was approved at the November Board of Directors' meeting, which included a review of the annual treatment cost for 2021, as well as, the costs for operating and maintaining the sanitary sewer collection system.

The Authority received the treatment cost rate for 2021 from DELCORA. The annual treatment cost is based on estimated flows for the upcoming year at a cost per thousand gallons, as set by DELCORA. Although the 2021 treatment cost did not include an increase to our expected total flows, the cost to treat the wastewater flows was increased by 10%. Factors included in the calculation of the cost per thousand gallons include DELCORA's cost of treating the wastewater flows, debt service for the Chester Ridley Creek Pump Station and force main, and a proportional contribution towards the capital improvements of the DELCORA facility. The treatment cost for 2021 has been budgeted at \$3.724 million, as compared to \$3.385 million in 2020.

Additionally, throughout the year, the Authority compiles a list of maintenance and capital improvement projects for the collection system to be funded in the next fiscal year. These projects are then prioritized based upon the volume of I&I that will be removed from the collection system with their completion. The Authority was fortunate to be awarded two grants in 2020 and the work is planned to be completed in 2021. The matching funds, or the Authority's contribution toward the project cost, is approximately \$50,000. These projects are repairs to the collection system that will contribute to the ongoing effort of I&I removal.

The Authority incurred major damage throughout the collection system during the storm events of August 4 and August 7, 2020. These damaging incidents included the flooding of the Toby Farms pump station on both occasions, the washout of approximately 250' of the Chester Creek Interceptor plus a manhole, as well as, numerous easements throughout the collection system being blocked by downed trees and debris. Although insurance was able to assist with some of these costs, some of the work remains to be completed in 2021. We are awaiting the decision on whether storm damage grants may be made available by FEMA/PEMA to assist the Authority in covering these costs.

In order for the Authority to balance its 2021 budget, the Board of Directors had to make the difficult decision to approve a rate increase. Effective with the January 31, 2021 billing cycle, a 1.5% rate increase was approved. In addition, the billable percentage of treated flows has been increased from 90% to 95% for residential customers. The Board of Directors and the Authority staff will continue their diligent efforts to control costs wherever possible.

CUSTOMER PORTAL AND ONLINE PAYMENTS

As part of the Authority's billing system improvements, updates were also made to our website, www.swdelcoma.org.

With the website updates, there is now a Customer Portal available to customers through the eSuites module of our billing program. To create a User Profile in the eSuites Customer Portal, please go to www.swdelcoma.org, click on Customer Portal and follow the instructions. Please contact our office with any questions you may have on creating a User Profile.

This portal provides customers the ability to view their bills online, make a payment to their account using a debit or credit card and to view their transaction history for a specific date range. It also offers customers the opportunity to

enroll in e-billing. By enrolling in e-billing, you can choose to receive an email notification when a new SWDCMA bill has been posted to your account.

We encourage our customers to set up an account through the Customer Portal for easy 24/7 access to your SWDCMA account.

BILLING

SWDCMA invoices for sanitary sewer service on a quarterly basis. The Authority invoices after service has been provided (i.e. sewer service provided Apr-Jun is billed in July). Customers will receive an invoice each January, April, July and October; these invoices are due at the end of the following month. Billing is based on two components: flat rate charge and consumption charge. The current rate for each of these charges appears on your quarterly invoice.

SWDCMA will send a Delinquent Notice to all accounts that have not paid their account balance by the required due date, unless you have entered into an agreed-upon payment arrangement with the Authority. Accounts that do not pay in full are subject to penalty and interest on their delinquent balance, property lien and potable water disconnection*, unless you have entered into a payment arrangement.

Residential accounts that have fallen two quarters behind in payments should contact our office to determine if they are eligible to enter into a payment plan.

Customers are eligible for a one-time courtesy credit for a penalty charged to their account if the account has not been delinquent for the last 36 months.

*NOTE: due to the pandemic, potable water disconnection is not taking place at this time.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

Payments can be made via mail, by using the drop box provided at the Administration Building, in person at the Authority Administration Building lobby or on our website, www.swdelcoma.org.

A drop box is located in the front of the Authority Administration Building during business hours. Methods of payment accepted at the Authority Administration Building drop box are check and money order.

The Authority Administration Building lobby is accepting only cash payments. Please be sure to wear a mask to enter the lobby and have the correct payment to be applied to your account, as change will not be given.

Payments using debit/credit cards can be made through the Customer Portal on our website. A service fee of 2.65% (VISA/MasterCard/Discover/AMEX) of the amount being paid, or a \$3.00 minimum, is charged.

The SWDCMA does not accept e-checks or customer payments over the phone.

DEDUCT METERS

For SWDCMA customers that have made the investment of landscaping and irrigation systems to their homes, the installation of a deduct meter, or hose bibb meter, may be a cost-effective addition. A deduct meter may be installed, at the homeowner's expense, to meter the water being used for irrigation purposes only as this water never enters the sanitary sewer system. Each quarter you will provide a photo of the meter reading and that water usage is deducted from your quarterly sewer bill. For further information on deduct meters, please visit our website, www.swdelcoma.org.

POOL CREDITS

For SWDCMA customers that have swimming pools, the Authority will provide a credit only in the case of initial pool installation or when proof of a repair is provided (i.e. replacement liner, refinishing of pool surface, etc.). If you have made a repair to your pool and need a credit for the additional water used in refilling the pool after repairs are complete, please contact our office at (610) 494-1335 to request an Adjustment Form, or print it from our website, www.swdelcoma.org. The completed form, along with receipts/documentation, should be returned to the address on the form so that an adjustment can be evaluated and a credit applied to your account, if applicable.