

The City of Framingham notified residents and businesses of a Public Hearing which was held on [Monday, November 18, 2024 at 7:00PM](#) located at Framingham City Hall, Blumer Public Hearing Room, 150 Concord Street, Framingham, MA 01702 regarding proposed rates, as well as amendments and changes for water and sewer services, including a "Ready to Serve" fixed fee, an updated irrigation rate, revision of the Multi-Unit Dwelling (MUD) Factor policy, and modifications to the tier structure which are proposed to become effective January 1, 2025.

During the meeting the Mayor communicated the following information.

Thank you for attending this public hearing regarding the proposed changes to water and sewer utility rates, policies, and charges for the City of Framingham. This meeting was posted on the city's website and advertised in the newspaper as a public hearing, including a Zoom link to attend the meeting remotely.

I (Mayor) have consistently communicated in my recent Mayoral reports to the City Council, that the City has engaged an external consultant to conduct a comprehensive water and sewer rate study. The goal of this study aimed to stabilize the Water and Sewer Enterprise Fund, ensure equitable cost distribution among users, promote water conservation, and support vital infrastructure improvements that are essential for our community's health, safety, and sustainability.

The water and sewer operations in Framingham are structured as an Enterprise Fund. This model ensures that the costs of providing services—such as personnel, maintenance, and infrastructure investments—are covered by user fees rather than general tax revenue.

As a member of the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA), Framingham receives its water supply and wastewater treatment services from this organization. Approximately 45% of the charges billed to our customers reflect MWRA's community assessments. In addition, the utility's budget includes personnel costs, operational goods and services, and debt service payments for infrastructure improvements. Maintaining adequate revenue is critical to sustain these operations, ensure reliability, and fund necessary investments in our infrastructure.

Proposed Changes Effective January 1, 2025

The following adjustments are necessary to meet these obligations and to ensure the long-term sustainability of the utility:

1. Implementation of a "Ready-to-Serve" Fee

- This fee will help recover fixed costs associated with running the utility, including MWRA assessments, personnel, operations, and debt service.
- The fee will be based on meter size and will be applied to each bill. For most residential customers (5/8" meter), the impact will be approximately \$37.00 per year.

Equivalent Meters Calculations						Ready to Serve Fees Based on Equivalent Meters			
Meter Size (inches)	Maximum Flow (in gpm*)	# of Meters	Equivalent Meter & Service Ratio	Equivalent Meters	EM%	RTS Annual Fee	RTS Total Annual Charges	RTS Fee, if Billed Quarterly	RTS Fee, if Billed Monthly
5/8"	20	17,339	1.00	17,339	55.8%	\$ 37.11	\$ 643,489	\$ 9.28	\$ 3.09
3/4"	30	2,221	1.50	3,332	10.7%	\$ 55.67	\$ 123,639	\$ 13.92	\$ 4.64
1"	50	686	2.50	1,715	5.5%	\$ 92.78	\$ 63,647	\$ 23.20	\$ 7.73
1 1/2"	100	294	5.00	1,470	4.7%	\$ 185.56	\$ 54,555	\$ 46.39	\$ 15.46
2"	160	440	8.00	3,520	11.3%	\$ 296.90	\$ 130,635	\$ 74.22	\$ 24.74
3"	300	98	15.00	1,470	4.7%	\$ 556.68	\$ 54,555	\$ 139.17	\$ 46.39
4"	500	45	25.00	1,125	3.6%	\$ 927.81	\$ 41,751	\$ 231.95	\$ 77.32
6"	1,000	11	50.00	550	1.8%	\$ 1,855.61	\$ 20,412	\$ 463.90	\$ 154.63
8"	1,600	4	80.00	320	1.0%	\$ 2,968.98	\$ 11,876	\$ 742.24	\$ 247.41
10"	2,300	2	115.00	230	0.7%	\$ 4,267.91	\$ 8,536	\$ 1,066.98	\$ 355.66

2. Revision of the Multi-Unit Dwelling (MUD) Policy

- The MUD adjustment will now apply exclusively to condominiums. Apartments and other multi-unit dwellings will no longer qualify.
- This change ensures consistency in billing practices and aligns with a policy adopted in 2007, which had not been fully implemented.

3. Change to Irrigation Rates

- The irrigation rate will increase from \$15.00 to \$18.43 (a 23% increase) per 100 cubic feet, bringing it more in line with domestic water and sewer costs.

4. Revision of the Tier Structure

- The number of usage tiers will decrease from five to four, promoting conservation and ensuring equity in cost distribution.
- This adjustment reflects MWRA costs, state environmental goals, and infrastructure needs. It is anticipated that 71% of bills will fall within Tiers 1 and 2, which include lower usage levels.

5. A 4% Increase in Water and Sewer Rates

- This increase is necessary to maintain operations, fund infrastructure improvements, and meet regulatory requirements. Rates will continue to be reviewed and adjusted in the future as needed.

Tier	Usage by Tier		Rates	
	Start	End	Water	Sewer
1	-	9	\$ 8.34	\$ 10.83
2	9	24	\$ 9.28	\$ 11.16
3	24	99	\$ 10.78	\$ 15.00
4	99	+	\$ 15.39	\$ 31.15

These changes reflect the City's commitment to responsibly managing and investing in its water and sewer services. They will provide a dependable revenue stream and allow for strategic planning.

Looking ahead, these updates will help Framingham maintain clean, safe, and reliable water and sewer services while supporting infrastructure improvements and environmental sustainability. A mailing with detailed information will be distributed in early December to notify residents and businesses of these changes, which will be reflected in bills issued after January 1, 2025.

We appreciate your cooperation and understanding as we make these necessary investments in our shared infrastructure. Your partnership is essential as we work together to build a resilient and sustainable future for Framingham.