

Greetings,

Even though less than 3% of Middle Smithfield Township's sewer users have called or emailed with questions regarding the new sewer rates and EDU schedule announced 3 months ago, and even though the sewer rate increases are less than both the rate of inflation and the cost of living increase over the same time period -- we realize that if some folks have questions about the sewer rate increase, others who are not calling or emailing might have questions too. So, we are posting this on your township website. (Approximately 25% of the township's residences and businesses are serviced by the central sewer system. The other 75% uses private on-lot septic.)

And, although we are posting information here on your township website, we would like to encourage residents to attend the annual "Mid Year Review", which is always given in July. (This year it's at the next scheduled Board of Supervisors meeting on July 24th.) All operations of the township are covered in this presentation, including the sewer, and if anyone still has detailed questions, then would be a good time to ask. (We also give a detailed presentation to the public every December when presenting the next year's budget, as well as every January, when we present plans for the upcoming year.)

Prior to the rate increase effective July 1st, ALL sewer users were notified of the rate increase with their 2nd quarter bill which went out April 1st. Both the actual bill itself and the newsletter insert stuffed in with the bill explained the rate increase. For the approximately 100 sewer customers who opted in on the automatic bill pay, their mailing went out April 1 too. They received their invoice marked "paid", along with the newsletter insert announcing the increase, and a new automatic bill pay authorization form (since their credit card, should they choose to continue, will be charged the new amount.)

At the 4/8/2014 Board of Supervisors meeting, the sewer rate increase was discussed, and the resolution to amend the Township Fee Schedule (Sewer Treatment Plant increase and Echo Lake and Resica Park Pavilion User Fee) was unanimously approved. (This is reflected both on the agenda and the minutes. The township posts DRAFT agendas on the township Facebook pages prior to meetings whenever possible, and posts approved agendas and minutes on your township website.)

At the 5/22/2014 Board of Supervisors meeting, Resolution 05-2014-1 (the new EDU Schedule) was unanimously approved, and the sewer operations were again discussed. (This is reflected both in the agenda and the minutes).

In fact, the sewer operations have been discussed at almost all public meetings in April, May, and June. Since the beginning of 2013, there are always monthly sewer workshops held every fourth Friday at 9am. These meetings are open to the public.

As the Supervisors have discussed in the past two Budget Presentations to the Public (given in 2012 and 2013), sewer income has not kept up with expenses. The 2013 Budget Presentation specifically mentioned that there would be a mid-year sewer rate increase. This inevitable rate increase has been staved off through the hard work and effort of the Sewer Department and new Collections Policy and Program, which, over the last two years, has increased collection of the money owed to the Sewer, as well as other efficiencies. However, sewer rates have been kept artificially low; an average increase of \$1 per year over the last 20 years would not sustain the sewer system, just as it would not sustain any other program such as water, electric, telephone, fuel, food, insurance, etc.

While we understand that it would have been preferable to have incremental increases over the last 20 years, instead of a \$14 a month increase, it still works out the same: the sewer increases are still less than the cost of living and less than inflation over the same time period. (There have been many years of no increase.)

Also, the Township refreshed its "Equivalent Dwelling Unit" (EDU) schedule which was first enacted 20 years ago. The number of EDU's assigned to a particular commercial use now reflects the most current consumption information made available to us. We realize that in the last 20 years, there have been changes in how businesses operate, consume and use water. These changes have now been acknowledged in the new EDU schedule. The new EDU schedule is available upon request/can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

We hope this answers all your questions. If not, and you have more specific questions, please come to one of our many presentations.

Best regards,
Middle Smithfield Township Board of Supervisors