



Village of Fox Lake – Northwest Regional Wastewater Rate Update – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. What is changing?

Beginning **January 1, 2026**, the regional wastewater (sewer) rate will change from **\$2.23** to **\$4.81 per 1,000 gallons** of water used. This will only affect the REGIONAL SEWER fee, not the entire bill.

2. Why is the wastewater rate increasing?

The rate increase supports critical upgrades to the regional wastewater system, including:

- Repairing and replacing **aging infrastructure**
- Covering **rising operating and maintenance costs**
- To ensure continued compliance with current and future state and federal environmental mandates, **many of which are unfunded**
- Ensuring **long-term reliability** for Fox Lake and neighboring communities

The previous rate had not been updated since 1992, and future rate adjustments will be evaluated as needed based on system requirements.

3. How long will this rate be in effect?

The updated rate will remain in effect **until a future review determines whether an adjustment is necessary**. At this time, no additional increases are anticipated in the near future, but rates will be reevaluated based on system needs, regulatory requirements, and operating costs.

4. Why is the increase happening now?

Many components of the wastewater system are reaching the end of their useful life. Delaying improvements would increase the risk of system failures, emergency repairs, and potential environmental violations—often at a much higher cost.

5. How will this affect my bill?

Your wastewater charge is based on how much water you use. While bills will increase, the exact amount depends on your household's water consumption. The updated rate reflects the true cost of operating and maintaining the system today.

6. Does this affect water quality or drinking water?

No. This rate change applies to **wastewater treatment**, not drinking water quality. Your drinking water remains safe and is managed separately from wastewater services.

7. What is the NWRWRF?

The **Northwest Regional Water Reclamation Facility (NWRWRF)** treats wastewater for Fox Lake and several neighboring communities. The upgrades ensure the facility continues operating safely, efficiently, and in compliance with environmental regulations.

8. Are other communities experiencing similar increases?

Yes. Communities across the region and state are facing similar increases due to aging infrastructure, higher regulatory requirements, and rising operational costs.

9. How will the additional revenue be used?

Funds from the rate adjustment will be used for:

- Infrastructure repairs and replacements
- Equipment upgrades
- Ongoing operations and maintenance
- Regulatory compliance and environmental protection

All revenue is dedicated to the regional wastewater system.

10. Was this decision reviewed or approved?

The Village retained an engineering firm to evaluate the wastewater system and recommend an appropriate rate update. As part of the review, the firm compared NWRWRF to other wastewater treatment facilities of similar size and function. The recommendation was based on professional analysis, financial review, and long-term planning to ensure long-term sustainability and fiscal stability.

11. Who can I contact if I have questions or concerns?

For more information, please contact the **NWRWRF team**:

NWRWRF@foxlake.org