

CHIPPEWA TOWNSHIP  
MECOSTA COUNTY, MICHIGAN  
CHIPPEWA TOWNSHIP  
CHIPPEWA LAKE SEWER DISTRICT NEWSLETTER - 2021

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**TOWNSHIP HALL** 231 867-3777    **WEBSITE:** chippewatwp.org  
**SEWER MAINTENANCE** 231 867-3616    **OPERATOR, Scott Rice** scott@chippewatwp.org

Dear Property Owner,

In your most recent Chippewa Lake Sewer Maintenance and Operation (SMO) Fee you will notice an increase of \$4.66/month a total of \$56.00 annually. There are several reasons for the increase including:

- Ongoing replacement of 602 individual step system pumps and 6 lift station pumps. The old pumps are failing and repairs to these obsolete pumps have become more expensive than purchasing new pumps. 142 of the step system pumps at the cost of \$81,294.00 have been replaced to date and we will continue to replace as needed.
- We will soon need to replace the 6 Lift Station Pumps due to obsolete repair parts and increased repair costs. Replacement pumps for the Lift Stations run between \$15k to \$25k each. None of the lift station pumps have been replaced to date.
- The Sewer Maintenance Vehicle is 9 years old and has well over 211k miles. Repairs are becoming more frequent and more expensive.
- Control panels and internal components have been obsolete for some time. We have been able to rebuild old ones as needed but no longer can, new ones will have to be purchased as the old ones fail.
- Property/Liability insurance continue to increase and we continue to pay on the USDA loan and additional USDA Bond Reserve Funding requirements.

***As before you have the option of paying the annual fee in full or splitting it into (3) installments. If you choose to pay in three installments; the installments will be due 4/1, 6/1 and 8/1. No additional bills will be sent out. It is up to the property owner to remember their installment due dates. If you need to make an alternate payment arrangement, please call Julie Austin 231.867.3777, she will be happy to assist you. Any delinquent accounts are subject to a 10% late penalty and will be added to the 2021 Winter Taxes after 9/1/2021.***

Consideration of the SMO fee increase was taken very seriously by the Township Board and Maintenance Staff. Every attempt has been made to keep costs low as possible, components have been rebuilt and reworked where ever possible while at the same time maintaining excellent service. However, in order to continue this level of service we must increase the fee. This is the first SMO fee increase 2010.

For those that are unaware, our system is unique. It is called a Sewer Step-System. Each improved property has both a pump chamber and a septic tank. Solids stay in the septic tanks. Effluent water is forced into the mainline and taken to a 40 acre drainfield three miles west of the lake. There are (8) Monitoring Wells located within the drainfield boundaries. These monitoring wells are extensively tested quarterly, as required by our EGLE Permit. The 602 individual septic systems, with the exception of the Pickeral Point Subdivision, are split into 5 quadrants. These quadrants are pumped on a 5 year rotation. The Pickeral Point Area is pumped annually because of the high water table the tanks are only 350 gallons.

Thinking of adding on or building a new structure a Sewer Clearance Permit is required. This permit must be completed and approved before any Mecosta County Building Permit will be issued. The permit application can be found on the website – chippewatwp.org or by calling the Township Hall. There is no charge for the permit. After the owner or builder fills out the permit it is returned by email or in person to Bryan Roels. Once the permit has been reviewed with a site visit and approved it will be forwarded to Mecosta County Building and Zoning which allows your building permits to be approved. The sewer clearance permit was implemented to avoid future problems with clearances and obstructions.

Your annual Maintenance and Operation Fee covers ALL maintenance costs from your septic tank to the mainline. This includes pump and pump chamber component replacement, septic tank pumping etc. It also covers the sewer control

panel and wiring from the panel to the pump in the tank. The service does not cover any issues between your building and the tank or within the building those costs are your responsibility. Each control panel is equipped with a red light and a warning alarm, in case of a system failure. The alarm can be very annoying, so once you are alerted to a problem call the Hotline Number 231.867.3616 and one of the technicians will either contact you or respond on site (Do not attempt to correct the problem yourself). When you call the hotline number, 231.867.3616, you will need to leave your name, phone number, street address and brief explanation of the problem. Our Maintenance Employees check the answering machine regularly and will respond to you as quickly as possible. Please keep in mind that they may be on a previous call, when notified. The Board and Maintenance Department also requests that you call in alarms, for your neighbor, if they are seasonal or not at home. This allows us to identify and repair any problems promptly. Once you have called the Hotline you can press the button (on control panel) to silence it. The Maintenance Department is available 24/7.

If you are a seasonal resident and you shutoff all your power to your building understand that you are also shutting off the electrical power to the sewer pumps and control panel. If so, make sure that you turn the power back on to the sewer system BEFORE using the plumbing facilities. This is a common problem in the spring and can cause backups in your building. Another thing to remember, it is not allowed to connect rain gutters or water runoff systems to the sewer system. The system is not meant for this type of loading and can cause problems to the system and to your property.

The Board would like to take this opportunity to thank our Sewer Maintenance Department. During the unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic, the department has continued to provide the best possible service, to our customers and keeping the system functioning at full capacity.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate in contacting the office or any Board member.

To everyone - *May you and your families finish the winter months warm, safe and above all else HEALTHY! Spring will be here before we know it!! (To the "snowbirds" have a safe journey home!)*

Sincerely,  
The Chippewa Township Board