

News and Updates from  
Des Moines Water Works  
**MARCH 2021**

# H2O LINE

**THINK DOWNSTREAM**

## New Water Rates Begin April 1

**N**ew water rates will take effect April 1 to fund 2021 capital and operational costs. The new rate increases will generate \$3.5 million in increased water revenue for 2021.

The Board of Water Works Trustees last year approved rate increases that range from 5 to 7 percent for retail customers and 15 percent for most wholesale customers. For the average four-person household in Des Moines that uses 7,500 gallons of water a month, this will be an additional \$1.88 per month for water charges on their bill.

**New rates will fund increased operational costs to provide safe drinking water and capital projects to replace aging water mains**



The Board approved a \$24.5 million capital budget which includes funding to pay for \$7.3 million in water main replacements and \$4.3 million for maintenance work at the Fleur Drive Treatment Plant.

The capital improvement fee will continue at 25 cents per 1,000 gallons for Des Moines customers with no increase for 2021. This fee is less for commercial and industrial customers – 17 cents and 13 cents, respectively, that use more than 150,000 gallons per month. A four-person household pays about \$1.88 per month for the capital improvement fee, which is used for replacement of aging water mains within the city of Des Moines.



The 2021 operating budget for the utility is \$77.2 million. Proposed expenses are budgeted at \$50.7 million, an increase of \$2.2 million or 4.5 percent increase, from 2020. The increase is a result of new jobs, more costs for employee and retiree benefits, as well as additional chemical and residual lime removal expenses to treat source water to ensure safe drinking water for 500,000 Central Iowans.

The Board also voted to approve \$4.3 million to repay debt for 2021.

Top photo: A Des Moines Water Works employee repairs a water main break. Bottom photo: When a water main breaks, it can buckle the road, which requires DMWW employees to dig up the street, repair the broken main and replace the pavement.

**Des Moines**  
**Water Works**  
Water You Can Trust for Life

## FAQs About Your New DMWW Account Number and Billing/Payment System

**D**es Moines Water Works last year converted to a new billing and payment system. The new system provides customers enhanced security of their personal information and convenient online payment features, and also provides the utility increased internal functionality.

### Why did my due date change?

Due dates are 25 days after the bill is generated. Customers have given feedback they prefer a bigger gap between the due date and the next billing date so payments were properly reflected on statements.

### When is AutoPay deducted?

The total balance will automatically be paid to Des Moines Water Works on the bill due date.

### How do I sign up for AutoPay?

All electronic check (ACH) transactions carry no transaction fee and do not have a \$500 transaction limit. Customers can sign up for AutoPay through their Invoice Cloud account:

- Create or sign in to your DMWW Invoice Cloud account portal
- Select My Profile at the top of the page. Choose Payment Methods
- Input your saved payment method
- Select My Profile. Choose AutoPay
- You can enroll in AutoPay for your saved payment method
- Confirm the AutoPay with the e-mail confirmation Invoice Cloud sends to you to complete the process

Customers may also fill out this form:

[www.dmww.com/up/documents/library/autopay-form.pdf](http://www.dmww.com/up/documents/library/autopay-form.pdf) and mail it back to Des Moines Water Works with a voided check.

### Can I still see my water meter reads and set consumption alerts?

Des Moines Water Works is working to add water meter readings and consumption alert features this year. Meanwhile, customers can call Customer Service at (515) 283-8700 to discuss meter readings. Those who previously set a consumption alert will continue to be notified by email.

### Can I still make payments by mail and automated phone system?

Yes. For the automated phone system, use your new Customer Number (7 digits) and Account Number (6 digits) and follow the prompts.

### Why do I have an "Estimated" bill?

Des Moines Water Works' re-designed bill statement now prominently displays when a meter read is estimating. Des Moines Water Works is occasionally unable to read a water meter and calculates an estimate based on typical water usage. Sometimes there is a problem with the meter reading device or the wiring to the meter inside your home. In many cases, this corrects itself. Currently, field operations are limited because of the pandemic. Your account may estimate longer because we are not entering customer homes to make repairs. If you don't want an estimated bill, you may choose to call or email your read until our field team is able to make the repair. Please contact us at [customerservice@dmww.com](mailto:customerservice@dmww.com) or call Customer Service at (515) 283-8700 to discuss your estimated bill.

## Standpipe gets new paint color

**R**esidents who live near Indianola Avenue and Pleasant View Drive will see a new paint color for the standpipe in their neighborhood.



The Board of Trustees approved the Wilchinski standpipe to be painted a new cumulus color in 2021. The current powder blue color is no longer available.

DMWW employees presented the color to the Indianola Hills and South Park neighborhood associations through a virtual meeting and email communications. There was no opposition to the new color choice.

The painting project will include both the exterior of the standpipe, which needs painted to improve the aesthetics and to protect the structure from deterioration and corrosion, and the interior to protect water quality.

Standpipes help with water pressure and provide potable water storage to the Des Moines metro area. DMWW has three standpipes located throughout Des Moines.

## DMWW tracks bills, meets with legislators

**D**es Moines Water Works has been educating and engaging elected officials about laws that protect and affect our customers.

DMWW recently hosted virtual meetings with legislators who live in the DMWW service area, as well as House and Senate leadership.

External Affairs Manager Jennifer Terry works closely with the utility's government relations firm, Advocacy Strategies, to analyze each bill that is proposed at the Iowa Statehouse that could affect the utility's operation or its customers. Some of these topics include source water quality, utility operations, fluoridation, public records requests, open meetings, contracts and lead testing.