

News and Updates from
Des Moines Water Works
MARCH 2022

H2O LINE

THINK DOWNSTREAM

“Water” We Up To: DMWW News In Brief

New Signs: “Drinking Water Source” signs went up in early February next to several prominent bridges along the Des Moines and Raccoon rivers to raise awareness about our two major sources of drinking water for central Iowa.



The signs mirror an Iowa Department of Natural Resources program in which signs installed along public waterways educate people about the names and locations of their creeks, rivers and watersheds, and best of all, encourage reflection about how they influence water quality.

Cover Crop Seeder: DMWW has joined a unique project to increase the number of cover crops in the Des Moines and Raccoon river watersheds.

Cover crops slow erosion, improve soil health and help keep soil and contaminants out of rivers and streams. DMWW, the City of Des Moines, Polk County and the Iowa Department of Agriculture purchased a cover crop seeder. Heartland Cooperative will meet with farmers in the Beaver Creek and surrounding watersheds about cover crop planting in hopes the landowners will choose to use the new seeder. Making the connection between upstream land use and downstream effects is part of “Thinking Downstream” and protecting DMWW’s source water.

Your Dollars at Work: 2022 rates start April 1

New water rates will take effect on April 1.

This year, Des Moines Water Works customers’ rates and fees will pay for expenses tied to chemicals to treat source water and make it safe for drinking; removal of residuals left behind from the water treatment process; and replacement of water mains in Des Moines, unincorporated Polk County and Windsor Heights.

For the average four-person household in Des Moines that uses 7,500 gallons of water a month, this will be an additional \$1.20 per month for water charges on their bill.

The capital improvement fee stayed at 25 cents per 1,000 gallons for Des Moines customers for 2022. 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, in part, to replace aging water mains.

The Des Moines Water Works Board of Trustees approved at its November 2021 meeting a \$79.6 million operating revenue budget for the utility for 2022. Proposed operating expenses are budgeted at \$53 million, an increase of 4.5 percent from 2021.

Continued on the next page.



A Des Moines Water Works crew repairs a main break in January. Water main replacement is part of the 2022 budget.

Des Moines :
Water Works
Water You Can Trust for Life



Learn About CIWW: A Regional Drinking Water Model

The Board of Trustees of Des Moines Water Works has released a proposed agreement that would establish a regional drinking water system for central Iowa.

The agreement – called a 28E or 28F for the sections of Iowa law that authorize its creation and financial authority – has been shared with 13 communities within the Des Moines metro that currently purchase water from Des Moines Water Works.

What is Central Iowa Water Works?

The formation of Central Iowa Water Works (CIWW) would establish a regional drinking water authority for central Iowa. It would have its own governing board that would supply and sell water to its member communities. CIWW would not replace or eliminate the boards or water departments within each community. Each community would continue to have its own board or city department that would set water rates and distribute water from CIWW to its residents and businesses. Each utility or community also will provide all of its customer service, and operate and maintain its local distribution system.

Why form a new entity?

Formation of CIWW will help ensure the best management of our precious water resources in the face of climate change, drought, floods and water quality challenges. It will ensure costs for water are

equitably distributed to all water customers across the metro, and it will provide the strongest, most reliable water system for everyone in the growing Des Moines metropolitan area. Creation of CIWW will also allow the region to collaboratively plan and construct water facilities to meet future growth.

Who is involved?

These communities are potential member agencies: Altoona, Ankeny, Bondurant, Clive, Des Moines Water Works (including all of DMWW’s retail and total service customers in Des Moines, Alleman, Berwick Water District, Cumming, Pleasant Hill, unincorporated Polk County, Runnells, Windsor Heights, and other small neighborhoods and developments directly served by DMWW), Grimes, Johnston, Norwalk, Polk City, Urbandale Water Utility, Warren Water District, Waukee, West Des Moines Water Works and Xenia Rural Water District. Each entity will consider whether to join CIWW, and these decisions are expected to be made by the end of 2022.

What will happen to utilities’ individual treatment plants?

All participating utilities’ treatment plants will benefit the regional system. A metro-wide system would provide redundancy in case of natural disaster and resiliency in times of drought or water quality challenges. While the regional system will provide redundancy, there is no plan to

change the source from where customers currently receive their water today. For example, Des Moines customers will continue receiving water produced by one of Des Moines’ three water treatment plants.

How will costs be distributed?

CIWW will distribute costs equitably among its members. Members will collaborate on decisions to expand or construct new treatment plants. Members also will pay for construction and expansion based on each community’s share of growth and need for more water.

Who will oversee access to water and future water needs?

Our metro area continues to grow. CIWW’s board will manage water sources collectively and cooperatively. CIWW will ensure water is available for all customers — current and future.

Will CIWW be a strong champion for clean water?

Together, CIWW will bring a powerful voice to the conversations about restoring and protecting our rivers, lakes and streams. You can also count on Des Moines Water Works to continue to be a strong advocate for water quality and source water protection.

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Two of the chemicals most used in the treatment process – lime and carbon – are expected to increase 8 percent from last year’s budget. Driver shortages across the industry are contributing to the volatility in chemical prices. Residual lime removal expenses are up almost \$1.3 million. In 2022, 173,000 tons will need to be removed and taken to a final disposal site. Lime must be removed from water to make it safe for drinking.

The 2022 proposed capital budget is \$45.9 million and includes money to pay for \$10.9 million in water main replacements in Des Moines, Windsor Heights and the unincorporated Polk County service area. In the 2022 budget, water mains are scheduled to be replaced on portions of these Des Moines

streets: Water Street, Luster Lane, Southwest Ninth Street, Southwest 10th Place, Southwest 11th Street, Sixth Avenue, Park Street, 43rd Street, 33rd Street, 34th Street, 32nd Street and others yet to be identified.

Money within the budget also will be used to support design of an expansion project at the Saylorville Treatment Plant, a new ASR (Aquifer Storage & Recovery) well, and wells for water collection along the Des Moines River.

In addition to water main replacement, \$1.6 million has been budgeted for repairs and maintenance in 2022. Crews have been busy with the cold weather earlier this year repairing main breaks. In January, DMWW crews fixed 57 breaks.

