



February 4, 2026

Dear Backus Resident,

On January 14, 2026, the City of Backus completed a utility rate study. The findings of this study showed that an increase to utility billing is necessary to ensure the continued operation, maintenance, and long-term sustainability of the city's water and sewer systems.

The monthly base rates will remain the same:

- Water base rate: \$27.50
- Sewer base rate: \$41.00
- Water tower fee: \$5.00

However, the 4,500-gallon usage threshold will no longer apply. Moving forward, utility bills will consist of the base rates **plus usage-based charges** calculated as follows:

- Water usage: \$3.50 per 1,000 gallons
- Sewer usage: \$3.43 per 1,000 gallons

### Example Monthly Bill

For a household using **3,000 gallons of water per month**:

#### Previous billing structure:

- Flat rate total: **\$73.50** (water, sewer, and tower fee)

#### New billing structure:

- Base charges: \$73.50
- Water usage (3 × \$3.50): \$10.50
- Sewer usage (3 × \$3.43): \$10.29
- **New total monthly bill: \$94.29**

### Effective Date

The rate increase will go into effect in **May**. This means the **first bill reflecting the increased rates will be the bill you receive in June**, which covers utility usage for the month of May.

### Auto Pay and Payment Reminders

Because bills will now vary based on water usage, residents currently enrolled in auto pay should review their payment setup:

- **City utility billing online auto pay:** If you are enrolled through the city's online utility billing system, the amount withdrawn should automatically adjust to the total amount due each month.

- **Bank-initiated auto pay (fixed amount):** If your bank sends a fixed payment amount (such as \$73.50) each month, this amount will likely no longer be correct. You may need to update or cancel that payment method to avoid underpayment.

Please also note that **late fees increased in January** from **\$5 per month to \$10 per month for each month a bill is late**. When using any auto pay system, be sure payments are scheduled to **arrive by the 15th of the month** to avoid late charges. Utility billing is not always completed on the same day of the month, so the due date can fluctuate slightly. **Scheduling payments to arrive by the 15th helps ensure timely receipt regardless of billing date.**

If you have any questions or would like assistance reviewing your account or auto pay setup, please contact City Hall:

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Sincerely,



Nicole Morcomb  
Clerk-Treasurer  
City of Backus