

NEWS RELEASE

Ilene Shapiro – Summit County Executive
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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New county sewer rates will take effect in January

SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO—Following approval by County Council on December 6, Summit County Sanitary Sewer Services (DSSS) will implement new sewer rates in January 2022. The County’s sewer district serves the unincorporated areas of Summit County as well as several other municipalities. These customers represent 9% of county residents. The new rates will offset the increased cost for treatment of sewage by third-party providers, including the City of Akron and the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NEORS), and provide revenue for critical sewer infrastructure projects.

Summit County last raised sewer rates in 2006, with the final rate increase implemented in 2011. Since that time, the cost for treatment of sewage by third-party providers has more than doubled, which represents a \$14.3 million increase in costs. This increase has created an estimated \$7.8 million deficit in DSSS’ sewer operating fund, with additional deficits expected without an adjustment to rates.

“Providing high quality sewer services to our residents and businesses is a foundational responsibility of our county government. Unfortunately, it is a costly responsibility,” said County Executive Ilene Shapiro. “We held off raising rates for 10 years, but the costs incurred to treat sewage have outpaced our revenue. We must also make important infrastructure improvements in the coming years to maintain a well-functioning sewer district. As sewer rates change in 2022, our staff stands ready to answer your questions and offer financial support as needed to those who qualify.”

Beginning in January 2022, metered customers will see a 16% increase in their sewer rate. Metered customers will also see a 16% increase in 2023. Flat rate customers will see no increase in rates in 2022 and 2023. Rates for both metered and flat rate customers will increase 7.5% in 2024 and 6.5% in both 2025 and 2026. The new sewer rates were determined following a comprehensive cost-of-service analysis conducted by Raftelis Financial Consultants, Inc., an independent firm specializing in public utility rate development. The analysis contained several objectives, including developing rates that adequately fund DSSS’ annual operating costs, minimizing the future rate impact on DSSS’ customers, and ensuring that rates are equitable between customer classes.

DSSS customers will still pay lower rates than customers utilizing other regional sewer service providers. Under the new rates, the average DSSS residential customer will pay \$53.74 per month. The same

customer would pay \$68.35 or \$74.25 if they were an Akron or NEORS D customer. A similar comparison is seen with commercial customers.

DSSS will continue to offer a 10% reduction to eligible customers (income-based) and offer an additional 25% for eligible flat-rate customers in 2022 and 2023. DSSS also offers the Summer Sprinkling Program, a 10% discount for all residential customers in June, July and August. Residents in need of financial assistance can also apply for sewer assistance at <http://www.summitcountycare.org/> or by calling 2-1-1.

Information about the new sewer rates, including the rate study and FAQs, is available at <https://co.summitoh.net/pages/DSSS-Sewer-Rate-Adjustments.html>.

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