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We Know the Poconos

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Pocono Township's projected sewer rates highest in Monroe

Rates expected to be county's highest by 75%

Photo 1 of 1 | Zoom Photo +



Crews work on the sewer line project along Route 611 in Scotrun in 2010.

Pocono Record file photo

By **Michael Sadowski**
Pocono Record Writer
May 02, 2012

Pocono Township's projected sewer rates already were going to be the highest municipal rates in Monroe County, but now that gap appears to be widening.

At about \$1,400 per equivalent dwelling unit, the township's projected sewer rates are 75 percent higher than the next-most-expensive municipality's residential sewer expense.

Tobyhanna Township charges \$800 a year per unit. The Mount Pocono Municipal Authority charges \$952 per unit for commercial properties — currently the highest commercial rate in the county, but 47 percent lower than Pocono Township's projected rates.

The average residential cost per unit in Monroe County municipalities is about \$550.

Pocono Township will hold a sewer meeting at 6 tonight at the municipal building on Route 611 in Tannersville to discuss the project.

"The only way we can get the rates down is to grow business," Pocono Township Supervisor Frank Hess said. "We're at 570,000 gallons (per day of projected daily usage) and we have 2 million (gallons available). The closer we get to that 2 million, the lower the rates will be, so that's what we have to work on."



Stroudsburg currently has the lowest sewer rates in the county at \$220 per year, per unit.

Borough Manager Barbara Quarantello said the borough expects "small increases" in the rate over the next few years to meet obligations when its plant expansion is completed.

Stroudsburg and Stroud and Pocono townships are teaming to share the cost of the Stroudsburg sewer plant expansion. The Pocono Township system, which is scheduled to open partially in the fall, will empty into Stroudsburg's sewage plant.

Pocono Township's rates had been between \$1,100 and \$1,200 earlier this year, based on usage projections for when the system opens next spring. But those projections were measured five years ago.

When the township reassessed how much usage there would be,

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MAIN HEADLINE

MONROE COUNTY

MUNICIPAL SEWER RATES

Municipality rate per year*
Stroudsburg \$220 residential,
\$260 commercial,
\$300 industrial
East Stroudsburg \$364
Del. Water Gap \$473
M. Smithfield Twp. \$530
Mount Pocono \$572 residential,
\$952 commercial
Smithfield Twp. \$650
Coolbaugh Twp. \$652 residential,
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Stroud Twp. \$680
Tobyhanna Twp. \$800
Pocono

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more than one-third of the projected usage had been lost, causing rate projections to rise.

The current projections for central sewer rates in Pocono Township are subject to change. Adjustments could come with more or less usage by the time it fully opens next spring. The township has not yet set the rates.

Municipal rates are only for government-run sewage collection and treatment systems and do not include rates at private developments.

Pocono Township's rates also will be identical for the small piece of Hamilton Township included in the project.

Twp. \$1,400 projected
 * per equivalent dwelling unit
 " Customers in the Winona Lakes development pay higher rates.

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Nig

Caution. Don't believe everything you here from Township. Tobyhanna township was 680.00 yr. more people hooked up, rates went up. also get an audit, sewer rates can be a giant pork barrel for Township. Remember, law says sewer money not to be used for anything but sewer, (follow the money). Township will always find excuses to raise rates. Expansion of plant should be billed to new hookups, not people already hooked up. (Follow the money)One of Townships biggest excuses is refinance, this allows them to keep rates high, users keep paying and paying, pork barrel gets bigger and bigger. (Follow the money)... User fees collected can be 2-3 times cost of operating plant. (Follow the money)...

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Walter McGrath

It seems to be a matter of the most gross negligence not to have binding agreements in place for two of your biggest customers. cmsjr makes a great point. Given the sky-high rates, will sanofi pull out.

cmsjr likes this.

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cmsjr

This is the third story on Pocono Township's proposed new sewage rates. We have yet to hear about the big player in this game - Sanofi. Sanofi was the catalyst that prompted Pocono Township to push for the municipal system. I am just curious how they feel about the higher rates? I am also curious if they are still eager to hook up? A great follow-up story would be about the plans that could affect these effluent figures. Such as: Does Pocono Manor still have any plans for development? What about the plans just south of Mount Pocono where there is a turning lane into a non-existent development? How fast is the new proposed water park moving at the old Summit? Will the shutting down of the one Pocono Mountain school in Tannersville affect this? I am sure that there are other factors I do not know of. Perhaps the bigger story was why Pocono Township did not estimate on the side of caution when they did the original planning?

writerly1 and Walter McGrath like this.

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ron

"The only way we can get the rates down is to grow business," Yea just what we need for the 50's roads and bridges we have . There seems to be no planning at all .

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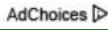
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