

Water+talk



Winter/
Spring
2020

In February, Halifax Water filed a rate application with the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (NSUARB) to increase water and wastewater rates. This rate application **does not** include stormwater rates. The NSUARB has tentatively scheduled a hearing June 1, 2020. This is the first rate increase application for water and wastewater services since 2016.

Below are some questions and answers to why Halifax Water is requesting an increase in rates to maintain critical water and wastewater services.

Why is a rate increase needed?

Costs have increased over the last four years, since the last increase, and we need to spend more to maintain infrastructure. We need to spend more to ensure regulatory compliance, protect the environment and public health; adapt to climate change and mitigate its impacts; and ensure the utility continues to meet customer expectations.

What does this proposed increase mean for homeowners?

While increases will vary based on usage, if approved by the NSUARB the projected cost increases for water and wastewater services for the average residential customer will be:

	Average Residential Monthly Bill Increase	Average Residential Quarterly Bill Increase	% Increase
Proposed Rate Effective Sept. 1, 2020	\$3.68 / month	\$11.04 / quarterly bill	5.8%
Proposed Rate Effective April 1, 2021	\$3.91 / month	\$11.73 / quarterly bill	5.8%

	Quarterly Water Consumption Charge	Water Service Base Charge	Quarterly Wastewater Treatment Charge	Wastewater Service Base Charge
Existing Rate	\$0.976 / 1000 litres	\$39.00 / quarter \$13.00 / month	\$1.753 / 1000 litres	\$42.00 / quarter \$14.00 / month
Proposed Rate Effective Sept. 1, 2020	\$1.085 / 1000 litres	No Change	\$1.920 / 1000 litres	No Change
Proposed Rate Effective April 1, 2021	\$1.201 / 1000 litres	No Change	\$2.097 / 1000 litres	No Change

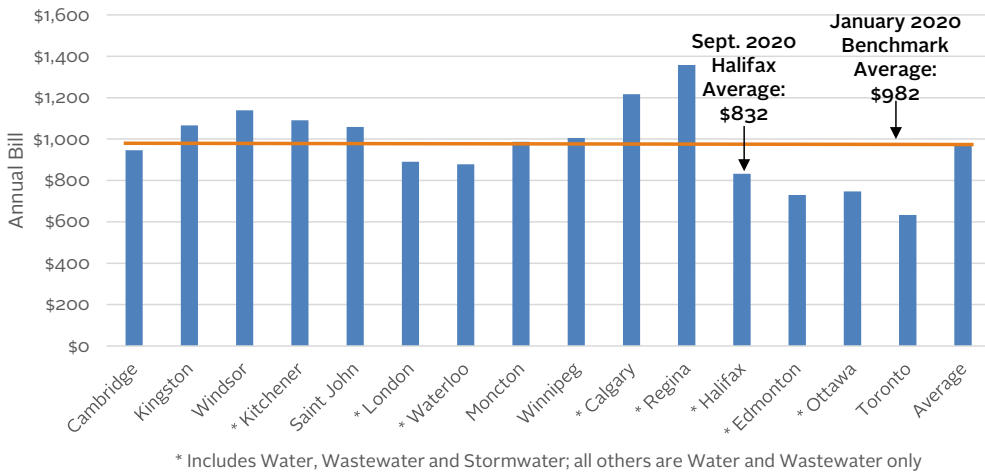
When was the last rate change for these services?

The last water and wastewater rate increase was April 1, 2016.

How do Halifax Water’s rates compare to other cities across Canada?

Halifax Water’s rates are amongst the lowest in the country. If the proposed rates are approved, on September 1, 2020, the average annual residential cost for a Halifax Water customer for water, wastewater and stormwater services will be \$832. The average cost (as of January 2020) across other Canadian cities is \$982 annually.

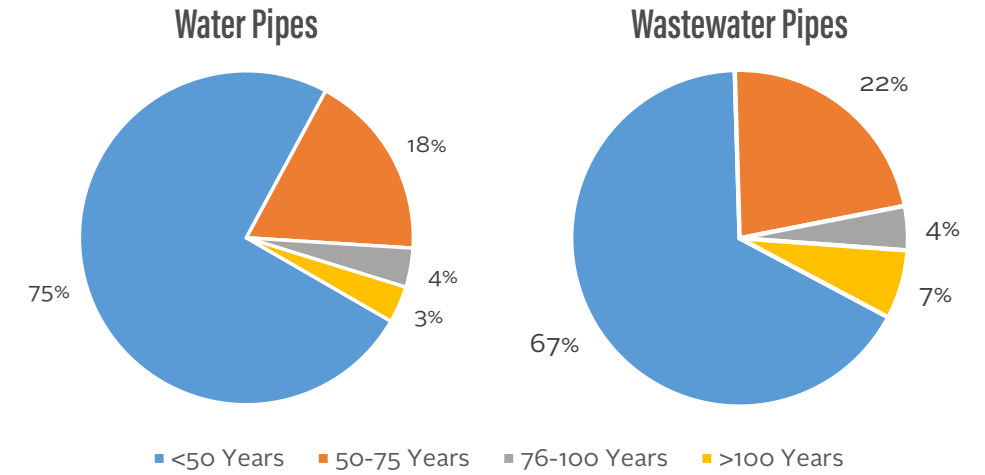
Benchmarking of Annual Residential Cost (5/8” Meter)



What level of investment is needed to maintain critical water, wastewater and stormwater services?

As with any facilities or equipment, over time the condition of the assets deteriorate. These assets need ongoing maintenance, upgrades and eventual replacement. Over 30 years (2019-2049), it is estimated Halifax Water will need to invest approximately \$4 billion (\$2.7 billion in today’s dollars) to renew assets, support growth across the municipality, and maintain compliance with all required regulations, all while adapting to climate change and mitigating its impacts. The Capital Budget for the fiscal year April 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021 is \$96.5 million and includes projects for water, wastewater and stormwater. Continuous investment in our infrastructure is critical to the short and long term economic and environmental sustainability of our region, and to public health.

Ages of Water & Wastewater Pipes



How does the rate application process work?

The Halifax Water Board, whose meetings are open to the public and live-streamed, first approves a proposed rate increase. A rate application is then submitted by Halifax Water to the NSUARB. Any change in rates and regulations has to be approved by the NSUARB.

What if I want to participate in the NSUARB rate hearing?

The rate application process is designed to be fair and open. Public and interested parties are welcome to participate. The NSUARB has tentatively scheduled a hearing for the week of June 1, 2020. For more details on the hearing process, please visit www.nsuarb.ca.

Is there a program available for those who may need financial assistance?

In 2011, Halifax Water established the H2O (Help to Others) Fund, a third-party fund managed through the Salvation Army. The H2O Fund assists customers with outstanding Halifax Water bills. Since the launch of the program, over 950 customers have been helped. Details on the H2O (Help to Others) Fund can be found at www.halifaxwater.ca and www.salvationarmy.ca/maritime.

Halifax Water by the Numbers

Halifax Water owns, operates, and maintains the following infrastructure to provide water, wastewater, and stormwater services to our customers and our environment:

Water Infrastructure

1,558 KM of Water Mains



Including transmission and distribution mains.

Equivalent Driving Distance:
Halifax to Yarmouth to Meat Cove and back to Halifax.



- 8 Water Supply Plants
- 2 Back-Up Water Supplies
- 6 Water Supply Dams
- 21 Booster Stations
- 143 Chambers
- 16 Reservoirs

Wastewater Infrastructure

1,424 KM of Wastewater Sewers



Including forcemains and gravity sewers.

Equivalent Driving Distance:
Halifax to Yarmouth to Amherst to Canso and back to Halifax.



- 14 Wastewater Treatment Facilities
- 1 Biosolids Processing Facility
- 167 Pumping Stations
- 5 Large Holding Tanks

Stormwater Infrastructure

878 KM of Stormwater Sewers



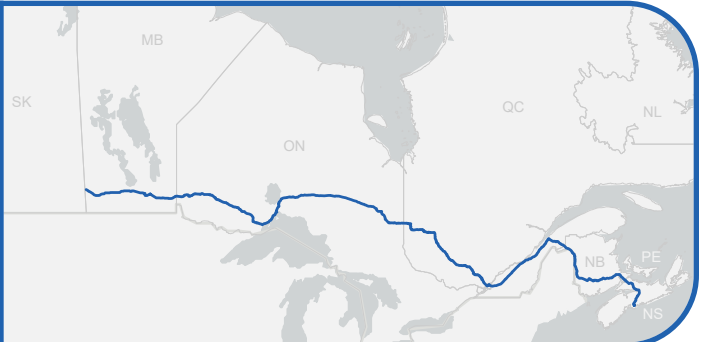
Ranging from 20 cm to 3 m in diameter.

Equivalent Driving Distance:
Halifax to Louisbourg and back to Halifax.



- 2,337 Cross Culverts
- 16,000 Driveway Culverts (estimated)
- 600 km Ditches (estimated)
- 40 Stormwater Mgmt Structures

The total length of water, wastewater, and stormwater pipe owned and maintained by Halifax Water would reach from our main office at 450 Cowie Hill Road, Halifax, via the Trans-Canada Highway to the border between Saskatchewan and Manitoba.



Last year, Halifax Water:

Had 480 employees working hard to serve customers.

Halifax Water had 109,000 customer accounts, and served an estimated population of 370,000 people on a regular basis, plus countless visitors in this region.

SUPPLIED
43.5
BILLION LITRES
OF DRINKING
WATER

TREATED
72.5
BILLION LITRES OF
WASTEWATER &
STORMWATER

How to Contact Us:

24-Hour Emergency Line:

902-420-9287

Website

halifaxwater.ca

Customer Care Centre

Hours of Operation:

Monday - Friday

8:00 AM - 8:00 PM

customercare@halifaxwater.ca

902-420-9287

Office Hours:

Monday - Friday

8:30 AM - 4:30 PM

450 Cowie Hill Road

Halifax, NS

Social Media

Monitored:

Monday - Friday

8:30 AM - 4:30 PM

Twitter: @HalifaxWater

Facebook: @HalifaxWater

YouTube: @HalifaxWater

LinkedIn: HalifaxWater

Water Conservation Tips

Everyone can make a significant contribution to minimize wastage of a very precious resource. Halifax Water does its part with the adoption of the International Water Association (IWA) standard to minimize leakage and account for all water delivered through the distribution system. Although we operate a system with some of the oldest pipes in Canada, our leakage rates are amongst the lowest due to our focused approach.

Conservation in the Bathroom

Roughly 60%-70% of residential water use takes place in the bathroom.

- Install low flow shower heads
- Install a dual flush toilet
- Take shorter showers by reducing your current shower time by a couple of minutes
- Turn off the water while brushing your teeth, use short bursts of water for rinsing
- Check faucets and pipes for leaks. Even the smallest drip from a worn washer can waste 75 or more litres a day. Larger leaks can waste hundreds.

Conservation in the Kitchen

Approximately 10% of residential water is used in the kitchen.

- Take foods out of the freezer early to allow plenty time to thaw. Thawing frozen goods under a running tap wastes water.
- Keep water in the fridge so you don't have to run the tap to get cold water.
- Fill the dishwasher completely. It can use from 35-45 litres per cycle.
- If you wash dishes by hand, don't leave the water running for rinsing. If you have two sinks, fill one with soapy water and one with rinse water. If you have only one sink, gather washed dishes in a dish rack and rinse them with a spray device or a pan full of hot water.

To learn more water saving tips, visit: halifaxwater.ca/water-savings-tips

Water**talk**

