



CITY OF DUBOIS, PENNSYLVANIA

PO BOX 408 16 W. SCRIBNER AVE. DUBOIS, PENNSYLVANIA 15801

TELEPHONE: 814-371-2000

FAX: 814-371-1290

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

City of DuBois

February 12, 2026 @ 12:00PM

City Officials Issue Statement on Utility Rates, System Needs, and Billing Questions

DuBois, PA — The City of DuBois recognizes that changes in water and sewer bills are personal and stressful for households and businesses. Many residents have raised fair questions about what has changed, why it has changed, and how the City will ensure this system is reliable and sustainable into the future. We hear you — and we want to respond clearly and respectfully.

We understand the frustration that comes with fees, surcharges, and changing rate structures. People want to know: *What am I paying for? Why now? Is this fair?* Those are reasonable concerns, and the City is committed to being transparent about the costs of operating, maintaining, and repairing critical utility systems.

As background, Sandy Township previously included separate “maintenance fees” of \$12.50 for sewer and sewer to support ongoing system needs. The City’s prior approach used tiered “surcharges,” including \$5.00 for sewer customers and \$10.00 for water customers for residential customers (with higher rates for commercial and industrial users). **These fees have been standardized and renamed “Debt Service” on all water and sewer bills.** Different structures, same underlying purpose: supporting safe, compliant, reliable utility service.

For too long, major capital items have been deferred — repairs and upgrades that a utility system cannot postpone forever without consequences. Deferring these investments has placed the overall system at risk. That is not an acceptable long-term path for our community.

Two realities are now unavoidable:

- The water system needs significant, long-overdue investment. The water treatment plant has not had major work completed in decades, and significant reservoir work is needed to protect reliable service and water quality.
- The new wastewater treatment plant is coming online — with substantial required debt service. That facility — an approximately \$88,000,000 project — is finally entering service. While this is a major step forward for long-term compliance and capacity, the related debt service is significant and must be paid.

When the former township and city systems were consolidated, management had to model a budget that adequately accounted for debts incurred years ago — whether through bonds or other obligations — as well as the capital needs required to protect the system from failure and costly emergency repairs.

As part of consolidation, the City also had to raise overall rates and equalize them so that customers across the community are treated consistently under a unified system and rate schedule.

The City has established monthly Debt Service charges, effective immediately, as follows:

- \$15 per month for water
- \$20 per month for sewer

In addition, the updated usage rates are:

- Water: \$16 per 1,000 gallons*
 - This reflects no change from the prior Sandy Township usage rate, and an increase from the former City usage rate of \$10.50 per 1,000 gallons.
- Wastewater: \$22 per 1,000 gallons*
 - The former City wastewater usage rate was \$19, and Sandy Township was \$18.50.

Please note that higher volume users (commercial and industrial customers) may show lower rates based on tiered volume discount. Also note that Treasure Lake's utility systems are separate from the City's and not impacted.

It is important for residents to understand that the wastewater rates are required under the financing and regulatory obligations established when the wastewater treatment plan project began. Once that work began and those commitments were in place, the City's role shifted to administering the rate schedule and ensuring the system remains compliant and financially stable.

The City is aware that many residents are calling to ask whether their bill is correct. We have run quality checks, and the bills reflect the approved rates and charges. If your bill includes the updated base charges and usage rates outlined above, it aligns with the changes described in this release.

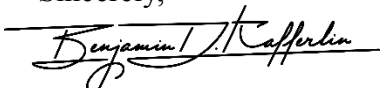
At the same time, our utility staff are currently inundated with phone calls, and the phone system is being overwhelmed. We sincerely apologize if you try to call and cannot get through or do not receive an immediate return call.

To help our staff serve customers who truly need direct assistance, we ask residents to please review this release first and use it to compare your bill to the base charges and per-1,000-gallon rates listed here. In almost all cases, a call to the office results in confirming the same information provided above. We respectfully ask for your help in keeping phone lines available for urgent issues, shutoffs, leaks, and account-specific problems that cannot be resolved through general information.

Finally, as a personal request, please treat our utility employees with respect. Our staff did not make these policy decisions, and they do not control the underlying mandates or debt obligations tied to the wastewater project. They are working hard — under heavy volume and stress — to help residents understand changes and keep essential services running. We understand that people are upset, but being disrespectful to frontline employees is not helpful and does not help solve the problem. We ask the community to show patience and grace as we work through the transition.

We know reliable water and sewer service is essential. Addressing decades of deferred investment and the financial obligations of major infrastructure projects is difficult — but it is necessary to protect public health, reliability, and compliance. As a community, we will get through this by staying focused on facts, treating each other respectfully, and making the investments required to secure the system for the future.

Sincerely,



Benjamin D. Kafferlin
Interim City Manager