Variable Rate Increase Announced to Finance Infrastructure Improvements

October 15, 2020

Diamondhead Water & Sewer District has announced a small variable rate increase designed to upgrade infrastructure systems that are failing due to age. The water and sewer system is now 50-plus years of age, and multiple failures are occurring with water mains, lift stations, and sanitary sewer system. The new rates will go into effect with the bill due by December 10, 2020.

A third party professional economist was enlisted to study the issue and recommend the rate increase necessary to return Diamondhead to a sustainable infrastructure system within five years. Diamondhead has not had a significant rate increase since 2009, and actually enjoyed a rate decrease since 2016.

Diamondhead Water & Sewer District drinking water has received the highest possible quality ratings from the State of Mississippi’s testing program for many years. The current situation with increasing failure rates with water mains, lift stations, and sewer collection stations are putting this rating at risk.

The aging infrastructure also threatens Diamondhead’s fire rating due to an inability to consistently deliver the volume and pressure of water for use in firefighting. In addition to this danger, a lowering of the fire rating could result in higher homeowner insurance premiums and legal issues in granting building permits for new homes and businesses.

Those who routinely practice conservative water use will see little to no increase in billing, while others will see a minimal increase compared to the alternatives. This variable rate increase will be an investment in meeting the water and sewer needs of Diamondhead now, and into the future.

The 5-Year Capital Improvement plan includes:

- Sewer System Improvements
- Hydrant/Fire Flow Improvements
- Basin 13 Improvements
- Water System Upgrades
- Lift Station #16 Force Main
- New Pumps for Lift Stations #16, #19, #28
- Well System Improvements
• Water Main Improvements

• Engineered Sanitary Sewer Hydraulic Model

• Sewer Cleanout Improvements

• Equipment Replacements

The map for these improvements can be found on our website www.dwsg.us under the News/Projects tab.

The new rate structure can be found on our website www.dwsg.us under the Customer Service tab.