

EAST MOLINE UTILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Frequently Asked Questions

The utilities we don't see beneath our feet — like water pipes, sewer lines, and stormwater systems — as well as our water and wastewater treatment plants, are crucial for a healthy community.

To ensure reliable, sustainable services, the City of East Moline has brought in experts to assess our water and sewer systems. High-priority repairs and upgrades were identified to help us maintain our systems, prevent costly emergencies, and comply with federal and state regulations. A utility rate study is developing funding strategies to address these critical improvements and secure the future of our utility services.

Why are utility improvements needed?

Over the years, East Moline has worked hard to make upgrades to our aging utility systems using available funds, grants, and careful planning. However, our utility facilities, many of which are 70 years old, have reached a tipping point and need more extensive improvements. In addition, federal and state regulations have been evolving and our utilities must be upgraded to ensure compliance.

What are these critical improvements?

Several high-priority utility projects are required over the next 5-10 years, including:

Replace lead service lines for drinking water, as required by federal mandate.

Upgrades to the Wastewater Treatment Plant to comply with state phosphorus removal mandates by 2030. In high concentrations, phosphorus becomes toxic and can devastate the delicate balance of life in our rivers and lakes.

Replace the clearwell at the Water Treatment Plant, which is damaged. It is a critical part of disinfecting our drinking water.

Replace deteriorating water and sewer lines to prevent costly failures.

Stormwater drainage improvements and compliance with FEMA's flood protection levee mandates.

How will East Moline fund these critical improvements?

We are committed to creating a thoughtful, forward-thinking plan of action and strategy for funding these critical utility upgrades. A combination of funding strategies will be required. These funding strategies include:

Gradual Utility Rate Adjustments: To complete all the necessary improvements, an increase in utility rates will be required. A rate study analysis for the next five years proposes a gradual annual increase.

Long-Term Borrowing: Utilizing bonds and other financing mechanisms to spread costs over time.

Grant Opportunities: Actively pursuing federal and state funding to offset local expenses. These grants typically include a local match and are highly competitive.

What is the reason for the proposed utility rate increase?

A rate increase is necessary to fund essential upgrades to our water, stormwater, and wastewater treatment systems. These upgrades are required to ensure compliance with federal and state regulations, maintain the functionality of the water and wastewater treatment plants, and support our community. We are evaluating rate increase recommendations with a focus on addressing long-term needs while minimizing financial impacts on residents.



Wastewater
Treatment
Plant

How much is the proposed increase in utility rates, and when would it start?

We are working with an expert team to develop a rate study analysis. On November 18, City Council reviewed initial proposed utility rate adjustments. Then on December 9, 2024, revised rate adjustments were presented to City Council, and included a decrease in rates to minimize impacts on residents.

The proposed adjustments would start in early 2025, and the average residential customer would see an increase of approximately \$12.10 per month, with rates gradually rising annually through 2029. Rates depend on usage (for water and stormwater), and this applies to residential, commercial, and industrial customers. A future analysis will take place to determine rate adjustments for 2030-2034.



Below is a chart showing the latest proposed rates for the average household and gradual rate increases over the next 5 years. **Rates are yet to be formally adopted and may be amended based on further analysis and discussion with City Council.**

	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
WATER, SEWER, AND STORMWATER						
Avg Customer Bill¹	\$72.73	\$84.83	\$96.41	\$109.09	\$123.57	\$135.21
Annual Monthly Change <i>Presented to City Council on 12/9/24</i>	--	\$12.10	\$11.58	\$12.68	\$14.48	\$11.64
Previous Annual Monthly Change <i>Presented to City Council on 11/18/24</i>	--	\$16.39	\$18.26	\$18.52	\$18.74	\$19.54

¹Billing Charge + 4 CCF water and sewer, 1 ERU stormwater

How much will rates increase for communities that use East Moline’s water and wastewater plants?

East Moline partners with four other communities -- Hampton, Silvis, Rapids City, and Carbon Cliff -- through an intergovernmental agreement to provide water and/or wastewater services from East Moline’s facilities. Residents in partner communities can expect an increase in utility rates. Contact your city for further information. Rates are yet to be formally adopted and may be amended.

Are there opportunities for public input on proposed rate increases?

Yes! Your thoughts matter as we make decisions that affect our community. **Contact our office at 309-752-1599 or email emsecretary@eastmoline.com.**

What would happen if a rate increase is not approved?

Without a rate increase, the City will face challenges in addressing aging utility systems and meeting federal and state regulations, which could result in expensive emergency repairs and fines. Our water treatment plant could face operational problems, which will likely result in service interruptions and expensive emergency repairs.

Is there a plan to assist low-income residents with this rate increase?

We’re exploring relief programs for qualifying low-income residents to minimize the impact of rate increases on those most in need. Additional information about potential assistance programs will be provided as it becomes available.

Where can I get more information?

We are committed to keeping residents informed every step of the way. Details and updates are available on our website at www.eastmoline.com.

