

UTILITIES NEWSLETTER

City of Port Townsend Utility Billing

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Info & Forms



cityofpt.us/finance/page/utility-information

Holiday Closures

City Offices and the Port Townsend Public Library will be closed on January 1 for New Years Day and January 19 for Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Be safe and warm out there!



Happy New Year! Join us at Kah Tai Lagoon on January 28 to toast to the parks team, meet the new park caretaker, and celebrate the re-opening of the restrooms.

2026 Rate Increase

City utility rates will increase effective January 1, 2026 and will be reflected in the January 31st billing. For an average residential customer residing inside City limits, the combined monthly fixed base rate for City-provided utilities (water, sewer & stormwater) will increase from \$156.46 per month to \$168.83 per month (before usage/volume charges are applied). This is a 7.90% increase over last year. Rates will vary for each class of water customer and water meter size. The City anticipates additional utility rate increases over the next several years to fully fund utility requirements. For additional details and projected rates going forward, visit Port Townsend Municipal Code (codepublishing.com) Chapter 13.05.

Join us at these City events and programs in January

- **Coffee Chat with the City Manager** will be held at Coyote and Crow Restaurant at the Port Townsend Golf Park January through March, 2026. Join John Mauro, neighbors, and friends from **9 – 10:30am on Friday, January 9.**

- Join us to celebrate the **re-opening of the Kah Tai Lagoon Nature Park restrooms** on Wednesday, January 28, at

noon! The restrooms have been closed for nearly 20 years and the Parks team have been hard at work restoring them for public use. Did you know that Kah Tai Nature Lagoon also has a Park Caretaker? Stop by to meet Ed Mead, the new Caretaker, toast the parks team with some hot cocoa and take a walk through this beautiful natural area to see migratory birds and native plant restoration projects.

Sign up for the City's E-News at tinyurl.com/2cb3dcac.



app.repd.us/porttownsend/en

Question of the Month

“Why is the City installing new sidewalks at Washington and Walker streets?”

Cleaning Sewer Lines

Each year, the Public Works crews clean approximately one-quarter of the City's sewer lines. Cleaning begins in December and is completed by the end of March.

Some of the lines are cleaned more frequently to keep them functioning properly. The sewer lines are cleaned with a cleaning nozzle that is propelled from one manhole to the next using water under high pressure (1,500 to 2,000 PSI). The nozzle is then pulled back to the starting manhole. As the nozzle is pulled back, water scours the inside of the sewer pipe. Any debris in the pipe is pulled back with the water. The debris is removed from the manhole with a vacuum unit. If roots are found, they are cut with a root cutter. The City cleans and addresses any problem areas one to two times per year. City sewer lines requiring a higher level of maintenance are cleaned annually or semi-annually.

What Can Homeowners Do To Help?

The sewer system begins with the plumbing fixtures inside your house. All the drains from the sinks, tubs, showers, and toilets are piped to the sewer service that exits your house and connects to the sewer main under the street. Each drain has a "trap" and a vent pipe that prevent sewer gases and odors from entering the house. If only one section of plumbing or fixture doesn't drain, it is usually a problem within the house. However, if no drains work, the entire system drains slowly or if you are experiencing waste water coming back up through the basement floor drain, the problem is probably outside of the house in the sewer service or the sewer main. Please notify the City if a sewer cleaning service is cleaning your private sewer line so the City can make certain nothing goes into the main sewer line.

You can reduce potential problems with our sewer system by following some simple rules:

Smell sewage but have no obvious problems? Add a gallon of water to your floor drains and plumbing fixtures to ensure your traps have water.

Never flush: Disposable diapers, sanitary napkins & applicators, wet-wipes, rags, floss, or other objects that might block or settle in pipes.

Do not dump gas, grease, oil, antifreeze, paint, or other foreign objects down drains.

If using a garbage disposal, minimize the amount of food and never dispose of cooking oils, greases, or coffee grounds.

If you suspect your sewer line is partially plugged, take immediate action.

Thank you for helping to protect our shared City infrastructure.



Take precautions when temps are predicted to reach 32° F or lower to prevent freezing pipes.

Prevent Freezing Pipes

When a pipe freezes, moisture standing in the plumbing can create blockages as additional water backs up in the pipe. Ice expands as it freezes and places extra pressure on pipe walls, potentially cracking or breaking them. Water begins leaking out of cracks as ice blockage thaws. Even if damage seems minor, when left unaddressed leaks can become catastrophic. Since pipes are located inside walls or under your house, repairs can be costly. Avoid high bills by protecting pipes as winter approaches. When temps are predicted to reach 32° F or lower, take precautions like those provided below. Damages are most likely to occur at nighttime.

For pipes running through cabinets or vanities, **open doors to keep interiors at room temperature** and warm air circulating around plumbing.

Depending on how well pipes are insulated, during extreme cold weather, **consider letting your faucet drip** (a slow trickle). You could catch water in a basin or bucket and use to water plants.

Keep garage doors closed if there are exposed pipes.

Disconnect hoses and cover outdoor spigots with foam faucet cover or wrap with cloth and newspaper wrapped with plastic tape.

Cover pipes with inexpensive pipe wrap insulation, which you can purchase at most hardware stores.

If you plan to be away for any length of time, **set thermostat at a level to prevent freezing pipes.**