



5/8/1

Dear Resident

NETWORK CHARGE FOR SEPTIC TANK USERS

In the past, residents using septic tanks, only paid for the months in which they used the services of the sewage truck. This tariff was R269.50 for two visits. The challenge with this tariff structure was, that residents using septic tanks, only paid for the service when it was used, while the monthly overhead operating costs for this service remained the same, regardless of how often the service was used or not used. The cost of this service was therefore subsidised by other residents via the payment of their monthly municipal utility bills.

A new tariff structure was developed and approved by the Council to ensure that residents who do not use this service regularly, make a fair contribution to the fixed overhead costs of operating sewage services. It is for this reason why the Council approved a network charge of R120.87, which is charged monthly on all properties connected to the sewerage network including those using septic tanks, but excluding those properties using seepage conservancy tanks. This is regardless of the frequency of use of the septic tank service. This is not a reserve charge, insurance charge or a prepaid charge for this service, but a basic charge levied for all residents who make use of municipal sewerage systems, including septic tank clients. Residents using septic tanks will only pay an additional fee of R164.54 for the month that the service is being used, limited to 2 visits and then a higher charge thereafter. Residents with flush systems pay the monthly sanitation charge of R164.54, as well as the network charge of R120.87, totalling to R285.41 monthly

Also note that the combined sewerage charge in the previous financial year was R269.50 for those with flush systems. The combined charge of R285.41 currently, represents an increase of R15.91 or 5.9% on the monthly bill.

The charge for the network fee for sewerage is standard across the entire municipality for all properties except where seepage conservancy sewer tanks have been installed. This *network charge will exclude properties where seepage conservancy sewer tanks have been installed.*

The financial year for local municipalities runs from the 1st of July to the 30th of June annually. Every year, in line with the prescribed legislation (See the Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2000 and the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000), the Executive Mayor must present the draft budget for the next financial year before the 31st of March. This draft budget contains all the proposals, including tariff proposals and adjustments for the next financial year. The draft budget, including the new proposed tariffs are then advertised in all the local newspapers, as required by law, and placed on our website for a period for public comment and feedback. The adjusted tariffs for septic tanks were included in the draft budget proposal for this current financial year, and residents had the opportunity to give input on this. No objections to this tariff were received.

All the comments received are then duly considered and integrated into the final budget, which is then tabled at Council for final approval before the end of May of the financial year. This includes the final approved tariffs. The drafting and approval of the budget is an annual process, and all this information is made public and therefore available to all residents. Residents, however, have a responsibility to acquaint themselves with the information made available to them by the municipality. Residents must also take an active citizen role, study the proposed draft budget, and give input on the information made available to them.

We do our very best to inform residents and we utilise the communication tools available to us, and we will continue every effort to improve our communications moving forward. We do however ask that our residents do their due diligence and participate in the process when the opportunity is given.

Sincerely,

Joggie Scholtz
Municipal Manager