

2024 Budget Information

For 2024, the NEW Water Commission has adopted a \$51.6 million budget to ensure that critical resources are available to continue the essential service to more than 238,000 residents, as well as businesses, industries, and visitors in Northeast Wisconsin.

The budget represents a 5.9% increase in total expenses over the 2023 budget, and an increase in Municipal User Fees of 6.1%. Drivers for the 2024 budget include funding critical capital improvement projects; plant repairs and maintenance for the incineration process; maintenance and needed upgrades for Information Technology (IT) systems; and increased costs for fuel and chemicals.

NEW Water estimates that for the 2024 budget, a typical family will pay \$25.60 per month* for NEW Water services (not including costs charged to them by their municipality) to enable their family to do the dishes, do laundry, and flush the toilet around the clock.

**It is important to note that NEW Water does not provide services directly to residents. Budgets are set separately by each municipality ([see the map of our service area here](#)), and include costs to maintain and operate their sanitary sewer systems as well.*

“Our utility plans for the future so that we can support the vitality of our community, while continuously protecting public health and safety, and our precious water resources,” said Tom Sigmund, Executive Director.

NEW Water develops its annual budget by forecasting flow volume (basically, the liquid portion of wastewater) and load units (pounds of pollutants) in partnership with its 15 municipal customers, and three industrial customers. Operations & Maintenance and Capital expense budgets are developed to determine the amount of revenue that NEW Water needs to collect in the upcoming year. Those revenues are then allocated to develop the parameter rates that NEW Water charges.

It is important to note that NEW Water is a non-profit public service, a shared community resource, and a shared cost. Costs are allocated according to each customer’s usage of the NEW Water system (both volume and strength of wastewater). In 2022, NEW Water cleaned more than 15 billion gallons of wastewater for Northeast Wisconsin.

The following examples demonstrate NEW Water’s commitment to cost-effectiveness:

- NEW Water’s Adaptive Management Program is a cost-effective approach to permit compliance for suspended solids and phosphorus. This program was estimated to save approximately \$40 million over a 20 year period by working in the watershed in lieu of building more wastewater treatment infrastructure.
- NEW Water has a Contract & Grant Specialist position that, in part, seeks external funding sources to support our operations. NEW Water has received approximately \$2 million in grant funding for various efforts over the period of 2015 to 2022.
- NEW Water produces biogas through anaerobic digestion of biosolids which reduces the loading to our incineration process and enables us to save approximately \$1.25 million per year in purchased electricity costs through on-site electrical generation.
- NEW Water receives an outside source of high-strength waste that is added to the anaerobic digesters. This effort brings in external revenue of \$220,000 per year while boosting energy production by about 25%.

- NEW Water utilizes available tank capacity to store biosolids that would otherwise need to be landfilled when we have incineration process outages. When needed, this existing infrastructure enables us to save approximately \$6,600 per day in landfilling cost. This cost-effective approach was used a total of 13 days in 2022 (\$86,000) and 17 days in 2023 (\$112,000 as of October 10th).
- NEW Water recently upgraded the fluid bed incineration (FBI) system wet scrubber to improve sulfur dioxide removal. This improvement is expected to extend the life of the media in the Granular Activated Carbon (GAC) unit and avoid replacement and disposal costs. This effort is expected to save approximately \$35,000 per year in avoided expenses.
- NEW Water has an active Energy Team that seeks energy savings opportunities within our facilities. Recent projects include: Digester mixing energy review, resulting in savings of \$38,000 per year in energy costs; and plant-wide compressed air system consolidation, resulting in savings of \$42,000 per year in energy costs.
- Additional cost-saving measures include a pollution prevention partnership with Brown County Household Hazardous Material Recovery Facility. The facility provides a safe disposal place for hazardous substances which may otherwise reach area waterways resulting in possible permit violations, causing damage to our system, and necessitating costly repairs, as well as increasing costs for additional treatment needs to handle pollutants.
- Water re-use at our wastewater treatment facilities: rather than purchasing potable water, we reuse our own treated water where we can. This is a significant cost savings measure.
- NEW Water takes a proactive approach to stewardship of financial resources, such as by ensuring continuous compliance with *Governmental Accounting Standards Board*. The favorable credit rating maintained by NEW Water allows us to secure low-cost Clean Water Fund financing at 55% of the market rate for infrastructure improvement projects.
- NEW Water completes numerous Lean Six Sigma projects each year. These yield greater work efficiencies and cost savings.