

Bedford Township sewer rates to jump 15 percent in 2017

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BEDFORD TOWNSHIP — Bedford Township sewer line customers will see quarterly bills jump by about 15 percent in 2017 for a typical household during rates that the township board approved Dec. 20.

The billing will be \$4.74 per thousand gallons usage, compared to the 2016 rate of \$4.12. A similar increase also is expected in 2018, township treasurer Paul

Francis said at the board meeting.

With a family of three, the typical quarterly bill is \$106. It would then increase to about \$123.

The amounts are based on the proposed budget received from the Monroe County Drain Commissioner; but more significantly, are a look ahead to major repairs and upgrades to the infrastructure that is now nearly 50 years old. One of the known problems is that stormwater and ground water seeps into the old

pipes in various locations. As a result, water that doesn't need to be treated adds to the volume and therefore cost.

Mr. Francis reported that the anticipated cost of the improvements to the sewage disposal system and plant, scheduled to start in late 2017, will be about \$12 million. The plan is to start with \$3 million of the \$5 million in savings the township has available for sewer line work and finance the rest.

A rate hike starting early in

the year would help jumpstart the additional funding, he explained.

In the meantime, township officials are discussing the possibility of putting sewer bills on a monthly schedule. The South County Water District is currently billing quarterly for water service in Bedford Township and surrounding communities, but has considered going to monthly bills; and if so, the township would likely follow suit.