



"The Bluegill Capitol of Wisconsin"

Public Notice
Standby Water Service
December 1, 2022

Per the January 1, 2016- Rate File for the Village of Birchwood

Schedule Sws-1 A standby charge shall apply to each lot or equivalent parcel of land for which water system facilities are available but are not connected, meaning fronted by a water main. An equivalent parcel of land shall be each full 100 feet where unplatted. An isolated parcel of less than 100 feet shall be equivalent to a lot. Where more than one lot or equivalent is used as a unit and a customer is connected, the total charge for water service to such customer shall be not less than the standby charge applicable to the several lots. This rate is not applicable to land declared by the local municipality as unbuildable.

For each lot or equivalent parcel of land- \$15.00 per quarter.

Wisconsin laws and Public Service Commission (PSC) utility regulations require utilities to bill for service based on the rates in their tariff. Wis. Stat 196.22 Discrimination forbidden, states no public utility may charge, demand, collect or receive more or less compensation for any service performed by it within the state, or for any service in connection therewith, than is specified in the schedules. Furthermore, Wis Admin. Code PSC 185.15 prohibits a utility from providing utility service to a customer for free or at a rate different than provided in its rates.

The Standby Water Service charge is set up to help maintain the water system and lines in the municipality. These funds are used to repair, replace, and update our water system equipment, as needed.

Since this charge was never implemented, we have been informed by the Public Service Commission that the Village of Birchwood is now required to back-bill all applicable lots for the standby charge they should have paid for the last 24 months.

The Village of Birchwood staff is currently working with Wisconsin Rural Water Association and the PSC to establish which properties are subject to the current and back-billed standby charges. Since this is a huge undertaking for our staff, our



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goal is to have the current and back charges invoiced on the 2022- 4th quarter utility bill. Going forward, any applicable lots will see the standby water charge on each utility bill.

If you are receiving this letter, you own property in the Village of Birchwood that may be affected by this notice. If it is determined you are subject to the Standby Water charge and you are **NOT** currently on the Village water system, you will begin receiving a utility bill starting January 2023. If you are currently receiving a utility bill, you will see these charges reflected on your next bill. These charges will be billed quarterly.

Per the 2022 property assessment, many lots are being combined in 2023. If you are one of the property owners whose lots are being combined, effective January 2023, you will no longer be charged the standby charge for those combined lots. If your lots were **not** combined and you are interested in combining them, please contact Kelly Owen, Village Assessor, at 715-308-2870.

If you have rental property in the Village of Birchwood, these charges will be added to the current tenant's utility account. Our office has no way of knowing if any additional lots are part of the rental agreement between you and your tenant. If you would like to have a separate bill for any of these lots, please contact our office and we will set up a separate utility account for you (landlord).

We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause. We are regulated by the PSC and are required to follow what is in our tariff. The Village of Birchwood is always willing to set up a deferred payment agreement, if needed. Please feel free to contact the office if you would like to set up an agreement.

We appreciate your patience and understanding during the implementation of the Standby charge. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Village Clerk's office at 715-354-3300. You may also contact the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin at 608-266-5481, if you have any questions regarding this requirement.

The Village of Birchwood Board of Trustees