



WATER METERS

Our 2023 water meter replacement program will be kicking off soon and I would like to remind our customers that this year we are focusing on meters that are located inside structures. Typically, we install meters outside in meter pits in the yard, but there are many that were installed inside structures in the past.

For those customers whose meters are going to be targeted for replacement this year, please be sure and respond as soon

as possible when you receive the notification from the contractor about setting a date and time to get access to the meter.

This will ensure that the project is completed in a timely manner. More information will be provided in the letter that our contractor, NECO, will be sending to the targeted accounts.



2022 SEWER RESTORATION PROJECTS

Our 2022 Sewer Main and Manhole Rehabilitation Project is just about complete, and we expect that all the sewer-related work will be completed by the second week of May, with the final restoration of pavement, sidewalks, yards and other punch-list items taking a bit longer to complete.

The current water main replacement project is taking a bit longer to complete although our contractor is working diligently to complete this project as well. This project included a lot more work and we expect it will be the end of the year before all the work is completed. We ask for your continued patience and cooperation as we wrap these projects up.



The next area slated for water main replacement is the Brookside Park area and we will be working with Lawrence DPW as they complete a stormwater improvement project in the same area.

We will also be working on the installation of two new production wells in the Fort Harrison well field to increase our raw water supply and provide more resiliency in our source of supply. This project will not have any impact on local roadways, which I imagine will be welcome news to many of you who are living in areas where it seems like the disruption will never end. But I can assure you that there will be relief soon!

COMMUNITY CROSSINGS GRANT

Lawrence DPW has received another \$1,000,000 Community Crossings Matching Grant, which will double the amount of paving work the city will complete in 2023. Franklin Road will be done as part of the 2023 paving work and should be done in early fall. See the Community News section for the CCMG announcement and

additional road segments targeted for improvements here: <https://www.cityoflawrence.org/news/2023/04/12/gov-holcomb-indot-award-1-million-city-lawrence>.



THE LAWRENCE LIFT

SEWER IMPROVEMENTS CONTINUE

Moving forward, residents may expect to see a lot more sanitary sewer improvements projects being performed as well. As we near the completion of our Sanitary Sewer Corrective Action Plan required under our EPA Order we will be providing information as to the nature and location of these projects via the Lawrence Lift and the city website in the Community News Section.

As I have mentioned before, these projects will focus on eliminating Sanitary Sewer Overflows (SSO) and will have the added benefit of freeing up existing capacity in the sanitary sewer system that is being taken up by the introduction of rain and ground water into our system in rain events. This has a negative impact on new development in the city in addition to the SSO problem.

I would also like to remind all our customers that the second phase of the 2022 sewer rate increase was implemented April 1, 2023. There will be two additional phases that will hit customer bills on April 1, 2024, and 2025.

The last two phases will be smaller than the first two phases. The new rates adopted in 2022 can be found on the city's website here: <https://www.cityoflawrence.org/utilities/water-sewer>.

These rates support the proper operation and maintenance of our sanitary sewer system as well as the existing bond debt obligations for bond funded improvements and operating capital for the sewer utility.

Adequate funding is crucial to ensuring that we continue to address the age and poor condition issues affecting a lot of our

water and sanitary sewer systems. Rate increases should be done more frequently but result in smaller increases.

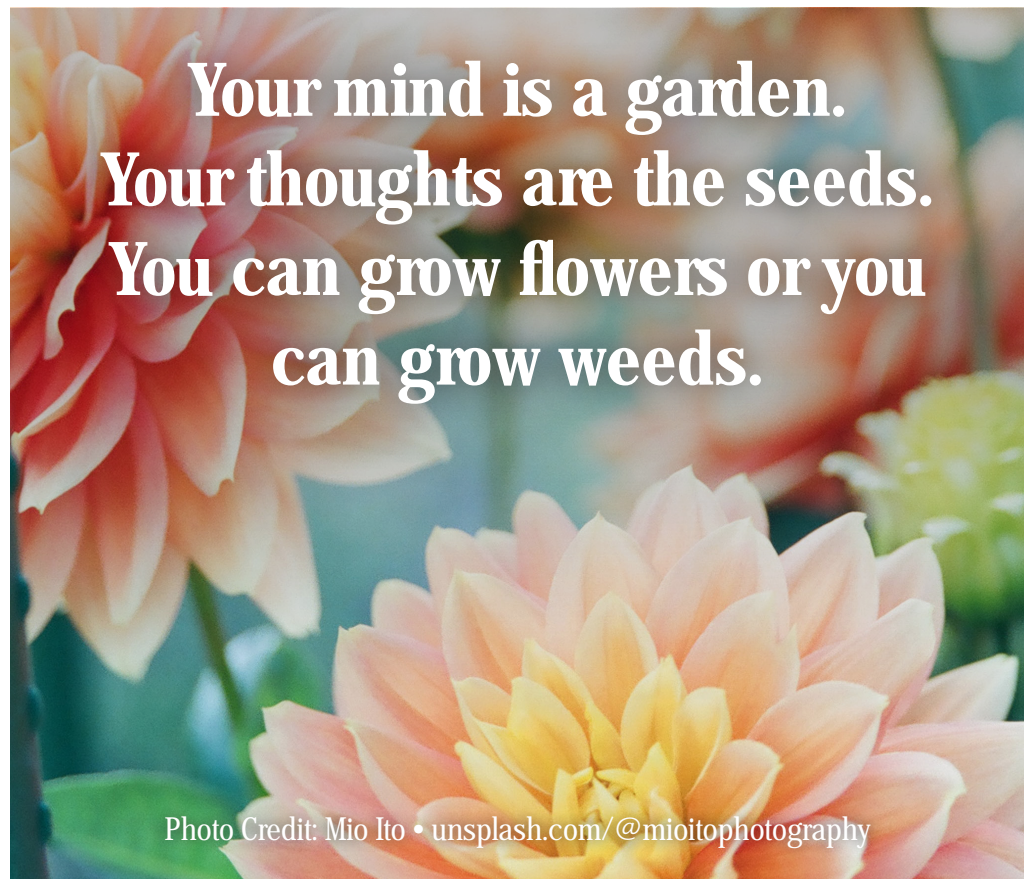
Thus, we are conducting a water rate study this year to assess how we are performing financially and to see if any additional adjustment is needed. The last phase of the 2017 water rate increase was implemented January 1, 2020, and so we have reached that 3-year interval where it is time to evaluate where we are.

We have seen significant increases in a lot of the materials and supplies we use to operate the utility, such as chemicals and various parts & fittings, not to mention a significant increase in labor costs that are driving up construction project costs so that the funding available for capital improvements does not go as far as it used to.

GRASS AND IRRIGATION

As we are now in the grass cutting season, we would like to encourage residents to avoid blowing their grass clippings into the street. These clippings get washed down the gutter in rain events and contribute to the clogging up of storm sewers, resulting in drainage backups. Residents should also avoid allowing these clippings to accumulate in ditches and drainage swales, where they accumulate and prevent the proper movement of surface drainage to where it is supposed to go.

We would also like to remind our customers with irrigation systems that it is the season to make sure your backflow preventer has been tested by a certified tester and the report sent to the Utility office at backflow@cityoflawrence.org. We are also looking into making improvements in our notification process and will be communicating those changes soon. For now, please do not hesitate to contact me via email or else contact the Business Office at 317.542.0511 to speak to a customer service representative in order to have your questions addressed.



Your mind is a garden.
Your thoughts are the seeds.
You can grow flowers or you
can grow weeds.

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