

# Ganges Sewer

## Frequently Asked Questions

Capital Regional District | September 2025

### How is the operating budget for the Ganges Sewer System established?

The total cost to operate the Ganges Sewer System is established through the CRD's financial planning and budgeting process and recommended by the Ganges Sewer Local Services Commission for approval by the CRD Board.

### When are sewage bills issued?

Ganges Sewer System bills are issued once a year by the CRD in August and the billing cycle is based on water consumption from September of the previous year to April of the current year.

### How are sewer fees calculated for the Ganges Sewerage Service?

Sewer invoices for Ganges users are calculated in accordance with "Schedule D" of the [Salt Spring Island Liquid Waste, Sewer, and Water Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 3864](#). The service operates on a cost allocation model, distributing total operating, maintenance and debt servicing costs after accounting for other revenue sources such as grants and parcel taxes. User fees are calculated by subtracting revenues from parcel taxes or other sources from the total budget and the remaining amount is then allocated across three user categories: residential, business, and institutional.

While each category has its own rate structure, costs are first allocated based on the water consumption of each category. This ensures that the rate for one category does not affect the others and that the proportion of total costs assigned to each category reflects its share of overall water use.

**Example:** If residential users consume 50% of the water, they are responsible for 50% of the total costs.

#### Residential user fees

Each household (single family equivalent or dwelling unit) **pays a \$150 fixed annual fee** and the remaining residential costs are distributed among users based on individual water consumption. Each household's share is proportional to its usage relative to all other residential properties connected to the sewer.

**Example:** If your household accounts for 2% of total residential water use, you would be responsible for approximately 2% of the remaining residential cost share.

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### Business user fees

Sewer costs for business properties are divided equally between two factors building size and water consumption and as a result, larger premises and higher water usage both contribute to higher sewer charges.

- Building Size (square footage) – accounts for 50% of the cost allocation
- Water consumption – accounts for the remaining 50%

### Institutional user fees

Institutional users such as schools, hospitals and long-term care facilities are billed solely based on water consumption and **do not pay** flat fees or charges based on building size. Each institution's share of costs is proportional to its water use relative to other institutions.

## Why did my sewage bill increase?

Many factors can contribute to the increase in sewage billing including but not limited to:

- Increased household water consumption
- An increase in the proportion of costs recovered through user fees
- Reduced overall water consumption in the service area

**NOTE:** Ganges Sewer operates on a cost allocation model, lower system-wide water consumption results in higher costs per unit of water consumed. This means that even if your usage remained steady, your share of costs may increase.