



Ottertail News

WATER DEPARTMENT

MN Water Connection Fee Increase for 2026

The 2025 Minnesota Legislature recently approved an increase to the Water Connection Fee, effective January 1, 2026. This fee, which has been in place since 1993, supports the MN Department of Health's Drinking Water Protection Program.

The adjustment was made to address two major factors:

- 💧 *Inflationary Costs: Since the last increase, inflation has significantly impacted on the costs of maintaining and monitoring safe drinking water systems*
- 💧 *Future Federal Regulations: Anticipated federal requirements for drinking water safety will require additional resources to ensure compliance and continued public health protection.*

What does this mean for you?

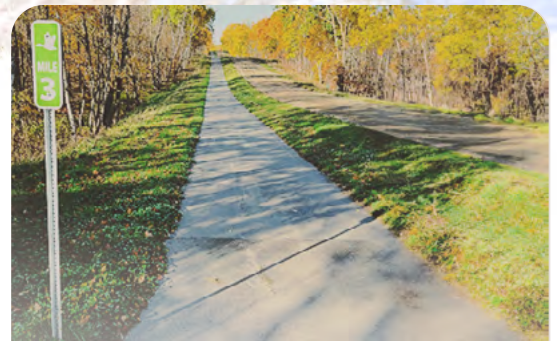
- 💧 *This is a state fee, not a local charge, and it appears on your water bill when you start water service*
- 💧 *The additional revenue will help protect public health by ensuring MN can continue delivering clean and safe drinking water to every community.*

This fee goes into effect January 1, 2026, and while any fee increase can be frustrating, this one is an investment in something we all rely on every day: safe drinking water for our families and future generations.

For more details on the *Drinking Water Protection Program* and how these funds are used, visit the MN Department of Health website.

Service Rate Increase

As of January 1, 2026, Water Service Rates will be increasing, City staff will send out reminders with each water bill remaining in 2025. More detailed information can be given upon request at City Hall.



DID YOU KNOW?

Fall's Best Trails Are Here!

Fall is a beautiful time to get outdoors and explore before the cold of winter sets in! Otter Tail County boasts nearly 473 miles of trails open to biking and hiking. Popular routes include the **Central Lakes State Trail (55 Miles)**, the **Heart of the Lakes Trail (31 miles)**, and the **Heartland State Trail (49 miles)**, just to name a few.

Whether you're looking for a leisurely ride or a longer adventure, there's a trail for everyone.

To learn more about the wonderful trails in Otter Tail County, visit:

- ottertailcounty.gov/parks-and-recreation
- traillink.com/city/ottertail-mn-trails



HONORING History and Heart

Park Donation Celebrates United States 250th and a Cherished Loved One

The City of Ottertail is honored to recognize a generous donation made by community member *Ted Jennings* and his wife, *Rita*, in celebration of the upcoming 250th birthday of the United States in 2026.

The Jennings have donated a bronze flagpole, complete with a solar lighting pad and six sewn flags, which has proudly been placed in the city park. Their vision was to create a lasting tribute not only to the nation's milestone anniversary but also to the sense of community fostered at the park, especially among the children who play there.

The City sincerely thanks the Jennings for this heartfelt contribution. This will not only enhance the park's beauty but also serve as a lasting symbol of remembrance, patriotism, and community care.



Message from Fire Chief, Joe Ahlfs

Prepare for the Heating Season - As the cooler weather approaches, it's a good time to prepare your home for the heating season. A few simple safety steps now can help protect your home and family throughout the fall and winter:

- **Furnace Maintenance:** Before turning on your furnace, have it inspected and serviced to ensure it is operating safely and efficiently. Regular maintenance can prevent costly repairs and improve energy efficiency.
- **Fireplace and Chimney Safety:** If you use a wood-burning stove or fireplace, have the chimney inspected for cracks, blockages, or creosote buildup. This will help reduce risks of chimney fires and ensures proper ventilation.
- **Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors:** Test all alarms and replace batteries if needed. Detectors are a vital line of defense in preventing tragedy from fire or carbon monoxide exposure.

Taking these steps now will help keep your home safe and comfortable all season long.

Thank you, Ottertail Fire and Rescue



Burn Permits: Fall is a common time to clear leaves and yard debris. Remember, a burning permit is required. Be sure to activate your permit each day you plan to burn and always follow safety guidelines. Burn permit can be obtained at City Hall during office hours or can be purchased online through the MN DNR Website.

CITY REMINDERS

Winter is right around the corner. Brush up on the City's *Street, Sidewalk and Trail Snow Plowing and Mailbox* policy:



STREET, SIDEWALK AND TRAIL SNOW PLOWING AND MAILBOX POLICY

The City Maintenance Supervisor and contracted Independent Contractor will determine which streets shall require most priority in ice and snow removal. Criteria for these decisions as based on the following:

- 1) Snow accumulation of 2 inches or more;
- 2) Drifting of snow which causes problems for travel;
- 3) Icy conditions seriously affecting travel;
- 4) Time of snowfall in relationship to heavy use of streets."

Snowplowing will not generally be conducted for snowfall less than 2 inches. Designated streets will be plowed when measured snow depth exceeds 2 inches and will be cleared as soon as reasonably possible.

The owner or occupant of any commercial or residential property adjacent to a public sidewalk shall remove all ice and snow at least 24 hours after the snow or other precipitation has ceased to fall to keep such walk safe for pedestrians. To maintain such conditions beyond the time provided constitutes a public nuisance and subject to penalties as provided in Ottertail City Code Chapter § 92.99.

We kindly ask for your help in keeping hydrant areas clear and accessible in case of emergencies. With the narrow rights-of-way in town, snow removal can be challenging, especially when vehicles are parked close to the roadway. Please ensure vehicles are parked well clear of snowplows so our streets can be cleared properly and hydrants remain accessible for public safety.



RECIPE **Fruit Crisp** *Yummy and super easy!*

Ingredients

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| 2 cups quick cooking oats | 1 cup butter |
| 2 cups packed brown sugar | 7-8 cups peeled and sliced apples, peaches or pears |
| 1 cup flour | dash of salt |
| 2 tsp cinnamon | |

Directions

Combine oats, brown sugar, flour, cinnamon, and salt; cut in soft butter until mixture is crumbly. Set aside. Place fruit in bottom of a 9 x 13 baking dish. Sprinkle oat mixture over the fruit. Bake 40 minutes at 350°.

Would you like to receive this newsletter digitally to your email? Let us know and we'll set you up! Email us otcity@arvig.net!



Check the City's website for forms, ordinance changes, agendas, council minutes, public notices, and other city information. A copy of the approved minutes from city council meetings can also be requested by emailing otcity@arvig.net

City Hall (218) 367-2250
Community Center (218) 367-2252
Fire & Rescue (218) 367-2250
Sheriff's Department (218) 998-8555
Emergencies 911

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2025-2026 CALENDAR

City Council Meetings

November 20 th	February 19 th
December 18 th	March 19 th
January 15 th	April 16 th

City Council Meetings generally take place at 5:30 p.m. on 3rd Thursday of every month at City Office unless otherwise posted. If you would like to be placed on the agenda, please contact City Hall the Monday before the meeting and provide your topic or concerns.

Email: otcity@arvig.net

Holidays Observed

Thanksgiving
November 27th – 28th

Christmas
December 25th

New Years
January 1st

Martin Luther King Jr. Day
January 19th

Presidents Day
February 16th

THE CITY OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED.

OTBCA & City Events

Trick or Treat // October 31st

Otter Dazzle // December 6th

Easter Egg Hunt // April 4th

Bookmobile Schedule

Stops at **Marge's Diner** from 3:15 p.m. - 3:45 p.m. For more information, visit viking.lib.mn.us/bookmobile.



October 28th
November 25th
December 9th
January 6th
February 17th
March 17th

Bridge Mobile Pantry

Comes from 1-2 p.m. on the following dates at Ottertail Community Center (103 Lake Ave, Ottertail).

October 16th
November 13th
December 11th
January 16th
February 13th
March 12th



www.thebridgepantry.org