

Village of Ford Heights



Charles R. Griffin
Mayor

April Thompson
Village Clerk

Trustees:
Ben-Ta U. Coulter
Johnny Griffin
Antonia McMichales
Steve Simpson
Jonathan Viverette
Jimmie Watson

Dear Resident (FYI):

The Village of Ford Heights Water Department bills 654 customers at the rate of \$45.00 per month for a total of \$29,430.00. The \$29,430.00 represents the Village collecting 100% of all accounts on a monthly basis. Unfortunately, only 71% of water customers pay their water bill. That reduces the amount collected to \$20,895.00 monthly. This cannot and will not continue. Everyone that receives water must pay.

The financial obligations of the water system are listed below:

City of Chicago Heights \$30,000 per month
United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) \$8,500.00 per month
City of Hammond, IN \$7,400.00 per month
Operation and maintenance \$4,450.00 per month
Administrative costs \$2,500.00 per month
Staff costs \$5,400.00 per month

Again, if the Village collected 100% of water bills, it would only collect a total of \$29,430.00. This amount does not come close to meeting the above water costs of \$58,250.00 per month. At this point the only alternative the Village had was to: **1.) Let Chicago Heights turn the water off on 3000 residents, or 2.) Raise the water rate by 80%.** The Village Board of Trustees acted responsibly by raising the water rate to insure that residents with disabilities, seniors, students, infants and other residents would continue to have access to clean water. The option that is totally off the table is returning to well water. To dig shallow wells, put a filtration system in place, purchase pumping equipment and meet IEPA regulations would cost the Village of Ford Heights over \$7.5 million dollars.

Therefore, the most responsible action the Village could take was to ask everyone involved commercial, industrial and residential users to pay a little more while helping the community by maintaining Lake Michigan water for customers.

The Village of Ford Heights has increased the current residential water rate from \$45.00 a month to \$85.00 per month. Seniors citizen will pay \$65.00, faith based and commercial users will pay \$105.00 per month. **Remember**, the Village has not ran a referendum that raise taxes or increased fees on residents in 15 years.

Now before complaining about this administration, remember prior to 2009. The Village was in terrible condition: potholes on almost every street, garbage and weeds everywhere, rodent infestation and abandon housing on every block.

This administration, along with the Mayor and Board of Trustees has resurfaced 90% of the streets, moved garbage to landfills, repaired sanitary sewers and created the first TIF district in Village history. In order to accomplish the above, the Village had to partner with local, county, state and federal agencies to acquire over \$20,000,000.00 in grants. **In addition**, the Village brought you the first commercial merchandising store, **Family Dollars**, established a park district and built the first State of the Art little league baseball field. Coming soon, will be the construction of a Community Recreation Center with a high school regulation basketball court. The Village is also confident that Fleetch Trucking, an \$8,000,000.00 project will be coming to town. This development will create 54 jobs. Currently, the Village is working on a strip mall to be located on U.S. Route 30. There are many other accomplishments that can be listed but we will save them for the future.

In closing, I ask you if the Village is better off today than it was in 2009.

Sincerely;

Charles R. Griffin
Mayor Village of Ford Heights