

A Letter to the Citizens of Galatia

From the Mayor and Board of Trustees

Dear Residents,

Over the past several years, the Mayor and Board of Trustees have worked diligently to avoid significant increases to your water and sewer rates. We understand that every household is feeling the effects of rising costs, and we have made every effort to manage the Village's finances responsibly while continuing to provide reliable water and wastewater services.

Unfortunately, we have reached a point where a rate adjustment is no longer something we can postpone.

Like every family and business, the Village has experienced substantial inflation across nearly every aspect of operating our water and sewer systems. The cost of electricity, equipment, repair parts, fuel, insurance, labor, and the finished water we purchase has increased dramatically. As just one example, the electric bill to operate the pumps that deliver water to our community exceeded **\$4,000 in a single month**.

While we have absorbed these increases for as long as possible, the cost of operating a public water and wastewater system has continued to climb. Across Illinois, the average cost of operating these systems has increased by more than **35% over the last six years**.

At the same time, much of our infrastructure is aging and must be replaced before failures become more frequent and more costly. The Village is currently working toward replacing the two water towers that serve our community. Thanks to years of planning and investment, we have already replaced most of our aging water mains, and we intend to replace the remaining older sections in the near future. These investments are essential to maintaining dependable service, protecting water quality, and reducing the likelihood of costly emergency repairs.

Many of you have also seen the growing trend of large, privately owned utility companies purchasing small, aging public water systems throughout Illinois. In many cases, those companies implement significant rate increases shortly after taking ownership, and because they are privately owned, local residents no longer have a meaningful voice in how their water system is operated.

Your Mayor and Board firmly believe that Galatia's water system is best managed by the people who live here and are accountable to the community they serve. We want to keep our water and sewer systems publicly owned and locally controlled. Doing so requires

making the investments necessary to maintain and improve the infrastructure that serves every home and business in our Village.

This was not an easy decision, nor was it one made without careful consideration. We recognize that any increase in utility costs places an added burden on our residents. However, we believe it is our responsibility to act now rather than postpone necessary improvements until they become far more expensive or jeopardize the reliability of our system.

Our commitment is to use these additional revenues responsibly—to maintain and improve the infrastructure that provides safe drinking water, dependable wastewater service, and reliable fire protection for our community. These improvements are investments not only in today's residents but also in the generations that will call Galatia home in the future.

We appreciate your understanding, your patience, and your continued support as we work together to preserve one of our community's most important public assets.

Sincerely,

The Mayor and Board of Trustees
Village of Galatia