



Newsletter

DECEMBER 2025



Commissioners Set 2026 Budget, Rates

Hartstene Pointe Water-Sewer District

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Billing Office Hours
Mondays: 9:00 am—2:00 pm
Tuesdays: 9:00 am—2:00 pm
Thursdays: 9:00 am—2:00 pm

Board of Commissioners meetings are held on the 1st & 3rd Thursdays of the month at 9:00 am in the District Office, 119 E Liberty Rd. All meetings are open to the public.

Hartstene Pointe Water-Sewer District is not associated with or governed by the Hartstene Pointe Maintenance Association. Please direct water-sewer service related questions to the District.

Hartstene Pointe Water-Sewer District is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

The Board of Commissioners adopted the 2026 budget and fee schedule, concluding a season of rigorous, lengthy budget meetings. Although several details may be readdressed as time allows, the budget is finalized and was submitted to appropriate government agencies. Below are the base rates for residential water & sewer services for 2026:

Water:	87.60
Sewer:	161.40
Total:	249.00

The base rate still includes 500 cubic feet (cf) of water consumption per month (about 3,740 gallons), with a \$5 charge assessed for each 100cf of water consumption in excess. Commissioners realize that the total increase in the combined base rate is noticeable. As mentioned previously in a newsletter and discussed in public meetings as the sewer project was introduced to the community, the increase is largely needed to ensure funds are collected by December 2026, when the first loan repayment for the construction phase is due to WA Department of Ecology (Ecology). Owners should expect a similar increase in 2027, when loan repayments for the construction phase double.

As a reminder, the need for sewer rehabilitation was well-established & documented. Pursuing it was the *only* option. Ecology agreed, appropriating low-interest loan funding and matching that with an additional \$9 million in grant funding.

What do rates pay for?

The new rates address the continuing rising costs for services, maintenance, debt repayment and support of the District's water & wastewater systems. The District is committed to your well-being and delivering quality service.

Rates pay for:

- Water & Wastewater Treatment
- Infrastructure Investment
- Personnel
- Debt Service

Any Grant Writers in the Community?

Do you have any experience procuring state or federal grants or know someone who does? The District could benefit from any contribution a consultant could provide. Without any such funding, rates must be maintained to be solvent.



General Manager's Report

Forever Chemicals



You may have heard for a while now about “forever chemicals” in drinking water, commonly called PFAS. These are man-made chemicals that have made it into the drinking water in some areas. The good news for everyone here at Hartstene Pointe is that we have tested our water on two different occasions, and there are no PFAS detected.

However, while the focus has been on PFAS in drinking water, it is becoming a concern due to its concentration in *wastewater*. While there may be none in the drinking water, it is present in almost all homes due to its prevalence in common household items. When these items are washed, PFAS go down the drain to the wastewater treatment plant. So far, there has been very little done in the way of testing or enforcement for it, but it will happen, without a doubt, as these “forever chemicals” discharge into Puget Sound.

Since it's only a matter of time before regulations are imposed on wastewater treatment plants, I'd like to start on prevention now, to be in compliance ahead of time. To do that, I'm asking for your participation. Do a little research on what items you purchase that may contain some form of PFAS (scan QR below), then see what alternatives are available. In this day and age, we are so used to having more convenience (for example, non-stick cookware), that it makes it hard to imagine anything else. It will be worth it in the long run.



—Jeff Palmer, General Manager



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Drippy the Droplet's Water-Saving Tip:

“Prepare for colder months by protecting pipes and plumbing fixtures from being exposed to freezing temperatures, especially if away for extended periods of time.

Sewer Project Updates

Contractors working on the ongoing sewer project have made a lot of progress since the outset last spring. Sewer main rehabilitation and replacements on Nantucket are complete along with repaving of affected portions of the road. CIPP lining of sewer laterals on Liberty and Barnacle are complete. Nantucket & Cutty Sark are underway and will continue to progress toward the North end on Pointes Drive East. Grinder pump installations are underway and on track.

Contractors, engineers, District representatives and an HPMA representative continue to meet on a weekly basis so that there is strong communication between all parties and each can provide status updates.

Overall project completion is anticipated to wrap up in April 2026.

SHORING SAFETY EQUIPMENT PURCHASED

Operators are specially trained to identify potential hazards while working in trenches and confined spaces. Working with water and sewer laterals, operators are regularly working in these environments. Trenches can collapse under conditions depending on soil type, temperature, moisture content and other variables. When an operator is in a trench that collapses, the situation can rapidly become very dangerous and in some cases, deadly.

When there is a need to work in trenches deeper than five feet, shoring equipment is required to be installed before any worker is allowed into the area. This provides a safer work environment that prevents collapses. In the past, any infrastructure needing repairs that was deeper than this threshold had to be outsourced.

The District procured new shoring equipment for use by in-house operators. Operators will be trained to use the equipment safely, which will not only protect them, but will save thousands of dollars on deep-trench repair work as they will no longer be outsourced to expensive contractors.

November Election Results

Congratulations to Commissioners Birgh & Swart who were elected to serve Positions 3 & 2, respectively. Commissioner Birgh will begin a six-year term in January and Commissioner Swart will fill a two-year term, after which the District will seek candidates to fill a six-year term for Position 3. Your commissioners are committed to serve the community in which they are your neighbors. Commissioners are a vital asset that have a vested interest in providing accountability and continuing to drive the vision of sustaining a quality utility District.