



7275 W. MAIN STREET, KALAMAZOO, MI 49009-9334  
269-216-5220 Fax 375-7180 TDD 375-7198  
www.oshtemo.org

January 3, 2018

«Recipient\_Name»  
«Owner\_Address»  
«City\_State\_Zip»

**Re: Notice of Sewer Availability and Mandatory Connection**  
**«Property\_Address», [Parcel ID: «Parcel\_ID»]**

Dear Property Owner:

This letter shall serve as Notice of Availability to you as the owner of property in Oshtemo Township that the public sanitary sewer system is available for connection to your property. Pursuant to Michigan Act 368 of 1978 and Oshtemo Township Code 232.008, your building is required (if within 200 feet of the right-of-way) to connect to the Oshtemo Township sewer system within 24 months of receiving this notice. This notice shall be recorded in the Official Records of the Oshtemo Township Clerk.

The payment of connection fees in accordance with current rates (adjusted annually) are due at time of connection. An application form containing a current tabulation of fees for your property is enclosed. Blank applications are available at the Township or can be downloaded (see endnote reference 1) to initiate tabulation of connection fees for other properties. Connection fees (reference 2) for a single family home range from \$9,000 to \$14,000. The Township Board realizes that this is a significant cost, and have authorized the Oshtemo Treasurer to provide an installment payment option for up to 20-years at Prime Interest Rate plus 1%. State sponsored elderly, veteran, and low-income assistance programs are explained in reference 3.

Please note that the excavation and construction work of installing the waste pipe from your home (or business) to the public sanitary sewer lead at the edge of the road is an additional private expense. You can make arrangements for this work with any licensed excavator or septic service firm. Once the sewer connection is completed, you will be required to add sanitary sewer service to your new or existing City of Kalamazoo water/sewer utility service account. Information on the City's quarterly utility service fees are provided in reference 4.

Although there is no requirement to demolish your existing septic tank or drywells during your work to connect to the public sewer, the Township does strongly recommend that you complete this demolition and remove all underground voids. It's not unusual for people to be injured or children to drown after falling into abandoned or collapsed septic tanks. Alternatively, there are options to repurpose your old septic system as identified in reference 5.

Please know that this notice and connection requirement was adopted by the Township Board only after several years of intense discussions, investigations, outreach, review of public infrastructure needs, and finance planning. The Township Board has worked hard to reduce homeowner's costs and to provide a very reasonable long-term financing option. A portion of the Township Board's work is captured in many of the references discussed and listed below.

In summary, it is in yours, the environment's, and the Community's best interests to connect to public sanitary sewer. Connecting to public sewer provides long-term economic benefit to your private home investment (reference 6). Septic systems are known to be polluting Michigan's lakes, streams, and groundwater (reference 7). More specifically, the Environmental Health Bureau of Kalamazoo County has identified that nearly 60% of the septic systems in many Oshtemo neighborhoods do not meet current standards (reference 8).

Please review this correspondence and referenced information. If you have additional questions, inquiries, or wish to submit the application form for fee tabulation, please contact Mr. Jamie Baker (voice: 269-216-5228; fax: 269-375-7180; email: [jbaker@oshtemo.org](mailto:jbaker@oshtemo.org)) at Oshtemo Township. Thank you for your cooperation.

Very truly yours,

Marc Elliott, P.E.  
Director of Public Works  
OSHTEMO CHARTER TOWNSHIP

ref: All of the references are available at:

<http://www.oshtemo.org/sewer-connection-notice/>

- (1) Sewer Connection Application Form, Oshtemo Township.
- (2) Amended and Restated Sewer Main Connection Charges.
- (3) Payment Assistance Programs.
- (4) City of Kalamazoo Water and Wastewater Rate Schedules, January 1, 2017.
- (5) Options to Repurpose an Old Septic Tank.
- (6) *Oshtemo Township Sewer System Impact Analysis*, Upjohn Institute, October 29, 2015.
- (7) *Aging Septic Systems Fouling Michigan Waters*, Detroit Free Press, January 16, 2017.
- (8) Letter, Vern Johnson, REHS, Environmental Health Director, Kalamazoo County, June 22, 2017.
- (9) Preliminary Engineering Report, Fleis&Vandenbrink (basis of application to USDA loan financing of neighborhood sanitary sewer extension project).
- (10) Summary of pre-application Public Outreach and Community Engagement.
- (11) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), *Oshtemo Board Approves Application for Federal Program Funds – Sanitary Sewer*.
- (12) Template form of this Notice.

cc: Libby Heiny-Cogswell, Supervisor  
Dusty Farmer, Clerk  
Nancy Culp, Treasurer