Answers to FAQ’s for Consumers
City of Ames Rate Survey

What Is the Rate Survey?
The City of Ames Water & Pollution Control Department annually surveys Iowa water and sewer utilities with a US Census Bureau reported population of 10,000 or more. With the information from the surveys, we then create a report of a representation of what customers of water/sewer utilities surveyed may actually pay. It includes all that would be included in a monthly billing cycle, assuming the customer had used their water and sewer. The City of Ames has been generating this report for over 15 years.

How the Survey is Calculated?
Many utilities have fees that are included in the customers’ bills such as user fees, availability fees, O & M, administrative, debt retirement, replacement costs, capital improvements, water/sewer funds, rental funds, construction costs, etc. These fees are generally charged whether a customer has any measurable usage or not. The rate survey results calculate these on a monthly billing cycle as well.

Some utilities calculate usage daily, some quarterly, but most calculate and bill monthly. Because of this, the survey is calculated by assuming monthly usage/billing for each city. Customer usage is assumed for all calculations.

All are converted into and calculated using cubic feet.

Where Does the Data Come From?
Each set of rates is calculated using the information provided by each utility, City Codes, and City Ordinances. Each set of numbers is calculated assuming customer usage, monthly, and by cubic feet; utilizing any rate steps and/or fees a utility may have in place.

Who Uses the Data Compiled?
Anyone with an interest in comparing water and sewer rates in Iowa. We sent the results to all cities surveyed, engineering firms, other interested cities who are not surveyed, and anyone who requests the report.