

Pownal Select Board raises sewer rate

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POWNAL — Rising fuel costs triggered the Select Board to raise sewer rates on Thursday. The rates are increasing annually by \$16 per hook-up.

"Fuel costs are killing us," said Select Board Chairman Nelson Brownell.

The fees, which have risen for the first time in three years, pay for operation and maintenance, according to Brownell. Residents on the town's wastewater system will now pay \$104 a quarter, which adds up to \$416 a year.

A portion of the fees pays off a five-year loan that was taken out for operation and maintenance when the wastewater system had a small amount of residents attached. That is only a small portion of the bill, though, Brownell said.

"Now we're at a point where we don't need the loan money but we need to pay off the loan," Brownell said. "We worked hard to keep this increase low."

Forcier Aldrich and Associates, the wastewater system's engineers, developed the operation budget, Brownell said. The increase is effective as of Thursday.

"The main thing is the increase in overall cost," said town auditor Clinton Hutchins, who helped develop the budget.