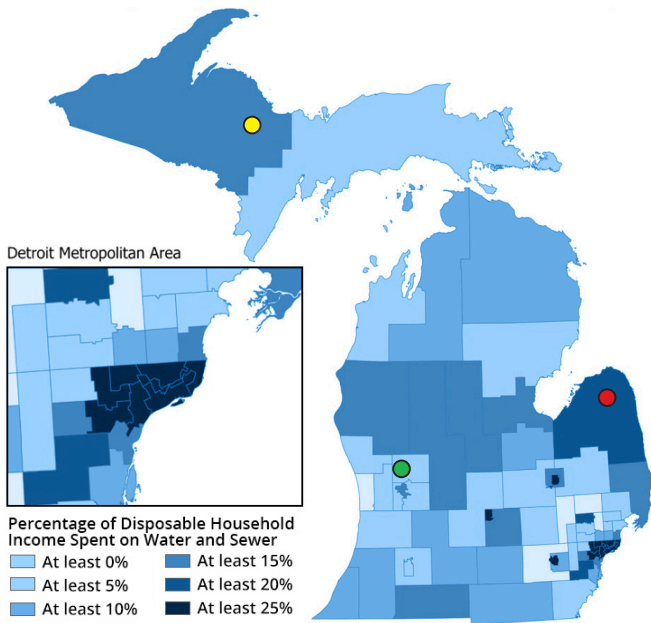


# RURAL COMMUNITIES: Safe, Affordable and Reliable Drinking Water is Possible Under Proposed Michigan Water Affordability Legislation

- **Rural communities face water affordability issues, too.**
- Smaller water utilities often **do not have programs to assist customers** who are struggling to pay their water bills or the **administrative capacity and resources** to run a standalone water affordability program.
- Across Michigan, the average cost of water went up 188% between 1980 and 2018.

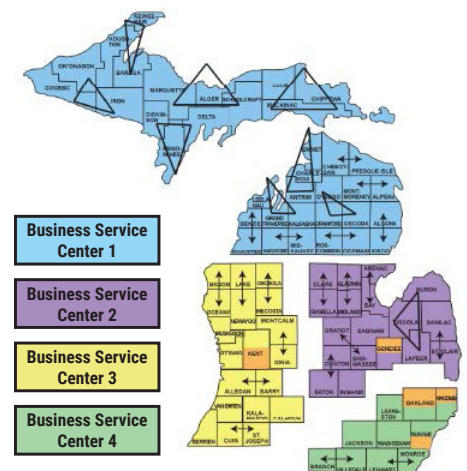


- Customers in the Huron County community of Bad Axe (population ~3,000) pay **\$155.55/month** for 4,000 gallons water and sewer.
- In Ishpeming (population ~6,000) water and sewer for that same level of consumption is **\$138.64**.
- Compare that to Grand Rapids, the state's second largest city, where residents pay **\$60.69 for the same amount** of water and sewer.<sup>1</sup>
- Rural customers experience a larger financial burden to pay for water and sewerage services.

**We can solve Michigan's water affordability problem in small and large communities alike by tackling it head on with the statewide water affordability program proposed under SB 549/HB5088.**

- SB 549/HB5088 allows low-income households in **every county to enroll in a water affordability program** and receive a **capped, discounted bill for water, sewerage, and drainage/stormwater services.**
- Income-eligible customers **under 135% of the federal poverty level (FPL)** will pay no more than **2% of household income**, and households with income between **135% to 200% of the FPL** will pay no more than **3% of household income.**
- Also, a statewide water affordability program will ensure that resources collected within four regions of the state will stay in those areas to help local families.<sup>2</sup>

Michigan Department of Health & Human Services Business Services Centers



Learn more at [miwaterplan.com](https://www.miwaterplan.com)

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.circleofblue.org/2021/world/michigans-rural-water-systems-confront-generations-of-inadequate-investment/>

<sup>2</sup> SB550/HB5089, Sec. 14t(5)