

Water Use, Restrictions & Savings: Newmarket Lawn Irrigation Analysis

Newmarket's 2025 water rates, year-round odd/even watering rules, and a seasonal savings model for typical local lawns

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COVERAGE	Town of Newmarket, Regional Municipality of York, Ontario
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Artificial Grass Newmarket Research publishes data-driven local studies on residential landscaping, water use and outdoor surfaces in Newmarket and the Greater Toronto Area. This report is provided free for information purposes.

ABSTRACT

This report assembles the Town of Newmarket's published 2025 water and wastewater rates (By-law 2024-63, Schedule A), the year-round outdoor-watering rules that apply across the town, and published outdoor-use statistics, then models how much water a typical Newmarket lawn consumes across a growing season and what eliminating that irrigation is worth. Every input is drawn from a cited public source; every modelling assumption is stated where it is used.

We find that irrigating a 500 sq ft lawn through a 24-week season uses about **27.9 m³ of treated water (roughly \$136 at Newmarket's 2025 combined rates)**; that Newmarket is **one of the few York Region municipalities whose odd/even watering rules apply year-round** rather than only in the summer window; and that while the cash case is moderate — **\$486.84 of a typical annual bill is fixed charges** no lawn decision can touch — the stronger case for turf is restriction resilience and an end to the waste the U.S. EPA puts at up to 50% of outdoor water use.

KEY FINDINGS AT A GLANCE

\$4.87/m³

combined water +
wastewater rate,
Newmarket 2025 (flat, non-
tiered)

27.9 m³

modelled seasonal
irrigation for a 500 sq ft
lawn (24 weeks)

\$136/yr

water + wastewater cost of
that irrigation at 2025 rates

Year-round

odd/even watering rules
(rare in York Region)

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1 Newmarket's water system and the 2025 rate structure

Newmarket's drinking water is a blend of Lake Ontario water and groundwater wells, supplied wholesale by York Region; only Markham, Richmond Hill and Vaughan in the region receive 100% Lake Ontario water [3]. The Town of Newmarket owns the water system and sets rates under By-law 2024-63, with NT Power (Newmarket-Tay Power Distribution) reading meters monthly and billing customers on the same bill as electricity [2][7].

Effective January 1, 2025, Newmarket's combined residential rate is **\$4.869/m³** — water at \$2.235/m³ plus wastewater at \$2.634/m³ — a 3.5% increase over 2024 [1]. Unlike the Region of Peel's tiered structure, Newmarket's rate is flat and volumetric, with no usage brackets. Each meter also carries monthly fixed charges of \$18.62 (water) and \$21.95 (wastewater), totalling **\$486.84 per year** before any water is used [1].

Table 1 — Components of a Newmarket residential water bill, 2025. Sources: [1][2].

Component	Basis	2025 charge
Water (volumetric)	flat, all metered use	\$2.235/m ³
Wastewater (volumetric)	flat, all metered use	\$2.634/m ³
Combined rate	water + wastewater	\$4.869/m ³
Fixed basic charge, water	monthly, per meter	\$18.62/mo
Fixed basic charge, wastewater	monthly, per meter	\$21.95/mo
Annual fixed total	12 months combined	\$486.84/yr

Because the rate is flat, the marginal cost of each cubic metre of irrigation is \$4.869 regardless of how much a household uses — a meaningful distinction from tiered systems where irrigation can push use into higher bands. Figure 1 puts this in proportion: roughly **\$487 of a \$623 annual bill is fixed**; the lawn's entire marginal footprint is the remaining \$136.

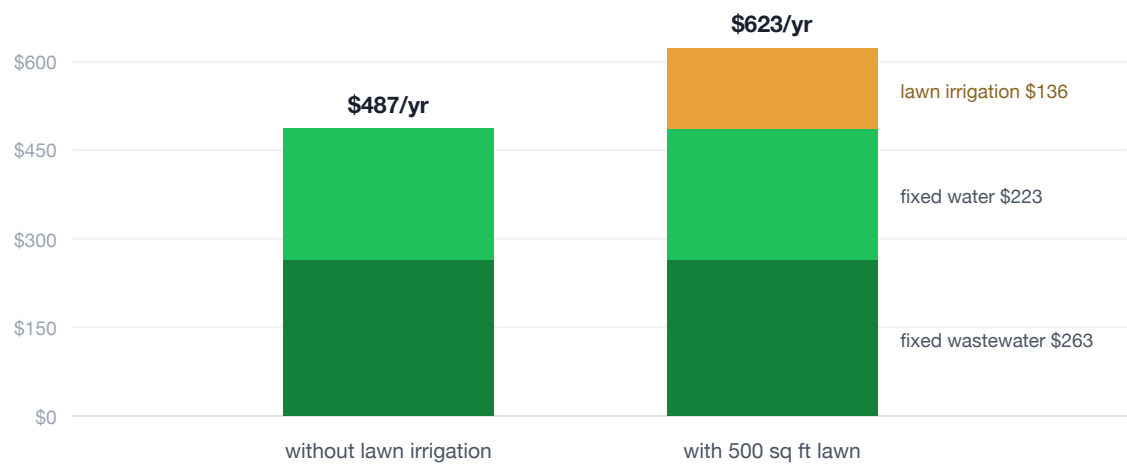


Figure 1 — Anatomy of a Newmarket water bill at 2025 rates, annualized. Only the amber segment changes when a lawn stops being watered. Derived from [1][2]; assumptions in \$M.

2 Outdoor watering rules: year-round, odd/even

Newmarket is one of the few York Region municipalities whose outdoor watering restrictions apply year-round, not just within a summer window [4]. Most neighbouring municipalities limit their rules to a May or June through September 30 season; Newmarket's persist through winter and early spring. The rules follow an odd/even calendar system tied to the address number [4]:

- Odd-numbered addresses may water lawns on odd calendar days; even-numbered addresses on even days.
- Watering is permitted only during **6–10 a.m. and 6–10 p.m.**
- New sod and seed receive a one-month grace period; newly planted trees and shrubs may be watered for 24 hours after planting.

The Town of Newmarket enforces its own outdoor water-use bylaw within the broader framework of York Region's outdoor water-use bylaws; the specific bylaw number was not confirmed in the source consulted [4].

LOCAL CONTEXT — YEAR-ROUND, NOT JUST SUMMER

Most York Region municipalities restrict watering only between May or June and September 30 [4]. Newmarket's year-round application means compliance obligations persist through winter and early spring — an important distinction for homeowners planning an irrigation system or a lawn conversion. Artificial turf needs no watering and generates no compliance risk in any season.

3 How much water a lawn actually uses

The U.S. EPA's WaterSense program puts outdoor use at **more than 30% of average household water consumption**, and estimates that as much as 50% of outdoor water is lost to wind, evaporation and runoff [5]. Ontario survey data cited by the Ontario Water Works Association shows 61% of homeowners irrigate their lawns; the 10% with automatic systems apply 95 mm of water per week versus 7 mm for the 90% watering manually [6].

For the seasonal model, this report applies the widely used horticultural guideline of **2.5 cm of water per week across a 24-week southern Ontario growing season** (May to mid-October) — a stated assumption, not a measurement (\$M). The Region of Waterloo endorses the same 1-inch-per-week guideline as sufficient for deep, healthy lawn roots [6]. That is 60 cm of depth per season, or 0.6 m³ per square metre of lawn.

Newmarket's climate softens but does not remove the need. The Toronto Buttonville station records 862.4 mm of annual precipitation, with 728.9 mm falling as rain [7]. July's average high of 27.3 °C drives evaporation between storms [7], and summer rain often arrives in intense bursts too rapid to soak in — on July 16, 2024, over 100 mm fell in a few hours across southern Ontario, causing more than \$940 million in insured damage [8].

4 The savings model for a typical Newmarket lawn

Newmarket's older neighbourhoods were built on 50-foot lots — the town's first planned subdivision, Connaught Gardens (1912–1914), was surveyed into 50-ft parcels, and Central and Old Newmarket infill today typically works with 50–91 ft frontages [9]. That translates to backyards commonly in the 300–700 sq ft range for turfed area. Table 2 applies the Section 3 model to three representative sizes; even the largest case is a meaningful household saving at Newmarket's relatively high combined rate.

Table 2 — Modelled seasonal irrigation and cost by lawn size, Newmarket 2025 rates. *Derived; assumptions in \$M.*

Lawn	Area	Seasonal irrigation	Cost/season	10-yr, undiscounted
Compact yard	300 sq ft (27.9 m ²)	16.7 m ³	≈\$81	≈\$813
Typical backyard	500 sq ft (46.5 m ²)	27.9 m ³	≈\$136	≈\$1,358
Large or deep lot	700 sq ft (65.0 m ²)	39.0 m ³	≈\$190	≈\$1,899

Two honest conclusions follow. First, the cash saving from eliminating lawn irrigation is moderate — about **\$81 to \$190 a year** at Newmarket's relatively high combined rate. Second, it is the only part of the bill a homeowner can eliminate: the fixed \$486.84 in monthly basic charges remains regardless (Figure 1). Water savings alone will not pay for a turf conversion at 2025 rates; they are one component of the broader ownership-cost case.

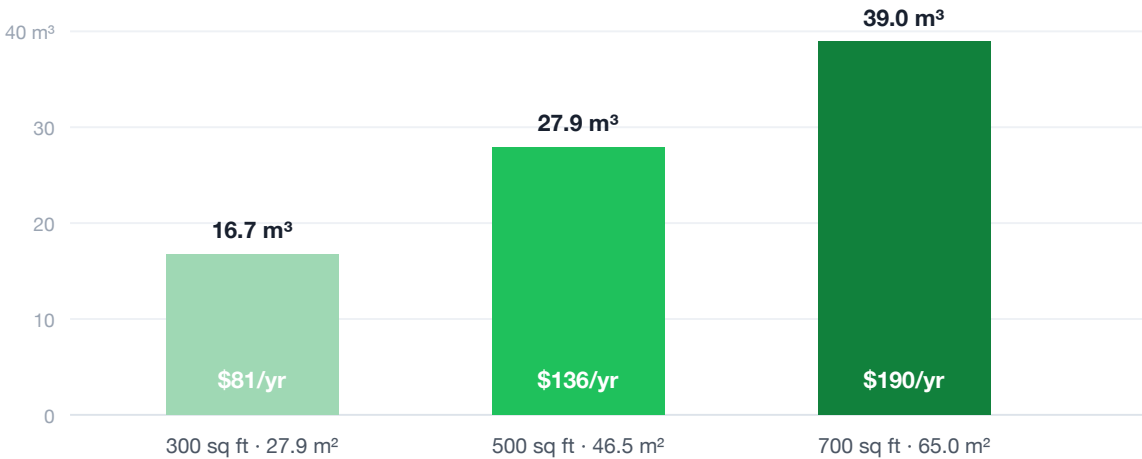


Figure 2 — Modelled seasonal irrigation volume per lawn size (bars, left axis), with the annual water + wastewater cost at Newmarket's 2025 flat combined rate of \$4.869/m³. *Derived from [1][2]; assumptions in \$M.*

5 Drought summers and restriction-proofing

Newmarket's rainfall statistics hide a timing problem. The Toronto Buttonville station records 862.4 mm of annual precipitation, well distributed across the year [7]. Yet summer rain arrives in bursts too intense for soil to absorb: on July 16, 2024, over 100 mm fell in a few hours across southern Ontario, triggering more than \$940 million in insured damage [8]; on July 3, 2026, a severe thunderstorm toppled or uprooted more than 200 trees across Newmarket and neighbouring Aurora [10]. A lawn can flood in the morning and be parched by the weekend.

In that pattern, the binding constraint on a natural lawn is rarely the bylaw — it is behavioural. Newmarket's 6–10 a.m. and 6–10 p.m. watering windows and odd/even calendar ask owners to do precisely what drought-stressed grass tempts them to ignore. Each July, the practical choice is between a browning lawn and watering outside the permitted windows. Artificial turf removes the dilemma: it needs no irrigation to stay green, it is unaffected if a temporary ban is declared, and its only water use is occasional rinsing.

Scale, honestly stated: Newmarket's 30,301 households [11] include a substantial share with private yards (75.8% homeownership [11]). If half of them irrigated a 500 sq ft lawn on this report's model, the seasonal total would be about 423,000 m³. Eliminating lawn irrigation is a household-level saving and a resilience measure, not a fix for regional supply — but it is the largest discretionary slice of residential water use the U.S. EPA identifies [5].

One caveat deserves note. Synthetic surfaces run hotter than living grass in sun, and where owners choose to cool turf by rinsing, some of the modelled saving is given back — in one arid-climate study, water-cooling artificial turf demanded as much water as natural turf [12]. Newmarket's humid, lake-moderated summers are far from arid, but the honest saving is the volume a household would genuinely have irrigated, not a theoretical maximum.

LOCAL CONTEXT — NO LAWN-REPLACEMENT REBATE IN NEWMARKET

Newmarket and York Region do not currently offer a lawn-replacement or water-wise landscaping rebate for residential properties. The closest local programs are an annual spring subsidized rain-barrel sale through Enviro World (\$79.95 including tax and delivery) and a \$100 LEAF backyard tree-planting rebate (one per property per year). Homeowners should treat any "water rebate" pitch for lawn conversion with scepticism.

M Methodology & data sources

This is a desk-research report. Published figures were collected in August 2026 from the sources listed under References: the Town of Newmarket's By-law 2024-63 Schedule A (2025 water and wastewater rates), NT Power's billing information page, York Region's outdoor water-use bylaws and municipal water-supply pages, U.S. EPA WaterSense statistics, the Region of Waterloo's outdoor water-use guidance, Environment and Climate Change Canada climate normals (Toronto Buttonville Airport, 1991–2020), The Weather Network's July 16, 2024 flood analysis, the History Hound's Newmarket subdivision history, YorkRegion.com's July 3, 2026 storm coverage, and the 2021 Census profile for Newmarket.

Stated assumptions (not sourced facts): (i) irrigation model — an actively maintained lawn receives 2.5 cm of water per week over a 24-week southern Ontario growing season, i.e. 0.6 m³ per m² per season (a widely used horticultural guideline endorsed by the Region of Waterloo); (ii) all modelled irrigation is billed at Newmarket's flat combined rate of \$4.869/m³ (wastewater is charged on all metered use per By-law 2024-63 Schedule A); (iii) lawn sizes of 300/500/700 sq ft follow the project ranges published in GTA installer guides; (iv) fixed monthly basic charges are \$18.62 (water) plus \$21.95 (wastewater), totalling \$486.84 per year; (v) ten-year figures are undiscounted nominal dollars. Derived figures combine these assumptions with the cited rates (volume = area × 0.6; cost = volume × \$4.869); changing any assumption changes the results proportionally.

Limitations

The irrigation model is a guideline-based planning estimate: real households water less, more, or not at all, and Newmarket's 862.4 mm of well-distributed annual precipitation reduces irrigation need in normal summers. EPA and Ontario Water Works Association figures are jurisdiction-wide statistics used for context, not local measurements. Wastewater is here charged on all metered water including irrigation; some municipalities apply a seasonal credit or return-flow adjustment that would lower the effective rate — the figure used is the bylaw-stated combined rate. Synthetic surfaces can run hotter than living grass, and any rinsing or cooling reduces net savings. This report is not an engineering, agronomic or financial assessment of any specific property.

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