Pearce Creek Waterline On-lot Construction

Frequently Asked Questions

ON-LOT WORK AT MY RESIDENCE

What is involved in the On-Lot Phase of Construction?
The on-lot construction will consist of the installation of a water meter at your front property line, the installation of piping from the meter to tie into your existing water system, the installation of a buried shut-off valve on your lot (Phase 1), interior plumbing as necessary to make the final connection to your indoor piping (Phase 2), and the abandonment of your well (Phase 3).

How long will the construction take to connect my home to the water system?
The construction to connect your home to the water system will occur in three phases. First phase, the contractor will install the meter and new piping which will terminate near your well line. This should take no longer than one day depending upon site conditions. Second phase, the plumber will disconnect your well line from your well, tie-in the new piping and conduct the interior plumbing. This should also take no longer than one day. Finally, the third phase, your well will be abandoned, which again, should only take one day. Depending on schedules, availability, weather, etc., the time between these phases will vary.

Will I be without water service during the installation process; if so, for how long?
You will be without water during the second phase of the on-lot construction – when the plumber is on-site disconnecting your well line and tying into the new system. It is anticipated that you will be without water for approximately 4-8 hours.

Once the on-lot hookup is completed, will water be immediately available and potable?
Yes, water will be immediately available and potable upon connection, in accordance with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) drinking water standards.

What if something is damaged during the on-lot construction; what is my recourse if something is damaged?
It is the responsibility of the contractors to take precautions to avoid damages to your residence. If damage occurs as a result of the work occurring on your lot or in your house, the contractor will be responsible for repairs. Please note that the contractor is required by the contract documents to videotape areas where work will be occurring, both outside and inside your home, prior to construction. The pre-construction video is only needed where it is anticipated that work will occur.

Will vacant lots have access to the waterline?
A waterline stub has been placed on each vacant lot to allow for future connections to the system at the owner's expense. Only dwelling units existing as of December 31, 2013 within the Pearce Creek Service Area will be connected to the water system at the expense of the Maryland Department of Transportation Port Administration (MPA).

When will all the homes be connected to the water system?
All homes are expected to be connected to the water system by April 2018; the project is estimated to take about 330 days. The contractor will attempt to prioritize full-time residents for connection in consideration of resident availability/scheduling, returned Access Agreements, logistics, and winterization of a property. Please return your Access Agreement as soon as possible to expedite the scheduling.

Who can I contact for more information regarding the on-lot construction process or if I want to discuss a unique situation at my home?
Contact Chris Rogers from AECOM at (302)-781-5945 or christopher.rogers@aecom.com.

ACCESS AGREEMENTS

What is the purpose of the Access Agreement?
The purpose of the Access Agreement is to allow temporary private property access to AECOM and the contractors to complete the on-lot installation and hook-up to the new water system, complete the interior plumbing, as well as abandon your existing well. This work cannot be done without a signed Access Agreement from the property owner.

Can I find out if AECOM received my signed access agreement?
Residents can contact Chris Rogers from AECOM at (302)-781-5945 or christopher.rogers@aecom.com to determine if their access agreements have been received.

If an Access Agreement was signed by the previous owners, and there are now new owners, will the new owners need to sign a new Access Agreement?
Yes, new owners will need to sign and submit a **new** Access Agreement. Please contact Chris Rogers from AECOM at (302) 781-5945 to receive a new Access Agreement for your signature.

CONSTRUCTION NOTIFICATIONS

How will I be notified when the contractor wants to start work on my lot?
The on-lot contractor, Reybold Construction, will contact you to schedule the three phases of the work (i.e. on-lot work, in-home work, and well abandonment).

When will I get notified of the time that the water will be cut off?
You will be notified that your water will be cut off as part of the notification of the second phase of the on-lot work, which involves the in-home plumbing work.

When will the contractors work on my lot or in my house?
The contractors will work during normal business hours (e.g. 8 am – 5 pm) during a normal work week (Monday – Friday).

Do I need to be home during the construction on my lot?

1. You do not need to be home for the first phase of the on-lot work which will involve the installation of the meter and piping as described above.
2. We do ask that you be home for the second phase of the work, which will involve in-home plumbing.
3. You will not need to be home for the third phase, well abandonment.

You will be notified by the contractor when each phase of the on-lot work will be conducted.

WATER METER AND PIPING INSTALLATION (PHASE 1)

How will the new piping tie into my existing water system?
In the vast majority of cases, the new piping will tie into the existing water line that comes from your well. In extraordinary cases, where this is impossible, the new piping will be extended into the home.

What is the purpose of the shut-off valve on my lot?
It is being installed to assist in the winterization of your homes. This is a manual shut-off and each resident will be provided a key. Another shut-off valve will be installed inside your home where the water pipe first enters your home.

How long can I expect to have an open trench in the yard?
The plan is to install the piping, have the pipe inspected and backfilled in the same day.

Will the construction contractor repair/restore my yard?
The contractor is responsible to restore your yard to original, or better, condition. The homeowner will be responsible for watering replacement vegetation as necessary.

Where will the water meter be located?
The water meter will be located in your front yard at the approximate right-of-way line of the adjacent road. The meter will be located approximately two feet behind (on the house side) the existing curb stop marker installed at each property. The water meter will be flush with the ground and covered with a lid that will be 10-12 inches in diameter.

Regarding the piping connecting the waterline to the home, what material is used and what size is it?
The piping will be copper material and either ¾ inch or 1 ½ inch depending on the property.

IN-HOME PLUMIBNG WORK (PHASE 2)

Who will be conducting the in-home plumbing work?
Reybold's contractors, which include licensed plumbers and electricians, will be performing the in-home work.

Will my existing water treatment system be removed? Who will dispose of it? Are there costs associated with disposal?
During the on-lot inspections by AECOM, you were asked if you wished to retain your water treatment system equipment after removal or have it disposed of by the contractor. If you don't remember how you answered this question, were undecided at the time of the inspections, or wish to change your mind, please notify Chris Rogers from AECOM at (302)-781-5945 or christopher.rogers@aecom.com. If residents would like to keep all or part of their treatment system connected to the new waterline, please contact Chris Rogers from AECOM with the provided information above or visit the on-site trailer to discuss the unique circumstances.

What types of in-home maintenance items will I be responsible for as a result of the new waterline connection?
After a one-year warranty period, residents will be responsible for maintaining all items beginning on the house side of the meter. Only typical plumbing fixtures, such as shut-off valves and expansion tanks will be installed, including the shut-off valve that will be installed in the yard. Any water treatment systems will be the responsibility of the owner.

WELL ABANDONMENT (PHASE 3)

Will I be able to keep my private well?
No, all wells will be abandoned during the on-lot connection process per a requirement by Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). If you have a question about well abandonment please contact Virginia Kearney, Deputy Administrator, Water Management Administration, MDE at (410) 537-3512 or virginia.kearney@maryland.gov.

What is the process of abandoning the well?
The well pump will be pulled from the well and disposed of, unless otherwise noted by the homeowner (if you would like to keep your well pump, please let Reybold Construction know when they contact you to schedule your on-lot work. Next, the casing will be cut to 2ft below grade. Lastly, concrete will be piped into the well. Residents will be contacted by the contractor before well abandonment commences. You will not need to be home for this phase.

SERVICING & BILLING

Are there any penalties if I do not connect to the water system?
Maryland statute requires that when a public water system becomes available, all adjacent homes must connect and abandon their wells. In this case, all residences located in the Pearce Creek Service Area were identified in the Cecil County Master Sewer and Water Plan Amendment as being required to connect to the Town of Cecilton's public water system due to the previous migration of degraded groundwater and subsequent adverse impacts of some residential wells adjacent to the Pearce Creek Dredged Material Containment Facility (DMCF). If a Pearce Creek Service Area resident does not connect to the system, the Cecil County Health Department will not issue future building permits for modifications to existing homes without assurance of a residence's connection to a safe and adequate water supply.

The Maryland Department of Transportation Port Administration (MPA) is funding the residential connections as well as any capping/sealing/abandonment of existing wells for property owners in the Pearce Creek Service Area. The MPA funding commitment will conclude one year after the water system is put into service. At this time, the one-year funding window is expected to close on June 30, 2018. After June 30, 2018 residents will be required to pay for their own connection, with an approximate total cost of $10,000 per residential connection and well abandonment.

How much time do I have to connect to the water system?
All MPA-funded connections to the new water supply system shall be completed within one (1) year of the date the water supply system is put into service. At this time, the one-year MPA-funding window is expected to close by June 30, 2018. After June 30, 2018 residents will be responsible for all connection and abandonment costs as mentioned above.

Who is responsible for maintaining/servicing the waterline in the road right of way?
The service provider, the Town of Cecilton, will be responsible for regular maintenance and servicing of the waterline in the road right-of-way, including meters.

How will I know how much water I used?
A Town of Cecilton representative will be reading every water meter quarterly to determine water usage per residence.

How will I be billed for water and what can I expect in terms of cost? Will billing start upon installation?
Residents will be billed quarterly by the Town of Cecilton upon installation. Residents of the Pearce Creek Service Area will be charged the same rates as the residents of the Town of Cecilton. The Town's rate structure includes both a base rate and usage rate. For example, the Town's water rate for fiscal year 2018 (beginning July 1, 2017) is as follows:

Per Quarter - Base rate of $68.91 for first 5,000 gallons and $9.18 for each 1,000 gallons thereafter. For those residents who may winterize their home and not use any water in a particular quarter, they would still be responsible for payment of the base rate of $68.91. It is current Town policy to increase rates 2% every year.

In addition to the fees described above, the Town of Cecilton will charge an additional fire hydrant recoupment fee specific to each community, which will be included in the quarterly water bill; residents can pay their total hydrant fee in full at any time *(Note: All undeveloped lots will be responsible for paying the hydrant fee as well. If you have an undeveloped lot that has been deemed unbuildable by the Cecil County Health Department due to failed percolation testing, please provide this documentation to the Town and the unbuildable lot(s) will not be subject to the hydrant fee)*. Residents will not be responsible for the water used by the fire department. For more information regarding this fee, please contact Chris Rogers from AECOM at (302)-781-5945 or christopher.rogers@aecom.com.

GENERAL WATER INFORMATION

Will the water pressure be adequate?
Yes, the water pressure will generally be between 40-50 pounds per square inch (PSI), which meets adequate pressure per the plumbing code. If residents wish to enhance their pressure, a booster pump can be installed at the owner's expense.

Will the chlorine in public drinking water affect my septic system?
There will be no effect of the chlorine from the water on the septic systems. The chlorine residual will be about 0.2 parts per million and has shown no adverse impacts to other in-town homes that have septic systems and utilize Town water.

Homeowners are responsible for their own septic system maintenance and repair. Many factors impact septic systems which could cause failure or require an increase in how often the system is pumped. High volumes of water, as well as a variety of solids and/or household cleaning products can be detrimental to a septic system[1]. The amount and type of chlorine present in public drinking water systems will not disrupt or kill the beneficial bacterial in the septic tank[1]. Likewise, at homes in which the water supply is not potable due to bacterial contamination, a chlorinator can be installed to serve as a temporary solution; systems with properly operated chlorinators will not harm the septic system[2].

[1] Huber, J. (2016). Caring for your septic system. Retrieved from https://www.houselogic.com/organize-maintain/home-maintenance-tips/caring-for-your-septic-system/

[2] InspectApedia. (2015). Chlorine in drinking water: Effects of water chlorinators on septic systems. Retrieved from http://inspectapedia.com/septic/Chlorine_Impact_on_Septic.php

Where can I find water quality information for the Town of Cecilton's water?
Information regarding the water quality for the Town of Cecilton can be found here: http://www.mde.maryland.gov/programs/Water/Water_Supply/ConsumerConfidenceReports/Documents/CCR2016/Cecil/0070004_Town_of_Cecilton.pdf
Information on the Town of Cecilton's water can also be found on the Pearce Creek Outreach website: http://www.pearcecreekoutreach.com/WaterSystem.html

If I have a backwash system will the water from my home be backwashed into the new water system?
No, there is a check valve in the meter box that will not allow water to backwash.