

PFAS Remediation Water Extension Project

Updated 2.08.23

The Burger/Goodwood Neighborhood water extension project is about to begin! The project engineers are finalizing the project timeline with the contractor now, but the project is expected to begin in early April. Watch the project website for updated information. In the meantime, the most common questions we are receiving about the project are related to residents connecting to the system. Below you will find answers to some of the most common inquiries. It should also be noted that, due to the nature of the project, the answers below can change week-to-week or even day-to-day. We will update this page whenever there is new information available.

WHEN CAN I CONNECT TO THE WATER SYSTEM?

The connection process will take place in three phases. Residences that are located along the existing main have been eligible to connect since Fall 2022. If you live along this section but haven't connected yet, please contact one of the plumbers ASAP. The residential connection process is beginning now for residences in Phase I of the project that are having watermain installed in front of their home this year. We encourage you to reach out to one or both of the plumbing contractors ASAP to get the process started. By making contact early, the plumber can identify and resolve any possible connection issues prior to the installation of the water main. All residents living in Phase I of the project will also receive communication containing this information by mail.

While Phase II is currently under design, it is expected those connections will begin in Spring 2024.

DO I HAVE TO CONNECT TO THE SYSTEM?

At this time the Township has not adopted a ground water use restriction ordinance that would require residents to connect. However, the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) is still determining what regulations may be necessary to remediate the PFAS contamination in the area as part of their conversations with the airport. It is very likely the Township will be asked to consider such an ordinance in the future, possibly as soon as this spring/summer. This type of ordinance has been adopted in other areas where groundwater has been contaminated by PFAS, with Plainfield and Algoma Townships as two of the most recent examples.

CAN I KEEP MY WELL FOR IRRIGATION PURPOSES?

As mentioned above, the Township has not yet adopted a groundwater use restriction ordinance and is waiting for direction from EGLE before the next steps can be taken. It is likely that any ordinance under consideration would have a well exception process for irrigation, similar to what was passed in the areas affected by the Wolverine Worldwide contamination in Plainfield and Algoma Townships. In the meantime, if a resident chooses to keep their well for irrigation and connect the rest of their property to city water, they are responsible for all costs for any modification necessary to continue using the well for irrigation and these costs will not be reimbursed if the well needs to be abandoned in the future.

WHAT ARE THE DOWNSIDES TO KEEPING MY WELL FOR IRRIGATION PURPOSES ONLY?

If there is PFAS in your water, this is not a good idea. While PFAS doesn't break down easily, it easily travels into grass, plants and gardens. Also, humans come into contact with irrigation water. The safest course is to take advantage of the well capping and close your well if you know or have any suspicion that there is PFAS in the well water.

CAN I WAIT TO CONNECT UNTIL THERE IS MORE CLARIFICATION ON THE REQUIREMENTS?

Absolutely. If you want to wait until the final rules and regulations are in place for connection, you can do that. In the meantime, the Township and County have provided several interim clean-water solutions that are outlined below. Once the final rules and regulations are in place, the Township will send a communication directly to homeowners outlining the rules and providing a timeline for any required connections.

WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR CONNECTION?

Through a competitive bidding process, the City of Grand Rapids has approved the following companies as plumbers for making the private service connections:

McDonald Plumbing

Attn: Grace Thumser

(616) 698-6771

gthumser@mcdonaldplumbing.com

BRIK Plumbing

Attn: Kraig Keegstra

(616) 277-1561

kraig@brikplumbing.com

At this time, all project area residents that already have watermain installed in front of their house and residents located in Phase I of the project are eligible to contact the approved plumbers to schedule a connection. If you are unsure whether or not your home is in the eligible area, you can contact the project team at goodwoodwater@gmail.com for clarification. The plumbers have also been provided with a list of homes that are eligible to connect at this time.

Here is the process that will be followed for connections:

- The property owner can coordinate with one or both of the pre-approved plumbing companies and select the company that they feel most comfortable working at their house.
- The plumbing company will provide Prein & Newhof (P&N) and the City of Grand Rapids with a property specific quotation form. This information will also be available to the property owner.
- P&N will coordinate with the City of Grand Rapids to review the property specific quotation form and verify that it is in line with the costs received at the time of bidding.
- Once verification of pricing is validated, the plumbing company will be approved to complete the work.
- The plumbing contractor will coordinate with both the City of Grand Rapids and Cascade Township for required inspections.
- After completion of the work, the plumbing company must compile and submit all required paperwork to P&N and the City of Grand Rapids for review and payment.

- The City of Grand Rapids will approve payments to be made directly to the plumbing company.

Please note that each connection is unique and there may be questions you have or issues specific to the connection at your home. Please discuss all those issues with your selected plumber and they will review with the project team to determine what is included in the project costs.

PROJECT RESTORATION CONTRACTORS

Cascade Township and the City of Grand Rapids are committed to restoration of the project area and leaving the neighborhood in the best condition possible, once the project is complete. If you have specific contractors that you use for services such as landscaping, irrigation or underground fencing, please forward the contact information to goodwoodwater@gmail.com. Please be sure to include your address when sending the information.

WHAT ARE MY OPTIONS FOR CLEAN WATER UNTIL I AM ABLE TO CONNECT?

Cascade Township and the Kent County Health Department have approved several options for clean water until the public water main project is complete.

If you have a positive PFAS test above the MCL limit: The Township has committed to providing a whole house filtration system at no cost to you, including periodic maintenance. If you are interested in this service, please contact Culligan Water – Grand Rapids at 616-791-7150. They have been given a list of households that qualify for this service based on the testing completed by the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE). If you have a PFAS above the MCL limits that was done by an entity other than EGLE, you can provide it to Township Manager Ben Swayze at bswayze@cascadetwp.com to be added to the list.

If you have a positive PFAS test at any level: The Kent County Health Department is providing free point-of-use filters, including installation and periodic filter changes. If you are interested in this service, please contact the Kent County Health Department at 616-632-7100 or KCPFAS@kentcountymi.gov.

If you live in the PFAS contamination area: The Township has committed to providing bottled water service up until homes are able to connect to the public water system, whether or not they have had a positive PFAS test. If you are interested in bottled water service, please contact Culligan Water – Grand Rapids at 616-791-7150.

If you don't see your question/answer above, you can always reach out to the project email address at goodwoodwater@gmail.com.