



## Barrington Lakes—Water Service: Frequently Asked Questions

### **BARRINGTON LAKES: WATER IMPROVEMENTS**

Central Iowa Water Association (CIWA) will assign its water service agreement with Barrington Lakes to the City of Dubuque (City). On or before December 31, 2016, Barrington Lakes must decide whether it wants to receive City water or opt out of that agreement. If Barrington Lakes decides to use City water, a schedule will be developed to connect directly to the City's municipal water system. City staff will meet with Barrington Lakes residents to discuss the option.

#### **What happens if Barrington Lakes does not choose City water?**

Barrington Lakes retains ownership of the water system. As the owner of a private water system, Barrington Lakes is responsible for the maintenance, repair, and operation of the water system in compliance with all applicable county, state, and federal requirements.

If Barrington Lakes chooses not to receive City water, the City of Dubuque would have no responsibility for any aspect of the water system's operation, maintenance, or compliance. If Barrington Lakes wishes not to receive water from the City, it must notify the City on or before December 31, 2016.

The City acknowledges that Barrington Lakes has paid CIWA through January 31, 2017. As a result, even if Barrington Lakes chooses not to receive City water, the City will monitor and operate the Barrington Lakes system for any amount of time up to and including January 31, 2017 while Barrington Lakes makes alternative water service arrangements. The City will provide this service at Barrington Lakes' request.

#### **What happens if Barrington Lakes chooses City water?**

If Barrington Lakes chooses to receive City water, the City's Water Department will operate Barrington Lakes' private water system. The City of Dubuque becomes responsible for the maintenance, repair, and operation of the water system in compliance with all applicable county, state, and federal requirements. Barrington Lakes' water system will operate as is until connected to the City's water system, but under the City's ownership, operation, and maintenance. Connection to the City's water system will occur on or before December 31, 2017. Once connected to the City's system, Barrington Lakes will receive City water through the Barrington Lakes distribution system.

A schedule will be developed to connect the Barrington Lakes water system to the City's municipal water.

#### **What happens then?**

The only change for property owners is the improved water service provided by the City of Dubuque. Septic systems remain private. All other service costs remain the same. Property taxes remain the same. Public safety services continue to be provided by the Dubuque County Sheriff's Department and the Centralia-Peosta Fire Department. Refuse collection and snow removal remain private services. Street maintenance and repair remain private expenses. The City of Dubuque will provide no other services to Barrington Lakes, nor will it have any other presence in the Barrington Lakes development.

**What will I pay for City water?**

If Barrington Lakes decides to receive City water, Barrington Lakes residents will be billed at its current billing rate of \$24.00 per month until the Barrington Lakes system is connected to the City's water system. Rather than billing bi-annually as the CIWA did, however, the City will bill on a monthly billing cycle. In other words, your bi-annual bill will be divided into smaller \$24.00 monthly payments.

The City is aware that Barrington Lakes' residents paid CIWA for water service through January 2017. The City will not bill Barrington Lakes' residents for the time period CIWA has already billed and collected. Barrington Lakes residents would receive the first City water bill in mid-March, 2017, and the bill would reflect the \$24.00 charge for water used in February 2017.

Once the Barrington Lakes system is connected to the City water system and water meters are installed, Barrington Lakes residents will be billed at 1.5 times the standard rate charged to residential water customers in the city of Dubuque for the actual amount of water used at the residence. The typical Dubuque household of four uses 6,000 gallons of water per month, and the average monthly water bill is \$29.53. The service fee at 1.5 times the standard rate equates to \$44.30 per month for 6,000 gallons of water. These numbers reflect the current fiscal year 2017 water rate.

**Do I have to sign a pre-annexation agreement to receive City water?**

No, Barrington Lakes property owners do not need to sign pre-annexation agreements to receive City water. The City presently has no plans to annex Barrington Lakes. This transaction is a water system purchase only. The agreement between the City and CIWA states:

Unless the customers described herein, or their successors in interest, voluntarily sign a petition for annexation, the present Dubuque City Council agrees that it will not attempt to annex such customers prior to January 1, 2018. Dubuque does not have any present plan or intention to annex the property owned by customers described herein. The present Dubuque City Council states as a matter of policy, and in a good faith effort to resolve pending litigation regarding such customers, that the City of Dubuque should not annex such customers via either an involuntary or 80/20 annexation proceeding.

If the city council of the City of Dubuque changes its policy, CIWA would have no right to claim the City breached this agreement.

**Do I need a City water meter?**

Yes, if Barrington Lakes decides to receive City water, the City will install water meters on property owners' internal plumbing. The meter will be installed by a licensed plumber at no cost to the property owner. The City will contract this service with a local plumbing company for all customers in the existing Barrington Lakes customer area. A one inch diameter or smaller water meter (one per service line) will be provided to property owners by the City at no expense.

**Will I have a water connection fee to connect to City water?**

If Barrington Lakes chooses to receive City water, Barrington Lakes residents, or properties located within the current Barrington Lakes subdivision, will not be charged connection fees to receive City water.

### **Who maintains the water service lines?**

The City Water Department maintains the water mains (typically located in the street). Property owners maintain the private water service lines (running from the control valve (stop box) to a house or building) servicing their property.

#### Control Valve (stop box) and Valve Boxes:

The covers of stop boxes and valve boxes must be the same height as the sidewalk or the surrounding ground. Property owners must ensure that stop boxes must be readily accessible at all times.

#### Maintenance of Control Valve (stop box) by Property Owner:

The curb box and control valve (stop box) must be in good condition and ready for use at all times. If a property owner does not maintain the stop box in proper condition, if the stop box fills up with debris, or if the control valve (stop box) needs repair at any time, the City will clean or repair the stop box or shutoff without giving notice to the property owner. The City's cleaning and repair exceed routine operation and maintenance, and the cost will be billed to the property owner. If the property owner refuses to pay those costs, water service may be turned off until payment is made.

#### Installation and Maintenance at Expense of Property Owner:

All service connections from the control valve (stop box) to a house or building are installed and maintained at the expense of the property owners served by those connections.

### **What is the quality of City water?**

The Water Department is dedicated to producing and delivering drinking water that complies with all state and federal drinking water standards. As regulations and drinking water standards change, Dubuque continually strives to adopt new and better methods of delivering the best quality drinking water. Dubuque commits to incorporate these changes system-wide in an expeditious and cost-effective manner.

The Eagle Point Water Treatment Plant is supplied by five shallow and four deep wells and does not use water from the Mississippi River. The Water Department delivers high-quality water that complies with all standards set forth by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Over 200 tests a day are performed by water treatment plant operators.

In addition to these tests, the Dubuque Water & Resource Recovery Center Laboratory performs over 60 bacteriological analyses of City drinking water on a monthly basis. Other compliance-related testing is performed by the University of Iowa Hygienic Laboratory and Keystone Laboratories. All these analytical measures ensure that the City water reaching your home is safe to drink.

### **Do I need a water softener?**

Dubuque water customers do not need to soften their water. The Eagle Point Water Treatment Plant is a lime softening plant. Starting with groundwater that is virtually free of sediment, the lime softening process reduces the total hardness from about 280 mg/L to 100 mg/L. The estimated savings on softening costs for a recipient of Dubuque water is \$17.60 per month, or \$211.20 per year, including electricity and amortization costs of the softening unit.

For more information on City water services, call (563) 589-4291 or visit [www.cityofdubuque.org/Water](http://www.cityofdubuque.org/Water)