



## English Mills—Water Service: Frequently Asked Questions

### **ENGLISH MILLS: WATER IMPROVEMENTS**

Central Iowa Water Association (CIWA) will assign its water service agreement with English Mills Properties, LLC (English Mills) to the City of Dubuque (City). English Mills will have until December 31, 2020, to decide whether they want to receive City water or opt out of that agreement.

#### **What happens if we do not choose City water?**

Property owners in the unincorporated areas of Dubuque County are free to develop their own private wells. The Dubuque County Health Department and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources require an application and permit for well installation. Applicants need to follow these requirements if installing a well.

#### **What happens if we choose City water?**

If English Mills chooses to receive City water, the City's Water Department will provide a City public water main in the right of way of English Mill Road adjacent to English Mills. English Mills may choose the location(s) at which it connects to that water main. This public water main installation is scheduled for completion on or before December 31, 2017. At the time of connection, English Mills property owners will pay applicable water tap fees.

Alternatively, if English Mills does not subdivide the acreage but instead becomes a single dwelling with large acreage, the City will provide water service as stated above.

The City of Dubuque will be responsible for the maintenance, repair, and operation of the public water system in the right of way in compliance with all applicable county, state, and federal requirements. All other water service lines remain private unless dedicated to and approved by City Council.

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

The only change for the 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 English Mills through this transaction, nor will it have any other presence in English Mills through this transaction.

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

Once you connect to the City's water system, you will be billed at 1.5 times the standard rate charged to residential water customers in the city of Dubuque. The typical Dubuque household of four uses 6,000 gallons of water monthly, 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 rates.

At the time of connection, you will have water meters monitoring your actual usage, so you will be billed at 1.5 times the regular City rate for actual water used.

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

No, English Mills property owners do not need to sign pre-annexation agreements to receive City water. The City presently has no plan to annex the English Mills properties. 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.

**Will I have to pay a connection fee?**

No. Although English Mills property owners will be required to pay the tap fee at the time of connection, English Mills properties as they presently exist will not pay connection fees upon connection to City water service.

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

As you prepare for connection to the City's public water main, the City will install a one-inch diameter or smaller water meter (one per service line) at no expense to the property owner. This installation will be performed for all property owners located within the current English Mills customer area.

**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 water mains 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 are readily accessible at all times.

**Maintenance of Control Valve by Property Owner:**

The control valve (stop box) must be in good condition and ready for use at all times. If a property owner does not maintain such box and shutoff 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, including the corporation cock, 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)