



City of Tarpon Springs, Florida

Project Administration Department
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Project Update #2 – Westwinds and Grassy Point Residential Reclaimed Water Project

Dear Westwinds and Grassy Point Residents:

This courtesy letter is to provide an update to those residents that will have City of Tarpon Springs reclaimed water available. The construction phase of the project began in June and at this point, is progressing on schedule. To restate the project's scope, the City's contractor is currently installing new reclaimed water distribution lines and associated improvements to serve approximately 310 residential customers in the Westwinds and Grassy Point communities. Funding is being provided by the City along with portions covered by a grant from the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD). Additional general information on reclaimed water, including the agreement required of all customers can be found on the City's website here:

<https://www.ctsfl.us/reclaimed.htm>

To keep everyone better informed with up to date project information please consider opting into our free text messaging service we set up specifically for the project. If you live in the Westwinds subdivision, please text WESTWINDS to 43506. If you live in the Grassy Point subdivision, please text GRASSY to 43506.

In this courtesy update we have updated several relevant Frequently Asked Questions to more appropriately address issues related to the construction phase of the project.

Project Questions and Answers

1. Does the City require reclaimed water connection? If not, how does the City ensure participation?

The City does not require connection to reclaimed water. It is our belief that participation will be ensured by two factors: (1) the economic advantage: depending on usage and configuration, irrigating with reclaimed water is up to 15 times less costly than irrigation with potable water service; and (2) convenience: reclaimed water is not subject to the same strict watering restrictions imposed by the City or the SWFWMD for all other sources, including wells or ponds. Please note that the City has its own watering restrictions that generally limit watering to once per week for all water sources except for reclaimed water (which is voluntary capped at twice per week).

2. If I don't connect to the reclaimed water system, am I still having to pay for this project somehow?

Many communities use a property tax assessment (added to a homeowner's annual property taxes) to pay for construction costs for projects like this. The City of Tarpon Springs has been able to

avoid doing so by using a combination of funding from the City's water/sewer utility and from grant funding from the State through the SWFWMD. This means that if you don't want to connect, you don't pay anything. If you do want to connect, please refer to the connection charges described herein.

3. What are the costs associated with connecting to the City's reclaimed water system?

Currently, a one-time fee of \$350 will be charged to install a reclaimed water meter to connect into the City's reclaimed water transmission pipes. A \$40 security deposit for the service meter is also required. These fees cover the cost of the new meter and inspection of the system for proper connections. Please keep in mind, the subsequent connection of an existing or new irrigation system (including any costs associated with such) to this new City meter is the responsibility of the homeowner.

The City does not provide recommendations for specific plumbing or irrigation companies that the homeowner may consider hiring to connect their irrigation system to the City's reclaimed meter. Please see additional information in Question #6.

4. What are the savings irrigating with reclaimed water?

As of October 1, 2018, the rate for reclaimed water will be \$0.99 per thousand gallons of usage plus a \$3 monthly backflow preventer base charge. A comparison of using 10,000 gallons in a month for irrigation is provided below for different water sources. The costs shown in the table represent what could be expected in addition to a typical water bill for average use within a home.

Water Source	Average Monthly Cost of Irrigating with 10,000 gallons*
<i>Reclaimed Water</i>	<i>\$ 13</i>
<i>Potable Water (Irrigation Meter)</i>	<i>\$ 94</i>
<i>Potable Water (Water Meter)</i>	<i>\$178</i>

**This is the additional cost of irrigation over a typical water bill*

5. Will those with existing City irrigation meters be provided some sort of credit for converting from potable irrigation meter to reclaimed meter?

*If a customer has an existing irrigation meter in service, they can contact the City's Utility Billing Department to request removal of the irrigation meter. Reimbursement of the \$60 deposit that was paid by the homeowner to the City when the meter was installed will then be credited to the customer's account. Please note that a customer cannot have both an irrigation meter **and** a reclaimed water meter installed at the same time.*

6. Will there be a way to coordinate placement of service/meter box? We would like to coordinate with existing communications equipment and services, if possible.

We plan to install the boxes in the most accessible location within a utility easement, expected to be between the sidewalk and the street. Often this leaves limited options for placement; however, consideration will be made if there is sufficient room to position the service meter box in a location more suitable to facilitate subsequent installation to an in-ground irrigation system. In certain circumstances, a field adjustment to the meter location may be considered as long as the

Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (FDEP) minimum separation from the water supply requirements are met.

7. Will private connections to irrigation systems be inspected by the City? How will this private connection construction quality be ensured, i.e. proper depth of excavation, workmanship, materials? Does this provide a risk to the public utility?

A homeowner has several options available to them:

- a. *Homeowner-installed system, City permit applied for by homeowner: Homeowners have the option to complete the connection from the City system (reclaimed water meter) to their private irrigation system. The homeowner can apply for a City Building Permit. The homeowner would be obligated to complete the work. With this option, the homeowner is acting as the contractor and assuming the liability associated with the project work.*

- b. *Plumber-installed system, homeowner permitted: Homeowners have the option of hiring a licensed plumber to complete the connection from the City system (reclaimed water meter) to their private irrigation system. The homeowner can apply for a City Building Permit on behalf of the plumber. The homeowner would be obligated to hire a licensed plumber to complete the work. With this option, the homeowner is acting as the contractor and assuming the liability associated with the project work.*

- c. *Plumber-installed system, plumber-permitted: Homeowners have the option of hiring a licensed plumber to complete the connection from the City system to the homeowner's private irrigation system. The homeowner can request that the licensed plumber apply for a City Building Permit to complete the installation. Under this option, the licensed plumber is assuming the liability associated with the project work.*

It should be noted that all available options require a City permit and inspection to ensure no cross-connection with the City's potable water lines.

8. What will be the route of the reclaimed water line and will tree roots be considered in routing?

The route has been influenced by survey, soils conditions, trees/roots, underground conflicts, and other factors. The presence of tree roots has influenced the choice of construction method, including extensive use of directional boring.

9. Will the project require removal of existing turf, pavement, sidewalk, or driveways? If so, how will this be addressed?

The City attempted to choose routes that would require the least disruptive construction activities. However, removal of some of these items is unavoidable. In those cases, the City will require the contractor to restore such items to meet or exceed pre-existing conditions. Turf will be replaced with sod that reasonably matches pre-existing turf type(s).

10. We have utility locate flags scattered over our yard. Is it OK to remove them?

It is OK to temporarily remove the flags to maintain your yard/lawn, but we ask that residents replace the utility locate flags after mowing in the same locations from where they were removed. The locations of underground utilities is obviously quite important to avoid damaging them during installation and causing service interruptions and, of course, for the safety of the workers. Florida State Statute 556 requires these locate flags to remain in place.

Even though the contractor may have appeared to have moved out of an area following pipe installation, the individual service connections may still need to be installed. Also, pressure testing and other activities still require the flags and markings to remain onsite.

The contractor will remove all flags when all work in that area is completed.

We apologize for the inconvenience. Please know that our contractor is sensitive to this and is working quickly and doing their best to minimize inconveniences.

11. When will the project be completed?

Construction began in late June 2018 and is expected to continue for approximately 10-12 months, resulting in an estimated project completion during spring/early summer of 2019. The contractor is currently ahead of schedule and we are hopeful that the project will be completed faster than projected.

12. When the construction project is finally finished, what are the next steps I need to complete to begin irrigating with City reclaimed water?

- a) *Complete a Utility Availability Statement (UAS) found on our City website here: <http://www.ctsfl.us/utility%20availability%20statement.htm>*
- b) *You will be notified upon the City approval. Bring the now approved UAS & driver's license to Utility Billing (next to City Hall) at 412 North Ring Avenue; (727) 942-5609*
- c) *Pay Meter (\$350) & Deposit fee (\$40) at the City Clerk's office*
- d) *Internally, a work order will then be generated to install the new reclaimed meter*
- e) *Coordinate with a licensed plumber/landscaper (or homeowner themselves) to hook up your home's irrigation system piping to the reclaimed water meter.*

We will continue to provide status updates. Thank you for your continued patience, and ongoing cooperation.

If you would like to view additional information please visit <http://www.ctsfl.us/projects.htm> and scroll down to the Westwinds/Grassy Pointe reclaimed water project section.

If you have any project related questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Nick Makris, the City's Project Site Supervisor at (727) 942-5638 or at nmakris@ctsfl.us.