

Fairmont Subdivision of Lockport Township Water & Sewer System transfer to

City of Joliet Public Utilities

Frequently Asked Questions

Why are my water and sewer services being transferred to the City of Joliet? The City was approached by concerned Fairmont residents as an alternative to sale of the system to Aqua Illinois. Upon discussions with Lockport Township, Will County and the City an agreement was reached to transfer ownership of the system.

What day will the transfer be complete? As of November 1, 2019, the City of Joliet Public Utilities will be acquiring the water and sewer systems within the Fairmont Subdivision of unincorporated Lockport Township. Joliet will take over ownership, operation and maintenance of the water & sewer infrastructure within the public right-of-way, including the wells, water tower and lift stations.

Where will my water come from? Initially, your water source will not change, and the City will operate the existing Township wells while corrosion control studies required by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency are completed. Once the studies are completed and we have approval from IEPA, the existing township wells will be abandoned, and the system will be fed from the City of Joliet water system consisting of a combination of deep and shallow wells.

Do I have to set up an account with the City of Joliet? Each resident or water customer will be required to fill out an application for water and sewer service in order to establish an account for billing purposes, much like you do as a new resident. In addition, the owner of the property will be required to sign a service agreement form stating they will comply with the terms and conditions of receiving service from the City of Joliet.

Do I have to pay the \$125 application fee mentioned in the Application for Water & Sewer Service? Initially, the City will not charge the \$125 deposit for any accounts already in the tenant's name. However, any new tenant accounts after December 1st will be subject to the \$125 deposit.

Will my water still be metered with my existing water meter? No, your existing water meter will be replaced with a new Sensus meter that will work with the City of Joliet billing system. Until the meter is replaced, water customers will receive a flat rate utility bill of \$65. Once you are contacted by the City's contractor, you will have 90 days to schedule the appointment to have the new water meter installed, or the flat rate bill will be increased to \$150. If you fail to get the water meter replaced within an appropriate amount of time, the City of Joliet may shut your water off until the appointment is made. **The 90-day timeframe will not begin until notices are sent out to customers to contact the contractor and schedule your appointment.**

When will I get my first bill? The first City of Joliet water bill should arrive in the beginning of December. Since the transfer occurs on November 1, the billing cycle will be monthly from the 1st to the 1st.

When will I get my final bill from Lockport Township? Final billing will be sent on November 1, 2019 for services through October 31st.

- **What about past-due amounts due to the Township?**
- **What happens to the \$7.50 surcharge that we have been paying to Lockport Township?**
- **What happens to deposits that were made to Lockport Township?**

These questions should be directed to Lockport Township.

Can I pay my bill online? Yes, online bill pay is available through Paymentus via a link on the City of Joliet Website <https://ipn.paymentus.com/cp/cjlt>. There is a small service charge for online bill pay.

Does the City of Joliet have Direct Debit for water bill payments? Yes, the application for automatic bank draft payments is also available on the City of Joliet Website at <https://www.joliet.gov/home/showdocument?id=1792>. This option is free of additional charges.

Are there other payment options available? other options for paying your bill include:

- Electronically through your bank's online bill pay
- U.S. Mail to PO Box 5001 Joliet, IL 60434-5001
- Automated Phone Service available 24 hours a day (877)811-3799
- In person at City Hall or at local bill payment centers, closest being the Collins Street Currency Exchange at 405 Ward Ave, Joliet
- Drop box outside of City Hall

Will my water bill go up? Until the water meter is replaced, all water customers will pay a flat rate water bill of \$65/month. This amount was calculated based on a minimum utility bill currently charged by Lockport Township. Once the meter is replaced, you will pay the City of Joliet's non-resident utility rates. The 2019-20 utility rates (effective as of 11/01/2019) are available on the City of Joliet website at <https://www.joliet.gov/departments/customer-services/current-utility-rates>

Do I have to annex to the City of Joliet to get water and sewer service? No, the intergovernmental agreement entered into by the City of Joliet, Will County and Lockport Township allows for connection to the City of Joliet Utility without the need to annex to the City of Joliet. Non-resident utility rates will be used to calculate the monthly bill.

Will my water taste different? The City of Joliet water supply comes from groundwater wells, much like the water that you previously received from Lockport Township. However, the City of Joliet water supply is mostly deep wells which require a different treatment process, this may result in a slightly different taste, but will be undetectable to most people.

Will I still need to use my water softener? Yes. The City of Joliet water supply still contains "hardness" or minerals such as iron and calcium, even after the treatment process.

Who do I contact if there is an issue with my water or sewer? For water billing questions, maintenance issues, after hours emergencies, or to report any problems or damage, refer to the Public Utilities Contact Us page at <https://www.joliet.gov/departments/public-utilities/contact-us>

Will the City of Joliet be responsible for repairing water main breaks and maintaining the water & wastewater system? Yes, as of the November 1, 2019 transfer date, the City of Joliet will be responsible for any water main break repairs and ongoing maintenance & rehabilitation of the system. The City of Joliet will be receiving funding through Will County via the Community Development Block Grant Program to make much needed upgrades to the water & wastewater systems over the next 5 years.

What repairs am I responsible for? Per City of Joliet Ordinance, the city is responsible for maintaining water service lines between the water main and the water main side of the curb stop or buffalo box (b-box). The buffalo box and curb stop itself is also maintained by the city. The property owner is responsible for the maintenance of the water service line from the b-box to the house.

For sewer service lines, the city assumes no responsibility and will not maintain any portion of the building sewer including the connection to the public sewer. The cost of maintaining the sewer service and house plumbing remains the sole responsibility of the property owner. The city may make necessary repairs to the sewer service line in the public right-of-way or dedicated easement areas where it is in the best interest of the city and the customer in order to restore service to said customer.

Will I be responsible for paying connection fees or any other additional costs? No, all costs associated with this transition will be funded by the Community Development Block Grant Program money. Subsequent maintenance costs will be funded with revenue generated from collection of your water and sewer bill. Residents will be responsible for paying their monthly water and sewer bill to the City of Joliet.

Will I be billed for trash service? No, trash service will continue to be provided and billed through Lockport Township.

What if I have sewer only? Sewer only is billed as a flat rate. Currently the non-resident rate is \$68.89 which includes the \$5.21 Sewer Main fee and the \$7.54 Sewer Separation fee. Customers do have the option of installing a well meter to be billed usage charges rather than the flat rate.

I have heard a rumor that the City may be switching water supplies. How will this affect me? The City's current well supply is being depleted at a pace that the City may not be able to keep up with the maximum daily demand by the year 2030. The City is currently conducting an alternative water source study and considering several options. Once the City switches water sources, your water will also come from the new source. This will likely be very costly and will affect everyone's water rates, resident and non-resident alike. For more information on the City of Joliet Alternative Water Source Study and decision process, visit the Rethink Water Joliet Website at <https://www.rethinkwaterjoliet.org/>.

Who do I contact if I have more questions about the transfer of the water & sewer system to the City of Joliet? Please call the Department of Public Utilities at 815-724-4220 and your question will be directed to the appropriate staff member.