

Start enjoying city water. (It's easier than you think!)

Find out if water is available at your home. Call the city engineer at 952-960-7900

What if water isn't available yet?

The city will work with interested neighborhoods to help make water available.

FACT: Road construction is the cheapest and best chance for your neighborhood to get water.

WITHOUT A ROAD PROJECT	WITH A ROAD PROJECT
\$7,000 to \$10,000* per home + \$1,000,000 per mile	\$7,000 to \$10,000* per home + \$ 0 per mile

Is there road construction in your neighborhood's future?

Learn about the costs and timelines for getting city water for your neighborhood by starting or signing a petition. A petition can be circulated to neighbors, or kept at City Hall for people to sign.

The process is easy!

1. One neighbor must decide to start a petition. Call the city engineer at 952-960-7900.
2. If 67% of your neighbors sign the petition, the city will conduct a feasibility study to learn how much it will cost each home to have city water.
3. Two public hearings will be scheduled, so that neighbors can look at the numbers and make an informed decision.
4. Following the public hearings, city council members will consider residents' opinions on the project, along with other relevant factors, and make a final decision on whether or not to proceed with the project.

A petition with 67% of neighbor signatures:

- Is a signal that your neighborhood is interested in learning about the costs of getting city water.
- Is the go-ahead for the city to start a feasibility study to get the numbers.
- Is only the first step. The city will schedule two public hearings where you and your neighbors can evaluate the numbers.

A petition:

- **Is NOT a final decision for or against the project** - City council members will take into account the opinions of residents regarding whether or not to start a water main installation project, but the final decision is up to the council.
- **Is NOT a blank check** - The target assessment for a water main project is \$10,000 or less per home. If the assessment is more than that, past experience suggests that the council may cancel the project.
- **Is NOT a commitment to connect to city water** - Even if you sign the petition and water goes in with your road, you will not be forced to connect to it or abandon your well.

3 easy ways to pay your assessment

1. Pay all at once.
2. Use city financing and roll it into your taxes. Example: \$10,000 spread over 15 years at 6.5% = \$1,100 a year (or about \$90 per month).
3. Take a loan out with a private lender.

What happens if my neighborhood approves city water?

- The city will install a water main during road construction.
- You and your neighbors will be assessed the cost of the water main (approx: \$7,000 to \$10,000 each) whether or not you signed the petition and whether or not you choose to hook up to the city water main.
- Congratulations! Water is available! Best of all, the \$7,000 to \$10,000 you were assessed is a credit toward your connection fee if you choose to connect. Ready? Follow the "If water is available at your home" steps below.
- It is **always your choice** whether to connect to city water. You are free to keep your private well - or to use both.
- Even if you choose not to connect to city water, the option will always be open to you - and to future buyers of your property.

If water is available at your home...

1. If you choose to connect to city water, the connection fee is \$10,000, minus the amount of the assessment.
2. If the water main assessment for your residence was paid in the past - by you or by a previous owner - you can still deduct it from the connection fee.
3. Hire a contractor to do the job (the 'mechanical contractors' section of the Yellow Pages or another business directory is a good place to start).
4. Pay the hook-up fees before the work begins. (About \$415 total* for connections, meter, inspections, and more.)
5. Call the city to arrange for inspections.

* Based on 2010 statistics

Have questions? Ready to start?
Call the city engineer at:
952-960-7900.

CITY WATER: ARE YOU CLEAR ON THE FACTS?

City of SHOREWOOD



City of SHOREWOOD
www.ci.shorewood.mn.us



INVEST IN TOMORROW

City water may add resale value.

A growing number of people prefer the security, reliability, and convenience of city water. This can be especially important for home buyers. Though there are still people who prize private wells, homes that are connected to city water (or have that option available) are typically easier to sell.

"I know how important city water is to potential home buyers, because I'm the one who fields the calls about it. I can't even count how many potential sales have come to a halt because buyers learn there is a private well instead of city water."

—James Landini, P.E., City of Shorewood

The short-term view: private wells are cheaper... as long as nothing goes wrong.

Residents with working private wells do not have to pay fees to the city (minimum of \$17.50 a month), though they do have to foot the bill for filtration systems, well cleaning, water softening, pumps, backup generators, testing, higher insurance rates, and more.

When private wells go wrong...

Private wells are vulnerable to flooding, collapse, equipment failure, power loss, contamination, and failure due to age. Repair can be expensive, and today's figures show new wells can cost around \$7,000 to \$9,000, while adding virtually nothing to the resale value of your home.

The long-term view: city water is an investment in the future.

City water is more than an investment in the value of your property; it's an investment in the health of your community. Property values rise, hydrants go in, insurance rates go down, and the people who want to keep their wells can keep their wells.



ENJOY THE QUALITY TODAY

City wells access a deep aquifer.

City wells are drilled deep, accessing an aquifer far beneath the earth's surface, where the water purity is considered excellent. Private wells are typically not dug as deep because of the high costs associated with such deep drilling.

City water is softer than private well water.

City water hardness has been measured at about 19 grains per gallon. So, while some iron and minerals are present, tests have shown that Shorewood city water is softer than private well water. Most residents who switch report saving money on treatment, using half the salt they used with private well water.

CITY WATER FACTS:

- You cannot be forced to connect to city water, even if a water main runs along your street. (Unless you are a business or multi-family housing of 4+ units.)
- When you sign a petition for city water, it is a way to get more information about costs, not a final commitment.

REST ASSURED

City water is tested monthly to ensure safety.

Following guidelines from the Minnesota Department of Health under the Safe Water Drinking Act, the city tests its water every month for coliform bacteria, and annually for nitrates, arsenic, VOCs, lead, and more.

Homeowners are responsible for testing their own private wells.

If you have a private well, testing is up to you. Groundwater can contain man-made and naturally occurring toxins that can get into private well water. The State of Minnesota recommends testing private wells once a year. As private wells age, more and more contaminants can seep in.

"I think there is true value in the safety and reliability of city water. This is a big-picture issue – it's about making the right investment."

— Mayor Chris Lizée

City water works – even when the power goes out!

Residents who are connected to city water can still run their taps, take showers, and flush their toilets when the power goes out. That's a major advantage in this area, where much of the electrical grid is above ground, which means the power goes out frequently.

- Even if you choose to connect to city water, you don't have to abandon your private well – you can keep it for watering your lawn.
- Unused wells must be sealed. The city has programs to help with the costs.
- City water availability may increase property values and decrease insurance rates. (Check with your local real estate agent or insurance broker.)

DOES YOUR PRIVATE WELL WATER CONTAIN DANGEROUS CHEMICALS? Find out!

Even water that looks and tastes good can contain dangerous contaminants. The state of Minnesota recommends you have your private well water tested in a laboratory at least once a year. This is the only way to know for certain that your water is safe for you and your family to drink and bathe in.

Water testing kits available for Shorewood residents!

Visit City Hall and pick up a kit. Tests cost around \$35 to run. Standard tests typically look for:

- **Coliform bacteria** - indicates human and animal waste contamination, and diseases such as salmonellosis, dysentery, and hepatitis.
- **Nitrates** - a common contaminant of Minnesota groundwater, linked to serious health issues.

We strongly recommend you request a test for:

- **Arsenic** - about 100 known cases of private wells with excessive arsenic are in the Shorewood area and that number is growing! Excess exposure to arsenic has been shown to increase the risk of skin problems, circulatory and nervous system diseases, and cancer.

Many homeowners also request tests for:

- **Volatile organic compounds (VOCs)** - studies suggest that 2% to 5% of Minnesota's private wells contain VOCs, which have been linked to problems with the central nervous system, liver, or kidneys; some VOCs are known to cause cancer.
- **Lead (from well pipes and fittings)** - exposure to lead can damage the brain, nervous system, and kidneys; infants and small children are particularly at risk.