

Water Works to Start Drilling a New Deep Well in November

A new deep well will help West Des Moines maximize its water treatment capacity and better serve customers. Construction of the new 2,500-foot deep well in Holiday Park is expected to begin in late November of 2016 with drilling operations expected to take approximately 90 days.

“The drilling process can be noisy and messy, but we want to assure our customers and neighbors that it is only temporary,” explained **Diana Wilson**, general manager of West Des Moines Water Works. “When the project is complete, the site will be cleaned up, restored and landscaped in keeping with the park.”

Once drilling starts, it continues for 24 hours a day, seven days a week until the well is completed. The Holiday Park site was selected for its proximity to well lines that already feed A.C. Ward Treatment Plant and its distance from other deep wells. Wells are located at least one-half mile apart to avoid interference with each other and a

concentrated drawdown of the aquifer at a specific location.

The new well will be in service and operational by July 1, 2017, just in time for peak summer usage.



This project marks the first time that the Water Works has drilled a new deep well in more than 15 years. The WDMWW Board of Trustees approved drilling the new well in order to fully utilize the

treatment capacity available at A.C. Ward Plant. The plant generally treats six million gallons of water per day. The new well will supply up to three million gallons per day in additional capacity.

“Our plant capacity now is 10 million gallons a day,” Wilson continued. “This increase in supply water will serve our immediate and future demands as well as provide additional system redundancy.”



When the well construction is completed, a well house will be erected and the grounds will be restored and landscaped as shown above.

Good News for WDMWW Customers on Lead and Copper Testing

In accordance with Environmental Protection Agency’s Lead and Copper Rule, West Des Moines Water Works recently tested samples of its water. The readings were within federal guidelines for safety and required no further action.

“This is always welcome news, but it’s particularly good to hear this year with the situation in Flint, Michigan,” said **Mitch Pinkerton**, water production manager. “As a result of our good record for

monitoring and testing, we are only required to sample for lead and copper every three years.”

WDMWW targets homes built before 1987 as these structures are more likely to have pipes, fittings and fixtures that contain lead. Samples are taken from commonly used taps, such as those in kitchens and bathrooms. The faucets in the house must rest at least six hours before the test.

DID
YOU
KNOW
?

More than 42,000
gallons of water
(enough to fill a
30 x 50 foot swim-
ming pool) are
required to grow
and prepare
food for a typical
Thanksgiving
dinner for eight.

No More Manual Meter Readers; We're Wireless Now

Two years ago, Water Works embarked on a campaign to upgrade and modernize its nearly 24,000 water meters across the city. Gone forever are the days when reading a meter required a good pair of a shoes and a healthy knowledge of which houses have aggressive watchdogs. The new wireless system offers customers a higher level of accuracy and convenience.

As part of the transition and upgrade, all current water meters that have been in service for 15 years or more will be replaced. As water meters age, they can slow down and lose accuracy; sometimes stopping completely, resulting in inaccurate water usage readings for billing. The new meters have an expected 20-year lifespan.

METER REPLACEMENT SCHEDULE

All water meters in West Des Moines currently have a wireless device that transmits the meter readings. The new "smart" meters paired with the wireless device allow for water use to be measured daily to $\frac{1}{32}$ of a gallon per minute.

The meter replacement program is expected to take approximately four years to complete. When your water meter is set to be replaced, you will receive a letter or email from Water Works requesting to make an appointment. Please do not contact the Water Works to replace your water meter until you receive the official notice.

During the appointment, a West Des Moines Water Works meter tech will visit your home and replace the water meter, free of charge. Each appointment takes about 30 minutes to complete, during which the water will be shut off for about 15 minutes.

FAQs

Why is my water meter being replaced?

The water meters have reached the end of their useful lives. Most residential water meters in West Des Moines are more than 15 years old.

What is the cost to have my water meter replaced?

There is no charge to the homeowner.

What is my responsibility as a homeowner?

It is the homeowner's responsibility to maintain the water pipes and valves within their homes. Old valves may need to be replaced in order for the new meter to be installed. The image below shows a typical meter setup, with a gate valve (green handles) on either side of the water meter. Both valves need to be in working order for the water meter to be replaced. Sometimes, as the valves age, they fail and will not close. A licensed plumber will need to replace any non-operating valves. All new valves need to be ball valves. Water Works meter techs are not plumbers and cannot replace the valves.

What is required for replacement of the water meter?

Water Works staff will need space around the meter to perform the work as well as access to the shut-off valves.



Do I need to be home for the meter replacement?

Yes, an adult 18 years or older must be present as water meters are located inside the home, typically in the basement or utility area.

Am I required to participate?

Yes. Participation in this program is mandatory. The upgraded water meters are necessary and ensure that WDMWW customers receive fair and accurate billing of utility services.

Water Works sincerely appreciates your help in making this project a success. For questions about the Water Meter Replacement Program, please contact Customer Service at 515-222-3460.

WEST DES MOINES WATER WORKS 4200 Mills Civic Parkway 515-222-3460 fax 515-222-3378 www.wdmww.com
WATER TREATMENT AND DISTRIBUTION 1505 Railroad Avenue 515-222-3465 fax 515-222-3469 TDD 515-222-3334

WEST DES MOINES WATER WORKS E-PAY: WDMWW.COM



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