



# THE WATER SYSTEM ORDINANCE

This Special Edition of the City of Crystal Falls Newsletter is an attempt to explain the Water System Ordinance to the water users in the City of Crystal Falls. We have tried to do this by highlighting various portions of the ordinance and how it will directly affect the consumers. We hope that everyone will take the time to read through and understand this ordinance in order to avoid questions and problems in the future. Keep in mind that the conservation of water will now mean saving you money on your utility bill.

## PUBLIC HEARING ON MARCH 12TH AT 5:00 P.M.

*If you want to have a say in the content of this ordinance this is the place to say it!*

At the City Council meeting held on Monday, February 12, 2007, the Water System Ordinance was introduced. This ordinance will regulate the distribution and supplying of water to the inhabitants of the City of Crystal Falls. If your home or business is not in the City limits - this ordinance does not affect you.

As with all ordinances considered by the Crystal Falls City

Council a Public Hearing must be held prior to adoption. The City Council has set this Public Hearing date to be Monday, March 12, 2007 at 5:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers at City Hall. (This hearing will be held during the regular monthly meeting of the City Council scheduled for that date.)

Once the public hearing is

conducted the City Council may adopt, or amend and then adopt, the ordinance. This ordinance is required to be adopted in connection with the upcoming City water project. In any event, once adopted, the ordinance becomes effective 30 days later and the residents of the City will need to abide by it.

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## CONNECTION TO THE WATER SYSTEM IS REQUIRED!

All houses, buildings or properties using water for human consumption situated within the City are required to connect to the public water service within 90 days. The only exception to this will be if the property is more than 250 feet from the existing

water main. For the majority of existing properties in the City this means nothing as they are already connected to the water system. However, if someone builds in an area where their property line is more than 250 feet from the

closest water main then that property owner may opt to put in a private well rather than connect to the city water system. Of course private wells will require all the proper permits from the county and state and/or federal authorities.

# WATER METERS

This has been the topic of most concern for the upcoming water project. Because the City is using a loan from the U.S. Rural Development it will be required that every location have a water meter. Until now, only the commercial buildings were metered.

The City is fortunate as the recipient of a Michigan Economic Development Grant to have the funds to buy and install these meters for the home owners. Without that grant we would all be paying for the purchase and installation of the meters for our homes.

As a homeowner all you need to do is make it possible for the contractor (selected by the City) to enter your home to install the meter.



WATER METER

The meter will be installed in your home at the point where the water service first enters the basement wall. If there is no basement the meter will be located where the water service first enters the building OR in a meter pit between the curb and the side-

walk. If a meter pit is required it will be constructed at the expense of the home owner with the construction approved by the Water Superintendent.

In addition to the meter, a meter reading module will be mounted on the inside of the home. This module will send a signal from the meter inside the home to a meter reading unit carried by the meter reader that will allow for reading the meter without entering the home each month.



WATER METER MODULE and METER

Property owners or persons in possession of the premises housing a meter are responsible for damages to a meter by heat, frost or other causes not controlled by the City. The cost of damages to the meter and the meter reading equipment will be immediately due to the City by the property owner or renter.

Meters will have seals on them. ONLY authorized employees of the City shall break a seal on a meter.

Authorized City employees shall

have the right to enter any premises on which City water is used to inspect, adjust, read, repair, or remove water meters at any reasonable time with the permission of the property owner.

No one shall ground or electrically connect any radio, telephone or other electrical system to the discharge side of any water meter unless approved by the Water Superintendent (special rules apply).

*Isn't technology wonderful !*

If a water meter fails to register properly the Water Superintendent is empowered to estimate the quantity of water used on the basis of former consumption and the City shall charge the consumer accordingly.

If a customer wants his/her water meter tested, he/she shall deposit a fee as set by the City (possibly as much as \$150.00). The meter will be tested and if found to be accurate, the City will keep the testing fee. If the meter is found to be fast or slow, the fee will be waived and the prior 3 months of the water billing will be adjusted accordingly. ***Most meters will slow down when they fail to register properly.***

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE WATER USER

Each water user must keep his/her own service pipe and meters and attachments in good repair and protected from frost at his/her own expense, and shall prevent all unnecessary waste of water.

No claims may be made against the City by reason of a freezing or breaking of any service pipes or meters or attachments, and the user shall provide a safe place for all water meters from damage, jarring, freezing, excessive heat, or other outside interference of every kind.

Upon the discovery of a leaking water service line to a property the user will be given a maximum of 3 days to fix the line unless otherwise ap-

proved by the Water Superintendent. Remember, the City has to pay for every drop of water bought from the Township and if you have a break in your line before the meter (which is located in your house) then the City will be picking up the tab for lost water from your broken line. That means that you and I, as taxpayers of the City, will pay for water

*Only 3 days to fix a broken water line before the City shuts it off!*

lost through those broken pipes. So get those leaks fixed fast and also

report any that you may see around your neighborhood to the City as soon as possible.

When replacing a water service line you will be required to use suitable copper or approved plastic material as set by the Water Superintendent. It was previously stated that perhaps everyone would need to replace their current water service with copper when this new system was put into operation. That is not so, but you will have to use the copper or approved plastic if your present water service line needs to be replaced in the future.

## Underground Lawn Sprinkling Systems

If you have an underground lawn sprinkling system there must be an anti-siphon breaker installed at least 3 feet above the highest sprinkling head. ( This is to prevent backflow of contaminants on the ground from flowing into your drinking water.)



## WATER SUPERINTENDENT

The City Manager may appoint a "Water Superintendent" of the City to have charge of the water system and the distribution of supplying water to the residents of the City.

It is expected that the "Water Superintendent" will be the Public Works Foreman. Kelly Stankewicz currently serves as the Public Works Foreman.

## CONNECTIONS TO WATER MAINS

All new water connections to the City water main will be installed only by the City crews.

Water lines from the main to the buildings will be made by a plumber or contractor, who is licensed to such work, and is selected by the property owner. The property owner is responsible for the cost of connecting to the main and the installation

of the water line from the main to their building.

The cost of the connection of the water service line to the main will be billed by the City to the property owner. The cost will include time, materials, and equipment. A deposit of 75% of the estimated cost is required in advance with the balance due upon completion.

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*This special edition of the Crystal Falls Newsletter series is an effort to clarify various points of the proposed Water System Ordinance. A complete copy of this Ordinance is available at the City Clerk's office upon request or on the city's website at [www.crystalfalls.org](http://www.crystalfalls.org). We hope that if anyone has concerns about the content of this ordinance they will take the time to attend the public hearing and voice their opinions before the ordinance is adopted.*



PROPOSED  
WATER RATES & COLLECTION PROCEDURES

The Water System Ordinance states that the City Council shall establish rates for the consumers of the public water service by resolution. These rates must be set so that all costs to operate the public water service and generate adequate retained earning for the Water fund are covered. The actual rates do not appear in the water ordinance but are suggested as follows:

Charge per 1,000 gallons: \$8.00  
Minimum monthly charge: \$36

(includes 4,500 gallons of water and the Debt Service fee)  
Debt Service: \$19.50/month  
The Debt Service fee will be charged even if the water is shut off to a building. This is needed to assure that the City will have the revenue to pay back the loan from Rural Development.

Turn on Charge: \$50.00  
Meter Testing Charge: \$150.00  
Tap on Fee:  
\$450.00 (1" & smaller lines)  
\$750.00 + material cost

for larger lines.  
Water Thawing: Time, equipment, & material cost.  
Meter Testing: \$150.00 (if requested by consumer)  
Charges for Temporary water services will be billed at a time and material basis.  
Late payment, interest charges, and service deposit requirements will be assessed the same as for all utilities provided by the City of Crystal Falls.