

# Utility Construction in Your Neighborhood

## What to Expect Before and During the Project



Fort Wayne City Utilities has hired a contractor to do utility construction in your neighborhood. We know that utility (water main, sewer line, drainage) projects can cause many kinds of disruptions. We want you to know what you may expect and who to contact with any concerns during the construction project. We hope that you will attend the neighborhood meetings that are being planned so you can learn more about the project.

**Safety is our top priority for every construction site.** You can help keep your area safe by staying clear of all construction activities and keeping children, pets and vehicles out of construction areas. When driving through a construction area, please obey signage and slow down to help ensure worker safety and reduce the spread of dust and construction debris. If heavy equipment is moving make eye-contact with the operator before proceeding to ensure they know you are entering the construction area.

The best thing about utility construction is that it will end and the end result will be improved service, increased reliability and a cleaner environment. In the meantime, here are some frequently asked questions and answers about what you can expect during construction.

### **Will the contractor trim or remove trees, shrubs or other landscaping?**

Trees, shrubs, grass or other landscaping in the public right-of-way, including in the park strip adjacent to your property, may be removed to make way for construction equipment or they may be trimmed, removed or cut down if they are in the way of where the contractor will be working. Trees on private property may be trimmed. To find out specifically how the public right-of-way adjacent to your property will be impacted, and if trees or other landscaping will be removed, we encourage you to attend the Meet the Contractor meeting.

If City Utilities acquired an easement from you, the easement agreement should address any landscaping removal and replacement that may be done on your property. If landscaping is not addressed in the easement document, the contractor will take precautions to protect it.

### **Will there be construction equipment on my property?**

Construction equipment may be placed in the public right-of-way or in an easement area in front of, behind or beside your property. City Utilities may have acquired a temporary easement from you that will allow equipment to access the construction area. Unless City Utilities or the contractor has made prior arrangements with you, no equipment or construction material should be placed on your private property. If equipment or material is left on your property, you have the right to ask the contractor to remove it. Please do not move anything yourself as you could be injured or you could become liable for damage or loss. If concerns continue, document the situation by taking pictures and call the City Utilities' Construction Manager or inspector. City Utilities will work closely with the contractor to resolve the situation.

### **Where will equipment and materials be stored during the project?**

Before construction begins, the contractor may bring materials and machinery to the work zone and store them in a centralized staging area, a nearby vacant lot or in the right-of-way so that crews can access them during



construction. The temporary storage often restricts on-street parking. Neighbors should expect large trucks and other construction vehicles to travel to and from work zones during construction hours.

Staging areas generally remain in one place for the life of the project. Additional storage areas may be set up throughout the project and are generally located near active construction.

### **What should I do if my property is damaged outside the limits of any easement granted to City Utilities?**

Contact the City Utilities construction manager to report your concerns. They will visit your property to investigate. It may also be helpful for you to take pictures to document your concerns.

### **Will the construction be noisy?**

You can expect noise and vibration from construction equipment and trucks coming and going from the area. Construction activity is dirty. Expect dust and mud. City Utilities will work with the contractor to keep your street as clean as possible, but dirt, dust and mud should be expected.

### **What hours will the contractor be working?**

Especially in summer, contractors like to start work early. Construction activity may begin as early as 7:00 and may continue until 8:00 PM, especially while weather is good. The contractor may choose to work 7-days a week or the contractor may work four 12-hour days and not work on Friday – especially if their crews come from out-of-town. The schedule for this specific project will be discussed at the Meet the Contractor meeting.

### **Will the street, sidewalk and curb in front of my house be damaged or removed during construction?**

#### **Will it be repaired or replaced at the end of the project?**

Public utilities are typically located in the street or under the sidewalk in the public right-of-way. The area where construction will take place will be discussed during the Meet the Contractor meeting for your project. However, you may assume that some or all of the street and sidewalk adjacent to your property may be affected by construction. The contractor will do full restoration of sidewalks and streets at the end of the project. There may be temporary restoration during the project to accommodate traffic. This may include the use of stone or a “cold mix” asphalt-like filler if work is being done in the winter when asphalt is not available. Metal plates may be used at night or on the weekend to allow temporary traffic access when active construction is not underway.

### **Will there be traffic interruptions on my street?**

Traffic interruptions are likely, especially on neighborhood streets. Traffic control signs will be in place. The contractor will make every effort to maintain local access, but there may be times when it is not possible. Expect delays. On-street parking may be limited in or near the work area. Please comply with no parking signs. Construction equipment and materials may be stored on the street at night. The contractor will secure the site for safety, but you will need to assist by making sure children stay away from the construction area.

### **Will I always be able to drive my car into my driveway?**

Contractors make every effort to ensure that residents can get out of their driveways in the morning and back in at the end of the day. However, when the crew is working immediately in front of your house, you may not be able to get into your driveway throughout the day. You may have to park a few lots away and walk to your house if you are coming and going in the middle of the day. Also there may be traffic interruptions that mean you may have to leave



your home going one direction as the work approaches your property and you may have to go the other way once the crews have gone past your driveway.

### **What can I do if construction vehicles or other vehicles are speeding on my street or cutting through my neighborhood?**

Report your concerns to the contractor and/or to the City Utilities construction manager. At night or on the weekend, call Fort Wayne Police.

### **Will the Post Office continue to deliver my mail? How will my garbage and recycling be picked up?**

The City of Fort Wayne will coordinate with post office for mail delivery. Delivery will not be interrupted. The contractor will work with your postal carrier to ensure that you receive your mail.

The location where you place your garbage/recycling containers for collection may shift while construction is going on along your street and while crews are working immediately in front of your property. The City Utilities construction manager will help to coordinate and someone will be available to assist persons with disabilities.

### **I need to have oxygen delivered to my house on a regular basis. Can the delivery driver still get oxygen (or other medical supplies/equipment) to me? What about scheduling special deliveries?**

If you are expecting a special delivery such as an appliance or furniture, please let the construction manager know so they can assist with getting the delivery truck to your house. Please alert them, too, if you receive regular deliveries of medical supplies such as oxygen so that we can be sure important healthcare deliveries can arrive when needed. While construction is being done immediately in front of your property, visitors may have to park a few houses away and walk to your house.

### **Will the school bus still pick up my children and drop them off?**

City Utilities and the contractor will coordinate with local schools and school corporations. The school will be responsible for notifying you of any change in transportation services.

### **Will police, fire trucks and ambulances still be able to get to my house if needed?**

Yes. City Utilities and the contractor have notified emergency services that the project is going on. Emergency services personnel will know how best to access your property to provide you with any required services.

### **I (or someone in my family) have a disability. How will I be able to get into and out of my property?**

If you (or a family member) have a disability or disabling condition that causes you to be concerned about access to your property, please discuss this with the City Utilities' construction manager. The construction manager and contractor will work diligently with you to ensure that you have the access that you require.

### **How long will construction last?**

Each project has a completion date that is set by the contract between City Utilities and the contractor. Construction dates for your project will be discussed at the Meet the Contractor meeting. Construction schedules may change due to a variety of factors including underground conditions, weather, subcontractor schedules and availability of materials.



For large projects the construction schedule may span several months or even a year or more. This does not mean that there will be construction in front of your property for the entire time. Construction disruption on your street or in front of your property may only last a few days. Also, you will see the construction approaching your area. It is not likely that a construction crew will appear in front of your house unexpectedly and begin construction.

### **When the crews go away does that mean the project is finished?**

Weather, availability of materials, other work to which the contractor is committed and other factors may cause periods of inactivity during construction phases. The contractor has until the completion date in their contract with City Utilities to fully complete all construction and restoration work. If construction is being done in the winter, there may be a period following construction when no work is being done. But the contractor may then return in the spring to complete landscape restoration and final street and/or sidewalk replacement/restoration.

### **Will my water service be interrupted?**

Sewer, water, and other utilities will remain in service during construction. If water lines are being replaced, there may be a 2 – 4 hour water service disruption when the water line serving your house is being connected to the new water main. You will be notified by the contractor if this is the case. You will receive a notice at least 24-hours prior to any planned water outage.

### **What if my car is damaged while I'm trying to get to my house while construction is going on?**

If you feel your vehicle or other property has been damaged as a result of construction activities by a contractor, please document the damage with photographs and contact the City Utilities construction manager to discuss.

### **Who do I call if I have questions, concerns or need more information?**

If you have any concerns – please do not allow rumors or concerns to go unaddressed. City Utilities understands that construction projects are disruptive, inconvenient and difficult for neighborhoods to endure. We do not want you to lose sleep worrying about some issue that is bothering you or some rumor that you may have heard. Please call and make us aware of any issues so they can be addressed with the contractor.

**Questions?** Call the Fort Wayne Citizen Services Department at 311 or (260) 427-8311.

The Citizen Services Department answers calls from 7:30 AM until 5:30 PM, Monday through Friday (except holidays). After hours or on weekends you may leave a message and your call will be returned on the next business day.

The staff in the Citizen Services Department may be able to answer your question immediately or they may put you in touch with the City Utilities' Project Manager or Construction Manager for the project in your area. During the Meet the Contractor meeting, you will also be provided with names and phone numbers for the contractor, inspector and project/construction management staff for your project.

Updated 5/2017

