



Septic to Sewer Conversion FAQs

1) What will this cost homeowners?

We believe that the residential hookup costs may range from \$5,000 - \$7,000. At this time, the City is working with the State and County to minimize costs to homeowners for the conversion. It is our intent to obtain grants that will cover the costs for engineering, construction and residential hookups. We are in the first stages of planning and final costs will not be known for some time. The City's goal is to ensure there is very little to no costs to residents. NOTE: Traditional systems need to be replaced at some point, the majority around the 20-25 year mark. Typically, this is a \$4K-6K cost homeowners pay out of pocket. If there is any cost to homeowners, the cost would be amortized over 20 years and would be approximately \$28/month.

2) Will the conversion to septic require a home to hook up to Volusia Water?

No, homes not currently on the County water system will remain on well water.

3) After conversion, what is the average monthly bill for sewer? In DeBary, the average monthly bill is approximately \$45.

4) What if no grants are received for this project?

If the City and Volusia County Utilities do nothing, each homeowner will be required to convert their traditional septic tank for an advanced nutrient reducing system within the next 20 years. Currently, these systems cost \$15,000 - \$20,000 to install, plus biannual maintenance and annual inspection costs. If the City and Volusia County Utilities did nothing, beginning July 2023, the Florida Department of Health would not issue

permits for new or repairing existing traditional septic tanks, requiring the advanced system for all properties in the Primary Focus Area. Over the last five years, on average, 47.4 residents in the Primary Focus Area replace their leach field annually. Each resident will be burdened individually for these costs. The State had provided some partial grants for converting to the new system, but these grant programs have ended.

This is why the partnership between the residents, City of DeBary and Volusia County Utilities is so important. Working together, we submitted a 5-year plan to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) that was accepted. With FDEP approval, the Department of Health will continue to allow new and repair of traditional septic systems. The 5-year plan entails installing a central sewer system through the entire PFA. A central sewer system is much cheaper and more reliable for the residents. The cost of installing a sewer system in the Primary Focus Area(PFA) is estimated to be \$50 million. The 5-year plan is contingent on state funding the engineering and construction costs. These funding contingencies make our plan a “Rolling” 5–year plan. With this partnership, our voice to demand the State to pay for all costs, including resident hookups, is important.

5) What if the State refuses to pay for resident hookups? Unfortunately, the burden of paying these costs will fall to the homeowner.

The City has the authority to create a special taxing district to assist homeowners to finance the cost for the hookups. Each year, the City will put your assessment on your property tax bill. For example, if the hookup costs are \$6,000, your annual assessment on your tax bill will be approximately \$28/month or \$336 a year..

5) My street is not listed but I have a septic tank. Will I be required to convert?

At this time, there is no requirement for other residences outside of the primary focus area to convert. The anticipated time frame for the conversion for the current primary focus area is approximately 20 years. Once the first

round is completed in 20 years, the hope is no further conversion will be necessary and the State will make a determination at that time. There is no way at this time to determine what will be required in 20 years.

7) I'm in the primary focus area. If my system fails prior to the conversion, will I be required to get the new system?

Homes in the primary focus area may replace their current system with a conventional system should their system fail during the conversion period. This is why the City included the BMAP area rather than the State suggestion of one section. By including the entire BMAP section in the primary focus area, all homeowners are protected during the 20 year process from having to install the expensive advanced systems.

6) What streets will be converted first?

Until the design and planning are completed, which will take several years, we will not know which streets will be converted first. Residents will be notified throughout the process as to the status of construction on their street.

7) How can I stay up to date?

Please continue to check this webpage for updates. Additionally, residents can sign up for email notifications at <https://debary.org/newsletter/subscriptions> and checking septic to sewer information. Finally, please be sure to follow us on Facebook @CityofDeBary and NextDoor @cityofdebary.