



YOUR GUIDE TO CITY WATER



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Complete Guide To Bringing Water Into Your Home On JOHNSON'S ISLAND.

From the big picture across the island, to the exact equipment and cost of getting water the rest of the way to your faucet.

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Johnson's Island
Connection
Walkthrough**

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The Big Picture: What’s Happening on Johnson’s Island.

City water is coming to Johnson’s Island. In 2021, more than half of the island’s property owners signed a petition asking the Village of Marblehead to bring city water service to the island, and construction is now underway — nearly 4.5 miles of new water main in total, including a transmission line crossing under Sandusky Bay and new main circling every street on the island, plus the island’s first-ever fire hydrants. Water is becoming available street-by-street as each segment is completed, over roughly two years.

- ✓ **The Village’s project ends at the curb stop:** the shutoff valve installed at your property line. That shared infrastructure is covered by the special assessment — separate from anything covered in this guide.
- ✓ **From the curb stop to your house is your choice:** your water meter pit and meter, the service line, and everything inside your home is a private undertaking. You’re free to hire any plumber or contractor licensed with the Ottawa County Sanitary Engineering Department — there’s no requirement to use any particular company.
- ✓ **Fry is licensed for the whole job:** curb stop to faucet, including permitting and proper well or cistern work — whether that means a full abandonment or converting it to a dedicated outdoor spigot.

That’s the big picture. Now let’s get specific — here’s what it actually takes, and what it costs, to bring that water the rest of the way into your home.

What’s In This Guide

- Why city water is good for you:** fire hydrants and always-on clean water.
- Insurance:** how new fire hydrants can affect your homeowners premium, and the question worth asking your agent.
- What it costs:** the outside connection pricing table, curb stop to your home.
- Your meter pit, explained:** what’s actually in it, and why it’s required.
- The Island Neighbors Program:** better rates when 10+ neighbors schedule together.
- HOA coordination:** working with JIPOA, BHOA, and the Road Commission.
- Licensing & backflow, explained:** what’s actually required and why, in plain language.
- Protecting your investment:** the paperwork that matters at resale.
- Fry VIP Membership & what happens next:** ongoing protection, and the exact steps to get started.

Insurance: What to Ask Before You Decide.

One thing covered in this guide can influence your homeowners insurance — and the answer can meaningfully change what tapping into city water actually costs, or saves, you.

- ✓ **Fire hydrants — ask if it lowers your dwelling premium:** Many carriers factor distance to a fire hydrant (commonly within 1,000 feet) and distance to a fire station into how they rate a property, alongside your community’s ISO Public Protection Class rating. Johnson’s Island has never had hydrants before, so the addition of one on your street is exactly the kind of change that can improve that rating — and any savings can help offset the added cost on your property taxes from the special assessment.

Call your insurance agent before you decide — this can change the math on your ROI:

City water is coming to your street either way; tapping in is entirely your call. Get the real numbers on this from your agent first — then decide what makes sense for your home and your budget. Our companion Equipment Guide covers three more insurance angles worth asking about: Flo by Moen, a propane standby generator, and the water backup/sump pump overflow endorsement.

Why City Water Is Good for You — and Your Home.

Before we get into cost, it's worth pausing on what city water actually changes about living on Johnson's Island — because the benefits go well beyond turning on a faucet.

Fire Hydrants: Real Protection, for the First Time

The new water main isn't just feeding homes — it's feeding the island's first-ever public fire hydrants, installed street by street as the project moves forward. That's a fundamental change for an island that has never had one.

✓ **Water, right on your street:** If a fire breaks out, the fire department has a pressurized hydrant supply close by — the same kind of protection homes on the mainland have always had — instead of relying solely on tanker trucks hauling water out to the island.

✓ **Faster response, less guesswork:** Hydrants let firefighters connect and flow water immediately on arrival, rather than spending critical minutes shuttling water back and forth.

This is also one of several things in this guide that can affect your insurance premium — see "Insurance: What to Ask Before You Decide" below.

Clean, Always-On Water — No More Sulfur, No More Guessing

Most wells and cisterns on the island come with a tradeoff homeowners have simply learned to live with: sulfur odor and taste, mineral staining, water quality that shifts with the seasons, and — for cisterns — keeping an eye on the level so you don't run dry during a dry stretch or a full house of summer guests.

✓ **Consistent quality, every day:** City water is treated and tested to Ohio EPA drinking water standards, so you're not managing water softening or filtration just to make it smell and taste normal.

✓ **No more cistern math:** No watching the gauge, scheduling a fill truck, or rationing water during a dry spell or a busy holiday weekend with the whole family on the island.

✓ **Full water pressure, on demand:** A pressurized municipal supply means multiple showers, a sprinkler, and a hose running at the same time — something wells and cisterns often can't keep up with.

Water Damage: A Real Risk Once You're on Constant Pressure

Once your home is on a constant, pressurized city water supply, a failed line or fixture can keep flowing for days before anyone notices — very different from a well or cistern you can simply shut off. Our companion Equipment Guide covers Flo by Moen, the smart leak-detection device built to catch exactly that risk — including the insurance implications worth reading about there.

Your Meter Pit, Explained.

Every home connecting to the new water main gets a meter pit — it's not optional, and it's more than just a box in the yard. Here's what's actually involved, straight from Ottawa County Sanitary Engineering Department's own construction standards.

✓ **Required on every connection:** The County requires a meter pit installed within 3 feet of your curb stop on every water service connection in the county — there's no version of this project without one.

✓ **More than just a meter:** Inside the pit: the water meter itself, a shutoff valve, and a meter setting with a built-in dual check valve backflow preventer — the same device that protects the public water main and, as covered above, is what creates the need for a thermal expansion tank.

✓ **Built to county spec, down to the manufacturer:** The pit's size, materials, and even the approved manufacturers for every part inside it (Ford Meter Box Co., Mueller, Carson, Sigma, and similar) are set by the County's official water construction standards — not left to whatever's convenient or cheapest.

✓ **Buried for frost protection, read without digging:** The pit is set deep enough to protect the meter from freezing and fitted with a radio-read module, so the County can read your usage without anyone needing to dig it up or walk into your yard.

✓ **Inspected before it's ever buried:** A County representative reviews and signs off on the installation before it's backfilled — work isn't allowed to be covered until it's been checked.

Source: Ottawa County Sanitary Engineering Department, Water Summarized Rules and Regulations, Section 5.01.J (meter pits and meter pit appurtenances).

What It Costs to Bring Water Into Your Home.

This section covers the outside connection work — running the line from the Village’s curb stop to your home, installing the meter pit, and keeping your existing cistern or well functional as a dedicated outdoor spigot, if that’s the route you choose. It does not include interior plumbing, fixtures, or equipment inside your home. Final pricing is based on actual site conditions and the specific work required at your property; a Fry representative will confirm your exact quote during your free walk-through.

Electric feeds, cable and internet lines, and — on many island properties — buried propane tanks all run through the same yards this connection has to cross. When a trench meets one of these, it can’t simply be dug through: it has to be hand-dug and carefully worked around, which is exactly what the “Utility Conflict Excavation” line item below covers. That’s precise, planned work, not a routine dig — Fry reviews the known utility and propane tank locations at your property and calls for utility locates before any excavation begins, on every job.

Item	What It Covers	Price
Excavation & Trenching		
Standard Dirt Excavation	Digging and backfilling the trench from the curb stop to your home in normal soil conditions.	\$50 / linear ft
Utility Conflict Excavation	Added cost when the trench crosses existing utility lines (electric, gas, cable) that must be hand-dug or carefully worked around.	+\$100 / linear ft
Rock / Limestone Excavation	When bedrock or limestone is encountered along the trench and must be broken out instead of simply dug. Based on the standard 2-ft-wide trench at a full 44” depth (42” for the water line, plus a sand bedding course).	\$353 / linear ft
Compactable Fill	Compactable fill as required based on site conditions.	\$100 / ton
Meter Pit, Connection & Permitting		
Meter Pit / Material	The meter pit, water meter housing, and related fittings installed at your property per Ottawa County Sanitary Engineering specifications.	\$2,500
Permits	The plumbing permit and paperwork Fry pulls and manages on your behalf with Ottawa County — one less thing for you to handle.	\$300
Well / Cistern — Keep It Functional		
Dedicated Outdoor Spigot Conversion	Re-plumb your existing well or cistern onto its own fully isolated piping serving one dedicated outdoor spigot — for the lawn, garden, or a hose bib — with zero physical connection to your home’s interior city-water plumbing: two independent systems, not one joined by a valve. Keeps the system useful without a full abandonment. Placeholder price; every home differs.	*\$750
Full Well or Cistern Abandonment	Properly decommissioning the system entirely per Ottawa County Health Department requirements. Priced individually based on system size, type, and site conditions — ask your Fry representative for a quote.	Quoted Individually

Notes & Assumptions

- ✓ **Water service installation depth:** 42” minimum, per Ottawa County Sanitary Engineering standards.
- ✓ **Trench dimensions used for per-linear-foot pricing:** a standard 2-ft-wide bucket, excavated to 44” total depth — 42” for the water line itself plus roughly 2” of sand bedding beneath it. That works out to about 0.27 cubic yards of material per linear foot, which is how the rock/limestone cubic-yard rate was converted into the linear-foot price shown above. Compactable Fill is billed separately by the ton, only for the actual volume of rock or unusable material removed. Actual trench width and depth - and therefore cost — can vary with site conditions.

- ✓ **Excavation & Trenching pricing already reflects Island Neighbors Program group rates:** the cost of mobilizing equipment, staging materials, and final cleanup is spread across participating homes rather than billed to each homeowner individually. This assumes a shared staging area for equipment and materials, arranged through your HOA — see “The Island Neighbors Program” below.
- ✓ **Not all items apply to every property.** Site conditions, existing utilities, access, rock, fill requirements, well/cistern condition, and homeowner-selected equipment all factor into final project pricing.
- ✓ **The \$750 spigot conversion price** is a placeholder — every well or cistern setup is different, and your Fry representative will confirm exact pricing during your walk-through. Full abandonment, if you choose it instead, is quoted individually.

Pricing is reviewed and updated periodically — ask your Fry representative for current pricing at the time of your quote.

The Island Neighbors Program — Better Rates When You Team Up

Because so many homes on the island are tackling this connection around the same time, we've built a group program around it: when neighbors on the same street or in the same section sign on together — for the outside connection work, the inside plumbing work, or both — we can pass along real savings in materials and labor efficiency that just aren't possible one house at a time. Get 10 or more neighbors scheduling together, and it becomes the full Island Neighbors Program, unlocking our best available group pricing.

- ✓ **Talk to your neighbors:** If a few houses on your street are considering connecting, let us know — we'll coordinate scheduling and pricing as a group, and help you build toward the 10-home threshold for full program pricing.
- ✓ **Works for outside and inside work:** The Island Neighbors Program can apply to the curb-stop-to-house connection, the interior plumbing and fixture work, or both together.

Coordinating With Your Homeowners Association

the Johnson's Island Property Owners Association (JIPOA) and the Baycliffs Homeowners Association (BHOA). Together with non-affiliated owner representatives, both associations make up the Johnson's Island Road Commission (JIRC) — the group directly coordinating with the Village of Marblehead on the water project's impact on roads, easements, and post-construction restoration.

- ✓ **Check the Road Commission's project page:** thejiroad.com maintains a dedicated "Coordination with Water Project" page with construction updates, easement documentation, and a licensed-contractor list specific to this project.
- ✓ **Confirm exterior-work guidelines with your association:** Before your meter pit or dedicated outdoor spigot goes in, it's worth a quick check with JIPOA or BHOA — whichever governs your section — on any covenant or aesthetic requirements for exterior work. Fry will work within whatever your association requires.
- ✓ **Happy to coordinate directly:** If it's easier, Fry can work with your association or the Road Commission on scheduling and placement questions alongside your own outreach.

Protecting Your Investment: Keep the Paperwork.

A permitted, properly documented water connection isn't just about doing the work right — it's a real asset when you eventually sell. Ohio's Residential Property Disclosure Form, required under Ohio Revised Code 5302.30, specifically requires sellers to disclose the source of their water supply among other water-related conditions. For a property transitioning off a well or cistern — or keeping one as a documented, fully isolated backup — having the paperwork to back up exactly what was done removes any ambiguity for a future buyer, their agent, or an appraiser.

- ✓ **What to keep:** Your OCSED service connection permit, any Ohio Dept. of Health Private Water Systems Contractor paperwork for well or cistern work, and your annual backflow preventer test certificates.
- ✓ **Fry provides copies as part of the job:** Every permit, inspection sign-off, and backflow test certificate is documented and handed to you — keep them with your other home records (insurance policy, survey, deed) for whenever you need them.
- ✓ **Especially relevant for second homes and generational properties:** island properties change hands within families and to new buyers more often than most. Clean documentation saves the next owner — or the next generation — from guessing what's actually installed underground.

Licensing: What's Actually Required, and Why It Matters.

Connecting your home to city water while retiring — or keeping — a private well or cistern touches three separate regulatory jurisdictions in Ohio, not one. That's not bureaucracy for its own sake: a mishandled connection between a private water source and a public system is a genuine public health hazard, which is exactly why the state and county require three distinct pieces of licensure to do this work legally. Fry carries all three in-house.

License 1: Tapping the Water Main

The physical tap onto the Village's water main — the connection that creates your curb stop — can only be made by a contractor licensed with the Ottawa County Sanitary Engineering Department (OCSED), and for taps 1½" and larger, only under the direct supervision of an OCSED representative. This is the license that governs the "shared infrastructure" side of your connection.

License 2: Plumbing Water Into Your Home

From the meter pit into your house, OCSED's rules require the work to be completed by the property owner or by a professional plumber or contractor licensed with the Sanitary Engineering Department — the same licensing body, but a distinct scope of work from the main tap itself. This is the license most homeowners think of first, and the one most local plumbers carry.

License 3: Abandoning or Altering a Well or Cistern

This is the one that catches people off guard. Sealing, altering, or constructing a private water system — a well, cistern, pond, or spring — in Ohio requires registration as a Private Water Systems Contractor (PWSC) with the Ohio Department of Health, a completely separate credential from a plumbing license. A permit from the local health district is required before any sealing work begins, and the work itself is inspected and reported back to the state. Plenty of licensed plumbers do not carry this registration, since it has nothing to do with plumbing code — it's a groundwater protection credential.

Fry carries all three: the OCSED contractor license for the main tap, the OCSED plumbing license for your interior connection, and the Ohio Dept. of Health Private Water Systems Contractor registration for well or cistern work.

One call covers every jurisdiction this project touches — no coordinating between separate specialty contractors.

Every City Water Connection Gets a Backflow Preventer — Well or No Well

Here's the part that trips people up: a backflow preventer isn't something you only need if you're keeping a well or cistern. Ottawa County Sanitary Engineering Department requires a dual check valve backflow preventer built into the meter setting on every new water service connection in the county, full stop — it's standard hardware at the meter pit, regardless of whether your property has a private well, a cistern, or neither. Its job is to protect the public water main from anything that could flow backward out of any home's private plumbing, not specifically to guard against a well or cistern.

If You Keep a Well or Cistern, It Has to Be a Fully Separate System: Not Just a Valve Away

This is the piece worth understanding clearly: you cannot keep a well or cistern "connected" to your city-water plumbing with a backflow preventer sitting at the junction between the two. There is no junction allowed. Ohio's cross-connection rules for private auxiliary water sources give you exactly two options: properly abandon the well or cistern, or keep it in service on its own completely isolated plumbing that never physically ties into the pipes carrying city water into your home. In practice, that means a dedicated outdoor spigot fed only by the well or cistern, with no shared pipe, tee, or valve joining it to your interior city-water lines — two independent systems under one roof, not one system with a safety valve in the middle.

The meter-pit backflow preventer described above still applies to your home either way, protecting the public main from your interior plumbing. But it does not, and cannot, serve as the separation between your well/cistern and your city water — that separation has to be physical, verified by Ottawa County, and permanent.

Why That Backflow Preventer Creates the Need for an Expansion Tank

The standard backflow preventer at your meter has a side effect that applies to every newly connected home, well or cistern or not: it turns your home's plumbing into what codes call a "closed system." Water expands roughly 2% in volume as it heats from 50°F to 120°F — with a check valve at the meter blocking that expansion from pushing back out toward the main, the pressure has to go somewhere. Both the International Plumbing Code and the Uniform Plumbing Code respond to this with a straightforward rule: a thermal expansion tank is required on the water heater's cold supply whenever a closed system exists. On a newly connected Johnson's Island home, that makes the expansion tank a direct, predictable consequence of the meter's backflow preventer — not an upsell, a code requirement, and it applies to your home regardless of what you do with an existing well or cistern.

The Dedicated-Spigot Alternative — Often the Most Cost-Effective Option

One way to avoid the cost of a full well or cistern abandonment: rather than decommissioning it, have it re-plumbed to serve a single dedicated outdoor spigot — for the lawn, garden, or a hose bib — on its own fully isolated piping with zero physical connection to your home's interior, city-water plumbing. The Ottawa County Health Department confirms this is allowed, and for many homes it's the most cost-effective path, since it avoids the abandonment cost entirely while still keeping the system useful. It should be done by a licensed party to guarantee true separation, but it's a

Quick Reference: Who Handles What

Department/What It Handles	Phone
Ottawa County Sanitary Engineering Dept.	419-734-6725
Main line taps, service connections, contractor licensing, backflow prevention & permits. Zachary E. Mulder, P.E., Sanitary Engineer.	
Ottawa County Health Department	419-734-6800
Environmental Health / Water Supply Program — private water system permits, well and cistern inspections, sealing and alteration approvals.	
Ohio Dept. of Health — Private Water Systems Program	614-644-7558
Statewide registration of Private Water Systems Contractors; program-level questions.	
Village of Marblehead Water Dept.	419-798-5836
Shared infrastructure status, curb stop timing for your street.	

Beyond This Project: Full-Service Plumbing & HVAC.

City water is often the first domino, once it's in, many homeowners move on to bathroom remodels, additions, or larger renovations that touch both plumbing and HVAC. Fry handles all of it, not just the water line:

- ✓ **Renovations & remodels:** Bathroom and kitchen remodels, additions, and full ground-up builds — our licensed team handles the plumbing and HVAC scope of any project, from rough-in to finished fixtures.
- ✓ **New construction:** Building on a vacant lot on the island? Fry can plan and install the plumbing and HVAC systems for a full ground-up build from the start.
- ✓ **Commercial Service Group (CSG):** The same high-touch service extends to our commercial customers — rooftop HVAC units, refrigeration, plumbing, drain cleaning, jetting, cabling, and gas lines for restaurants, marinas, and other island or peninsula businesses.

Whatever comes next for your property, Fry is the one call that covers it all.

What Happens Next?

Ready to move forward? Here's exactly what that looks like, start to finish:

- 1. Free walk-through:** A Fry representative visits your property, confirms your curb stop status, and gives you an exact quote for the outside connection and any equipment you're considering.
- 2. Choose your path:** Decide between full well/cistern abandonment or a dedicated-spigot conversion, and select any equipment you'd like — heat pump, water heater, Flo by Moen, dual-fuel furnace, generator, or sump backup.
- 3. Permitting:** Fry pulls and manages your Ottawa County Sanitary Engineering permit and, if a well or cistern is involved, the Ohio Dept. of Health Private Water Systems Contractor paperwork.
- 4. Installation:** Curb stop to faucet, scheduled around your availability — and grouped with your neighbors under the Island Neighbors Program if 10 or more households are ready together.
- 5. Documentation & walkthrough:** You receive copies of every permit, inspection sign-off, and backflow test certificate, plus a full walkthrough of your new equipment and its app controls.
- 6. Ongoing protection:** Enroll in Fry VIP Membership from day one to lock in the 10-year labor warranty on your new HVAC equipment.

Why Fry Is the One Call You Need

Fry is licensed to handle every part of this project, start to finish: the connection from the curb stop into your home, properly handling your existing well or cistern to Ottawa County and Ohio Department of Health standards — whether that's abandonment or converting it to a dedicated outdoor spigot — and all the interior plumbing, heating, cooling, and water heater work that goes with it. One company, one point of contact, one team accountable for the whole job — inside and out. Scan the code below, or visit FryHeating.com/johnsons-island-city-water-service-guide



**SCAN THE CODE
TO LEARN MORE.**

*Ask us about heat pump comfort,
Flo by Moen, and the Island
Neighbors Program for your street.*

Phone: (419)472-1106

Website: RelyOnFry.com

**Request A
Johnson's Island
Equipment Guide.**



**Call Fry Today!
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Complete Utility Transitions. Unmatched Island Expertise.

When navigating municipal water upgrades on Johnson's Island, experience matters. From strict local code compliance and seamless municipal hookups to complex terrain considerations, our licensed team manages every phase of your utility transition with precision. We ensure your internal plumbing, pressure regulation, and fixtures are fully adapted, safe, and built for reliable, long-term performance.

Your Full-Service Plumbing & HVAC Partner

Beyond municipal water transitions, Fry provides end-to-end solutions for residential, commercial, and seasonal properties. Whether you need heating and air conditioning installations, indoor air quality management, drain and sewer services, water heaters, or custom maintenance programs, our certified technicians handle it all under one roof.

Trusted Across Ohio & Michigan

Don't just take our word for it - see why homeowners and businesses across Northwest Ohio and Southeast Michigan consistently rate Fry as their top-choice contractor. **Visit us online to read over 1800 of verified 5-star reviews from your neighbors throughout the region.**



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