

# HOWARD COUNTY

## WATER/SEWER CONNECTION FINANCING PROGRAM

Howard County has begun a program to assist property owners with the costs of connecting to the sanitary sewer system, as part of County efforts to protect the environment, keep groundwater clean and improve infrastructure.

The purpose of the program is to encourage as many property owners as possible to connect to the existing system in order to reduce the number of septic systems.

Through the Howard County Code (Title 20. Taxes, Charges, and Fees, Subtitle 7. Water/Sewer Connection Financing Program, Section 20.700), the County is making available loans to finance all or part of the costs of connecting existing buildings to the available public sewerage system or the public water and sewerage systems. (This program applies to property owners who seek to connect to the public sewerage system or both the public water and sewerage system – not water-only connections.)

Here are the steps and criteria to participate in the program:

**QUALIFYING CRITERIA.** Property owners located within the Planned Service Area of the Howard County Master Plan for water and sewerage are eligible for a loan under the water/sewer connection financing program if the property meets ANY of the following criteria:

1. The property is located in the Metropolitan District.
2. The property owners have submitted a petition to the Director of Public Works to incorporate the property into the Metropolitan District. See the Metropolitan District Incorporation Fact Sheet for information regarding this process.

3. The Health Department has ordered the property to be connected to the public water and/or sewerage system under Section 12.105 of the Howard County Code.

**COSTS WHICH MAY BE FINANCED.** The following costs may be financed through the County's Water/Sewer Connection Financing Program.

1. Water and sewer house connection charges;
2. Water and sewer in-aid-of construction charges and supplemental sewer-in-aid of construction charges, if applicable;
3. Plumbing permit fee;
4. Costs to physically connect the existing building to the public sewerage system or the public water and sewerage system; and
5. Costs to disconnect and seal all existing connections to septic systems and/or wells.

**NOTE:** It is the responsibility of the property owner to find and retain a plumbing contractor to make the connection.

**APPLICATION REQUEST.** Property owners that meet the criteria may apply for a loan under the Water/Sewer Connection Financing Program by completing an Application Request Form, and submitting it to the Director of Public Works at 3430 Court House Drive, Ellicott City, Maryland, 21043. Contact the Real Estate Services Division (RESD) at 410-313-2330 for further information.

**APPLICATION.** Upon receipt of the Application Request Form and all supporting documents, RESD will review the request to ensure that it meets the criteria. An Application will be prepared and sent to the property owners for execution. The application shall include the interest rate and amortization schedule.

**LEGAL DOCUMENTS AND PERMITS.** After execution of the Application and approval of the loan by the County, RESD will forward the following documents to the property owner for review and execution:

1. Promissory Note.
2. Deed of Trust (the County will not subordinate its Deed of Trust).
3. Plumbing Permit Application, completed by the plumber.

**ALL PROPERTY OWNERS MUST SIGN THE DOCUMENTS.** The executed documents should be returned to the RESD for processing. A fully executed copy of all documentation will be returned to the property owners.

**PERMIT ISSUANCE.** RESD will notify the Department of Inspections, Licenses and Permits (DILP) that a Plumbing Permit should be issued. DILP will process the permit application and notify the property owners or plumber when the permit is ready to be picked up.

**CONSTRUCTION.** Upon completion of the work the plumber must submit a signed invoice to the property owners for their review and signature approval. The invoice must be signed by all property owners and submitted to RESD. If there is a discrepancy between the plumber's estimate and the final invoice, the Deed of Trust and Promissory Note will be revised to incorporate the final charges.

**PAYMENT FOR CONSTRUCTION.** RESD will request a check to be issued and made payable to all property owners and the plumber. Upon receipt of the check, RESD will request the property owners come into the office to endorse the check. The signed check is then forwarded to the plumber as payment.

**LOAN REPAYMENT.** Once the final costs are verified the Deed of Trust will be recorded in the Land Records. A recorded copy will be transmitted to the property owners. The Department of Finance will set up a payment schedule in accordance with its procedure and will send an invoice to the property owners once a year until the loan is repaid.

**RELEASE OF LIENS.** When the property owners pay off the loan, the Department of Finance will notify RESD that the Deed of Trust should be released. A Short Release executed by the County will be recorded in Land Records and a copy will be forwarded to the property owners.