



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is the Pinecrest Water Vote?**

It is a Special Election by mail that asks registered voters in Pinecrest to approve completion of the Miami-Dade County Water and Sewer infrastructure in the Village via limited ad valorem tax bonds. This infrastructure will give access to 743 properties that currently do not have access to county drinking water and fire hydrants.

### **What is the question that will be on the ballot?**

Shall the Village of Pinecrest, issue limited ad valorem tax bonds not exceeding \$15,000,000, maturing within twenty years from their issuance, bearing interest not exceeding the maximum allowable by law, and payable from a Village levy of 0.23 mills of ad valorem taxes in each year the bonds are outstanding to improve the public health and safety by constructing county-owned potable water and fire hydrant infrastructure for areas currently without access to those facilities?

For Bonds       Against Bonds

### **When will I receive the ballot by mail?**

The Miami-Dade County Elections Department will mail all official ballots with a secrecy envelope, a return mailing envelope, and instructions sufficient to describe the voting process to each elector entitled to vote in the Special Election not sooner than the 20th day before the Special Election and not later than the 10th day before the date of the election.

### **When does the ballot have to be returned?**

The ballot must be at the Miami-Dade County Department of Elections office before 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 26, 2019. Please allow enough time for the US Postal Service to deliver the ballot by the deadline. If you are unsure if the ballot will be delivered on time, you can drop off the ballot at the Elections Department at 2700 NW 87th Ave # 100, Doral, FL to ensure your vote is counted. For more information about the Miami-Dade County Elections Department, please visit [www.iamelectionready.org](http://www.iamelectionready.org).



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### How do I request an absentee ballot, if I am out of town during the Special Election?

Voters may request that the ballot be mailed to them at a different address. Each voter must sign their respective ballot. If the signature doesn't match, it is not counted. For more information, please visit <http://bit.ly/AbsenteeBallotMDC>.

### Do I have to be a U.S. citizen to vote in the Special Election?

Only citizens can vote in Federal, State, and most local elections. Lawful Permanent Residents (green card holders) cannot vote until they become naturalized U.S. citizens. You must also be a qualified elector and register to vote.

### What is an ad valorem tax?

An ad valorem tax is a tax based on the taxable value of real estate.

### What is a limited ad valorem tax bond?

A limited ad valorem tax bond is when a local government issues bonds backed by its pledge of property taxes. If the tax pledge is limited, the municipality may only increase the property tax up to a certain millage rate, in this case 0.23 mills. If the referendum passes, the millage rate of up to 0.23 mills would be assessed to every property in the Village to pay debt service on the bonds – including those currently with access to the county's drinking water and fire hydrant infrastructure.

### Who will be able to vote?

All registered voters residing in Pinecrest.

### What if I am not a registered voter?

Register to vote by visiting [www.iamelectionready.org](http://www.iamelectionready.org) and clicking on "voter registration". You may also call the Miami-Dade County Elections Department at 305.468.5900 for instructions on how to register.



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### By when do I have to register to vote in order to receive a mail-in ballot?

You must register to vote 29 days before the Special Election – Monday, February 25, 2019. Please contact the Miami-Dade County Elections Department at 305.468.5900 for more information.

### I didn't receive a ballot. What do I do?

Please contact the Miami-Dade County Elections Department at 305.468.5900.

### What will happen if the referendum passes?

All property owners will be taxed no more than 23 cents per \$1,000 of their property's taxable value as determined by the Miami-Dade County Property Appraisers Office over 20 years to cover the principal and interest payments on the bond.

Taxable Property Value	Maximum Annual Assessment	Maximum 20 year Assessment
\$400,000	\$92	\$1,840
\$600,000	\$138	\$2,760
\$800,000	\$184	\$3,680
\$1,000,000	\$230	\$4,600

### How much is the bond?

\$15 million to fund the completion of the Miami-Dade County Water and Sewer infrastructure for county drinking water and fire hydrants in the Village.

### Where can I find my property's taxable value?

The information is available online at [www.miamidade.gov/propertysearch](http://www.miamidade.gov/propertysearch). Type in your property address. Click on the folio number. Scroll down and find your city "taxable value". For a step-by-step guide with visual prompts, please go to [www.pinecrestwatervote.com](http://www.pinecrestwatervote.com) and click on "Calculator: How much will I pay?".



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### How much more will I pay in taxes if the referendum passes?

Based on the median taxable property value in Pinecrest of approximately \$687,200, the amount would be up to \$158 per year for 20 years or up to \$3,160 over 20 years.

### How do you calculate the annual tax?

Taxable Property Value divided by 1,000 and then multiplied by 0.23.

Example based on average taxable property value in Pinecrest:

$\$687,200 / 1000 \times .23 = \$158$

### When will I start to pay, if the referendum passes?

The assessment will be included in the 2019 tax bill.

### When will the results of the referendum be published?

The results will be published election night (March 26, 2019).

### Why is the county drinking water infrastructure incomplete?

In 2007, the Village began a capital project to bring water lines and fire hydrants to approximately 1,500 properties that lacked access to county drinking water. Using funds from a county general obligation bond issue that pledged ad valorem taxes from Miami-Dade County and funds from the State of Florida, the project was partially completed. The funding only provided water and fire hydrant access to approximately 750 properties. Such access was exclusive of the connection costs for each individual property, which are to be borne solely by the property owners. Pinecrest turned over the new infrastructure to the Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department, as it is the Village's water utility. Subsequent efforts to obtain funds from county, state and/or federal governments to complete the infrastructure, at no direct cost to the remaining Pinecrest residents without system access, have been unsuccessful.

### Why is the Village moving forward with a referendum now?

Recently, many residents have asked that the Village consider alternate ways of securing the necessary funds to complete the project.



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### **Does the Village charge for the use of county drinking water?**

No. Miami-Dade County Water and Sewer is the water utility. If the referendum passes, county drinking water infrastructure will be handed over to the county after it is constructed. The Miami-Dade County Water and Sewer Department will then provide water and assume maintenance responsibility of the new infrastructure.

### **Why doesn't Miami-Dade County pay to complete its infrastructure?**

Miami-Dade County has an internal policy that dictates that the cost associated with new water infrastructure be borne by private developers/private property owners. In accordance with county policy, any revenue derived from the sale of water to existing customers can only be used to fund expenditures/improvements to the existing infrastructure – not new infrastructure.

### **What is the scope of the project to complete county drinking water and fire hydrant infrastructure?**

In order to complete the remaining infrastructure, approximately 18.5 miles (98,000 linear feet) of waterline and 208 fire hydrants would need to be built. See map.

### **Once the county drinking water and fire hydrant infrastructure is complete, will there be any additional steps to access county drinking water?**

Yes. The property owner is responsible for the cost to connect the physical house/structure to the waterline in the public right-of-way. The cost is approximately \$2,500 to \$5,000 (but may be more depending on the site conditions) for a plumber and Miami-Dade County Water and Sewer Department water meter and impact fee, plus a Village permit fee of \$151. Miami-Dade County requires that the home connect to the county's water infrastructure within 10 years of receiving access or within 90 days from when the property changes owners – whichever one is first.



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If the referendum passes, what is the timeline of the project?

March 6 to March 16, 2019	Special Election ballots are mailed to registered voters
March 26, 2019 by 7:00 p.m.	Ballots must be at the Miami-Dade County Department of Elections
March 26, 2019 (evening)	Results of Special Election published by Department of Elections
April or May 2019	If the referendum passes, the Village Council will then authorize the Village Manager to proceed with updating the design and construction plans to complete the county drinking water and fire hydrant infrastructure
August through September 2019	The project will be authorized in the FY 2019-20 Budget process
November 2019	Millage increase included in Miami-Dade County tax bill
Late 2019	Bond is issued
Early 2020 - between October and November 2019	Construction bidding and award
Spring 2020	Construction begins
Spring 2022	Construction completed



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**How many bonds does the Village have and what percentage of the budget pays debt service?**

The Village has five bonds. The annual debt service payment is approximately \$1,643,936 which covers the principal and interest associated with the debt schedule for all of the existing loans. This amount represents 5.25% of the total consolidated budget and approximately 7% of the General Fund Budget. Fitch Ratings upgraded Pinecrest's bond issuer rating to 'AAA' from 'AA+' in April 2017. The increased bond rating highlighted the "Village's exceptional financial resilience" and anticipated a revenue growth rate only slightly lagging the pace of the US GDP expansion.

**If the referendum passes, do I still have to pay if I already paid to connect to the county's drinking water and fire hydrant infrastructure?**

Yes, every property owner would be required to pay up to .23 cents per \$1,000 of taxable property value to pay the debt service on the bonds.

**Can I still maintain my well water for my yard, pool and drinking water only?**

You can use well water for irrigation purposes only after submitting an application to the Florida Department of Health along with a \$250 fee. To download the application, please go to <http://bit.ly/WELLFORM>.

**When the taxable value of property goes up, will the Village Council lower the .23 mill rate to the rollback rate to offset the increased taxable value?**

If the referendum passes, the Village Council will decide on an annual basis whether or not to lower the .23 mill rate to offset increasing the increasing taxable value of property. In the event reserves are built up, the funds will go toward the early payoff of the bond issuance.



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Do all Pinecrest residents, with and without access to Miami-Dade County drinking water and fire hydrant infrastructure, currently pay taxes toward existing water infrastructure that was constructed between 2008 and 2010 in the Village?

Yes, in 2004 Miami-Dade County voters approved a \$2.9 billion Building Better Communities Bond Program to fund projects countywide. Out of that bond, Pinecrest received \$4.3 million (.148% of the \$2.9 billion bond) to buildout the backbone of the existing water infrastructure and to provide access to 552 properties.

All Miami-Dade County property owners, including Pinecrest property owners, are paying for the \$2.9 bond through 2061. For more information about the bond program and to see how it financially impacts you, please visit <https://www.miamidade.gov/bondprogram/building-better-communities.asp> and <https://www.miamidade.gov/bondprogram/library/agendas/2012/2012-01-18-Item-III.pdf>.

**Is it true that those who have lived in Pinecrest for 25 or more years will receive a discount when connecting to the county's drinking water and fire hydrant infrastructure?**

This is not true.