



2012/2013 RESIDENTIAL WATER METER PROJECT

Between August of 2012 and the summer of 2013, the City will be installing water meters for all residential water users within City limits. This also includes Spallumcheen residences that are directly connected to the City's water system who are not part of a Water Improvement District.

Typical Installation & Meter Reading

The City has contracted with Corix Utilities who will be supplying and installing all meters. The vast majority of houses will have the meter installed inside the house at the water supply line after the main shut-off valve. A small reading device called a touchpad will be installed on the outside wall of the house. A wire will connect the touchpad to the meter. Installation should take approximately one hour in most cases. Water supply to the house will need to be shut off during the installation. All installers will be readily identifiable as representatives from Corix Utilities and will be carrying picture identification. **Residents can call Corix Utilities toll free at 1-877-666-3837 to book an appointment for installation.** Residents will need to ensure that an adult (18+) is present during installation to provide access and sign off of installation forms.

In some cases, the meter may need to be installed in an underground meter pit outside of the house. There will be no direct charge to residents for installation. In cases where the resident refuses to allow the installers entry into the home or property for installation, the meter will be installed in a meter pit in the City-owned road allowance. In these cases, the homeowner will be billed any additional costs.

The meter is read by a handheld device that when in contact with the touchpad, retrieves the meter number, customer account number, and meter reading from the meter via the wire. There will be no need for the person reading the meter to enter your home to access the meter unless the touchpad is not able to obtain a reading. The meter has its own built-in 20-year battery. No wireless technology will be used for these meters. As such, no wireless transmissions will be generated.

Billing

It is expected that meter installations will be completed by the summer of 2013. Meters will be read semi-annually beginning in late 2013; however, billing will remain on a flat-rate basis in 2013 and 2014 to allow residents to see their water consumption patterns in order to make any changes. During that time, consumption statements will be mailed to residents. Consumption-based billing will begin in 2015. The rate structure chosen will result in approximately the same amount of annual charges as the flat-rate system if consumption mirrors what an average family uses. For households that use less than the average amount of water, there should be a reduction in total annual charges compared to the current flat rate amount. For households that use more than the average, total annual charges will be higher. This will result in a more fair distribution of charges to users.

Multi-Family / Multi-Unit Complexes

Some multi-family complexes will have one central water meter rather than an individual meter for each unit. These will include rental apartments, condominiums, the mobile home park, and some townhouse complexes. In these situations, the water bill will be issued to the property owner for rental properties or the strata council. Some strata complexes where residential units are detached or semi-detached will have individual meters. Water bills will be issued to each unit owner in the same way as a single family residence.

Newer Homes & Select Homes Outside of the City

Single family homes and some strata units that were built in 2007 or later should already have a water meter. As such, the existing meter will be used, but it may be necessary to have the wired touchpad installed. Also, a few homeowners volunteered to have meters installed several years ago for purposes of the City conducting residential consumption research. These homes will retain their existing meter but will have the wireless remote reading device (known as a radio transceiver) removed. Spallumcheen homes that are connected to the City's water system east of the highway and on the Spallumcheen side of Okanagan Street (but not part of a Water Improvement District) will also have meters installed.

Commercial & Mixed Commercial/Residential Buildings

Commercial water users are already metered and pay consumption charges on a quarterly basis. Any residential units inside a commercial building are included in the commercial metered billings to the property owner and are not affected by the meter installation project.

Project Costs & Sources of Funding

The metering project has a budget of \$683,000 and is being funded \$400,000 from existing water utility reserves; \$266,700 from Federal Gas Tax funds; and \$16,300 from a grant from the Okanagan Basin Water Board. The cost of the project was reduced when Council decided against using wireless technology in favour of less-expensive wired technology for purposes of reading the meters. The City will maintain ownership of all meters and touchpads and will be responsible for the cost of maintenance and eventual replacement.