



Frequently Asked Questions

What is an AMI meter?

AMI stands for Automated Metering Infrastructure. It can be an electric, water or gas meter equipped with wireless communication technology. The AMI meters collect usage data electronically daily as opposed to a monthly reading by a city employee. The AMI meter transmits these readings remotely over a private, secure and licensed radio network.

Why are the traditional meters being replaced?

AMI meters represent a significant improvement over previous metering technology. The meters will allow Arlington Water Utilities and their customers to have better billing and water consumption data.

Do AMI meters use radio frequency communications? Is it safe?

Yes. The meters do use radio frequency to send data from the meter to the utility billing department. All communication equipment used for the AMI system complies with federal licensing requirements and is considered safe. According to the California Council on Science and Technology, when installed properly and maintained, the meters result in much smaller levels of radio frequency exposure than many existing common household electronic devices such as cell phones, microwaves and baby monitors.

Will the communications system interfere with home equipment?

All communications equipment used for AMI meets criteria set by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The AMI meter and system operates on its own licensed radio frequency and should not interfere with any equipment inside a home or business.

Will a meter reader still need to visit to read the meter?

The Arlington Water Utilities staff will not be on site to read meters monthly but will continue to need access for periodic inspections and maintenance.

What are the benefits of the AMI meter?

Enhanced Customer Service and Conservation – AMI meters will provide faster and more accurate readings remotely. The additional information will allow our staff to help customers troubleshoot billing concerns and improve conservation efforts by providing information about consumption patterns.

How often will meter data be collected?

Meter data is collected in 1 hour intervals.

Is my AMI meter accurate?

By ordinance, all meters must meet the accuracy test guidelines of the national American Water Works Association when installed and are warranted by the manufacturers. In addition, small meters used for residential service under-register or become less accurate as they age. For example, when a new meter is installed it is 100% accurate at measuring water flow. Over time, the components inside the meter wear down a little and this can reduce the effectiveness of measuring the actual water flow to, for example, 97% accuracy after 15 years or so. This means for every 100 gallons that are used in the home, the meter would only register 97 gallons as having moved through the meter. Meters are typically changed out around 15-20 years or after unusually high historical consumption.