

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is Fayette County Water System replacing meters?

The transition to Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) is an important step for water utilities. As mechanical meters age, they wear down and become less accurate. Replacing aged meters with new ultrasonic meters that have no moving parts is the most cost-effective approach for addressing the County's aging infrastructure and allowing the Water System to provide the most accurate meter readings possible. The AMI Program supports Fayette County's Mission to "provide critical services to protect and enhance the health, safety and welfare of its citizens in a manner that is efficient, fiscally and environmentally responsible, and which perpetuates a quality lifestyle for future generations."

What is AMI?

AMI is Advanced Metering Infrastructure, called AMI for short. With AMI, every customer's water meter within our service area will be able to reliably measure the use of water in your home or business and automatically send a brief, private, digital message via existing cellular network infrastructure to Fayette County Water System, where the information is processed within its billing system.

I don't get great cellular reception at my house. Will this affect my water meter?

No. Despite using existing cellular infrastructure, the meter is not using the same signal as your cell phone.

How will AMI benefit Fayette County Water System?

Installing automated meters will enhance our customer service by minimizing the potential for missed or inaccurate reads—allowing our customers to have confidence in the bills they receive. We are excited to adopt AMI because it will enable us to provide faster service, better information and reliable bills for all our customers.

How will AMI benefit me?

AMI technology ensures that customers pay only for the water they use—no more and no less. By ensuring that your bill is based on actual usage, AMI technology provides enhanced monitoring capabilities. It can also help to identify any irregularities in water usage, such as leaks. Fayette County Water System and its customers can be alerted to abrupt or abnormal changes in water usage much earlier than previously possible, potentially saving customers hundreds or even thousands of dollars from an undetected leak. It will also remove the need for someone to come onto your property for manual meter readings, increasing the privacy of your home.

Do I have to have my meter replaced?

Yes. Each residential meter must be replaced. The meter is the property of Fayette County Water System, and there are no protocols for residents who may wish to opt out of meter replacement.

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How much will this upgrade cost me?

There is no cost to customers for the AMI upgrade.

When will this project begin and when will it end?

The meter replacement portion of the project will begin in late 2023 and is scheduled to be complete by the end of 2025.

What type of system is being installed?

We have selected a system that features Badger Meter E-Series water meters with ORION® Cellular Endpoints.

Who will be replacing the meter?

Pedal Valves, Inc, the authorized meter installation contractor, will be performing the majority of the meter installations during the project. Information on the installation process is available at www.fayettecountyga.gov/water.

What is involved in a typical meter replacement?

The meter replacement will be performed by a contracted installer from Pedal Valves, Inc. All installation personnel will present photo identification and will be driving a clearly marked vehicle. The installer will need access to the meter.

You do not need to be home and you do not need to schedule an appointment to have your meter changed. In either case, please be sure there are no obstructions around the meter that will hamper access. Under normal circumstances, the installation will take approximately 30 minutes. Water service will be interrupted during this time.

Will I need to have any plumbing work done in conjunction with meter replacement?

In most cases, no additional plumbing work will be required. If specific plumbing work is required at your residence, you will be contacted.

How will my replacement be scheduled?

Approximately two (2) weeks prior to installation, you will be mailed additional information about the project and notice that your meter is coming up for replacement. Commercial customers will be contacted directly.

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Is AMI safe?

Yes. The power of the radio frequency signal used is too low to pose a health risk. The products that make up the AMI system are stringently evaluated for safety and meet all standards established by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE). The system sends a signal that can be compared to a cellular text message. It uses low-powered radio frequency (RF) to transmit data. The technology fully complies with U.S. Federal Communications Commission (FCC) guidelines for human exposure to RF energy. The endpoints have been certified by the FCC and tested in accordance with Title 47, Part 15 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). The Food and Drug Administration and the FDA's Center for Devices and Radiological Health have determined that the RF emitted by AMI systems is non-ionizing radiation, which doesn't have enough energy to change the structure of molecules. That means that they are less harmful than X-rays and even ultraviolet light. Some devices that also use non-ionizing radiation include TVs, radios and remote controls.

Will the transmitter radio signal interfere with other electronics?

No, the radio transmission operates in compliance with FCC regulations to avoid interference with electronic devices.

Will my information be secure?

Yes. Your account information is secure. Data transmitted through the system is protected and proprietary communication protocols are used. Each radio frequency device has a unique identification number, which is transmitted along with the meter reading. The unique number is compared with account records to ensure a match. No personal account information is transmitted, only meter readings and consumption data

How accurate is my new meter?

The Badger Meter E-Series meters meet or exceed the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and the American Water Works Association (AWWA) standards for accuracy. All meters are tested and calibrated at the factory before shipping and come with a multi-year material and accuracy warranty. The E-series meter has no moving parts and retains an industry-leading degree of accuracy throughout its lifespan.

How do you know that the meter reading is accurate?

Water utilities all over the world are adopting AMI technology, first and foremost because it provides accurate information. The reading at the meter is regularly converted into a digital format using technology that has proven to be highly reliable and secure. It improves accuracy in large part because it eliminates the potential for human error in manual meter reading.

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Will my water bill increase?

As some water meters age, they can under-register water use. When we change out your current mechanical meter with a new ultrasonic meter, consumption will register more accurately for your usage, which may result in impact to your bill.

Will the billing frequency change?

Water utility bills will continue to be issued monthly.

Will Fayette County Water System be monitoring my water consumption?

The day-to-day water usage of individual users will not be routinely monitored by Fayette County Water System. System-wide monitoring capabilities will be used to flag flow anomalies, leaks, and other conditions to best operate the water system as a whole.

Will I be able to access my own water consumption data?

Yes. Customers will have easy access to information about their own water consumption through a user-friendly app that allows you to compare current usage to previous periods and set email and text alerts to achieve conservation goals.

Will there be any difference in the delivery or quality of water after my meter upgrade?

No, you will continue to receive the same high-quality water you have come to expect from Fayette County Water System.

What if I have questions about the last meter read before my upgrade?

The installer will take digital photographs of the last meter reading. Should any questions arise, our utility billing staff will have this information available to answer your inquiry.

What if I have additional questions?

Please contact Fayette County Water System at 770-461-1146