

ADVANCED METERING INFRASTRUCTURE

The City of Covington has contracted with SUEZ for the installation of an Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) system. Advanced metering technology enables the wireless transmission of water and gas meter readings directly to Covington Gas and Water from regional collectors located on existing water towers and antennas. This innovative system will collect multiple reads per day, allowing for better detection of continuous consumption, closer meter reading and billing dates, and improved customer service.

Benefits to Customers:

- Covington Gas and Water can provide your detailed consumption (hourly readings), a customer portal to provide you with access is planned for the future
- Smarter decisions regarding service and usage
- Higher reliability due to timely readings
- Closer meter reading and billing dates
- Problem solving capabilities
- Improved customer engagement and service.

Benefits to the City of Covington:

- Improve customer relationship
- Increase efficiency in billing and customer service
- Improve operations
- Reduced labor and travel for meter reading
- Improve non-revenue water analysis
- Improve workforce management
- Reduce carbon footprint
- Improve safety and security
- Improved leak detection

Advanced Metering also supports the City's commitment to preserving and protecting the environment:

- Carbon emissions will be greatly reduced by taking meter readers off the road.
- Covington Gas and Water's ability to quickly detect and stop leaks will be greatly enhanced.
- By providing up-to-date water usage data, customers can improve their efforts to conserve.

ADVANCED METERING INFRASTRUCTURE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How can I access the data provided by the new meters?

If you would like to review your usage data, contact City Hall at 901-476-9613 and a Customer Service Representative will assist you.

How does Covington Gas and Water know these meters are accurate?

The meters are tested by the manufacturers and comply with the American Water Works Association standards. If for any reason you are concerned about the accuracy of your meter or inaccurate billing, call Covington Gas and Water's Customer Service Department at 901-476-9613 or email dgray@covingtontn.com.

How does the AMI system work?

It uses a radio network to transmit customer usage data allowing electronic reading and eliminating the need for visual inspection.

How is the installation done?

- Many water meters have been replaced and are AMI ready. These meters will simply be fitted with the AMI transmitter.
- Older meters will be replaced with new meters and the AMI transmitter.
- Installers will clean the area and make sure the new device is working properly.
- You will notice a small device attached to the meter in your meter box, this device is the transmission unit that is attached to the meter

How long will the installation process take?

In most cases, less than 30 minutes. During this time, your water service may be turned off to complete the install of the new meter if needed.

How long will this new device work?

The life expectancy of the devices installed in the field is 20 years. Periodic inspection and maintenance will be performed to ensure all devices are performing as expected.

How will the project benefit the Covington Gas and Water and its customers?

AMI technology has been proven in many utilities across the country. AMI minimizes meter reading costs and is faster and more efficient than automated or manual meter reading.

Benefits to Customers:

- Ability to track consumption (hourly readings);
- Smarter decisions regarding service and usage;
- Higher reliability due to timely readings;
- Closer meter reading and billing dates;
- Problem solving capabilities;
- Improved customer engagement and service.

Benefits to Covington Gas and Water:

- Improve customer relationships
- Increase efficiency in billing and customer service
- Improve operations
- Reduced labor and travel for meter reading
- Improve non-revenue water analysis
- Improve workforce management
- Reduce carbon footprint
- Improve safety and security

Advanced Metering also supports Covington Gas and Waters commitment to preserving and protecting the environment.

- Carbon emissions will be greatly reduced by taking meter readers off the road.
- Covington Gas and Waters ability to quickly detect and stop leaks will be greatly enhanced.
- By providing up-to- date water usage data, customers can improve their efforts to conserve.

If I am getting AMI technology, will I be notified before the installation takes place?

Yes. You will receive a notification at least one week prior to installations beginning in your area. On the date of installation, Vanguard Utility Service, our certified installation contractor will attempt to contact you at your home. If there is no one home or no adult present when the contractor arrives for the meter install, they will leave a door hanger with instructions for you to call and schedule an appointment.

If I notice a problem after installation, whom should I contact?

If you notice a problem after installation, please email dgray@covingtontn.com or call 901-476-9613.

Is my privacy secure?

Yes, measures are in place to ensure your information is secure and kept safe at all times. Covington Gas and Water will not provide this information to any other person or business. Only account holders or authorized persons will receive information regarding meter readings.

Is the AMI technology safe?

The new meters will not negatively affect your health. The wireless portions of the system will be operated per Federal Communications Commission rules, and will not interfere with other radio frequencies in the area. The transmitters use one-quarter of the power of a cellphone transmission. Exposure to radio waves from advanced meters is tiny compared to cellphones transmissions. The amount of exposure to radio waves decreases with the square of the distance from the radio source and the total transmission time is less than 2 seconds per day.

Is there any special care or maintenance that I need to do to my new meter?

As in the past, Covington Gas and Water will maintain your meter. Please know that this new meter has transmitting technology on it that allows your meter to be read remotely on a daily basis.

What are advanced meters?

Advanced meters are water meters that offer two-way communications between the meter at your home or business and Covington Gas and Water. They are a key component of our new Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) system.

What do I need to do to prepare?

Please provide our installation contractor with a clear and unobstructed path to the water and gas meters.

When will I get my advanced meter?

Installations will begin around mid-March early April. The entire project should take approximately 15 months to complete. In most cases, the transition will be completely transparent and will have minimal effect for customers. The work will be performed during the normal working hours of Monday-Saturday 8:00AM – 5:00PM.

Covington Gas and Water has contracted with Vanguard Utility Service to install all new Advanced Meters. You will receive a notification prior to your new Meter installation.

Who do I call if I have questions or concerns about my advanced meter?

Covington Gas and Waters Customer Service Representatives are available Monday – Friday from 8:00 am until 4:30 pm. You can reach a representative by calling 901-476-9613 or emailing dgray@covingtontn.com.

Who is involved in the AMI Initial Implementation Project?

All meters will be upgraded to an AMI Advanced Meter.

Who will install the AMI device?

Covington Gas and Water has contracted with Vanguard Utility Service to install all meters. They will be driving vehicles marked with both Covington Gas and Waters logo and Vanguard Utility Service logo.

Why is Covington Gas and Water installing advanced meters? What are the benefits?

Covington Gas and Water is in the process of upgrading its technology to better serve customers. Advanced meters offer a number of benefits for both Covington Gas and Water and our customers, including more detailed water usage information and the ability to address issues more quickly and effectively. The new meters will help Covington Gas and Water operate more efficiently and pass on benefits to customers, including the following:

- Improved customer service and support
- Fewer estimated bills
- Detailed hourly usage data
- Data to help resolve billing and usage questions
- Faster service for customers who open and close accounts
- Reduced operating costs
- Better data allowing staff to plan, construct and optimize the water distribution system

Will I be able to read my water meter after the AMI device is installed?

Yes, visual meter reading will still be available as a back-up.

Will I be charged for this new service?

No, there is no additional cost for the new meter. The funding for this technology is incorporated in the water bill you already receive.

Will my water bill look different?

No. The look of your water bill will remain the same for now.

Will my water service be disrupted during this process?

A 30 minute service shut-off will be necessary during your meter replacement.

Will the AMI device's radio signals affect the operation of other electronic devices in my home?

No, the device's radio signal is similar but significantly weaker than that of a cordless phone.

Will the new device affect my bill?

Installation of the AMI transmitter will not affect your bill. A new meter is more accurate than old meters, so your bill may change to reflect the accurate measurement of your water use.

Will I be able to opt out?

No, Covington Municipal Code 18-115 states the service line meters and meter boxes are owned by the municipality.