

# Water Meter Upgrade Project

Okaloosa County Water & Sewer’s meter upgrade project is a step toward a more modernized water metering system, which will help us all as a community to better manage our water resources. The upgrades will include replacing older water meters for new meters with Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI). AMI uses a low-powered communication device that’s added to your new water meter to transmit meter readings over radio frequency. The Water Meter Upgrade Project will begin on November 1st, 2018, and it is expected to take approximately one year to complete.



Old Meter



New Meter

**What to Expect**..... 1

**Pre-Installation**..... 2

**How You Can Help** ..... 2

**Day of Installation** ..... 2

**Post-installation** ..... 2

**Frequently Asked Questions:** ..... 3

## What to Expect

Professional Meters, Inc., (PMI), the installation contractor working on behalf of Okaloosa County Water & Sewer, will be performing your water meter upgrade. The installer will have identification that shows he or she is a representative of PMI, and all vehicles will have PMI’s logo. You do not need to be home during the upgrade. The installer will never need access into your home.



## Pre-Installation

One to two weeks prior to installation, a postcard will be mailed to the physical address of the meter to let you know that the contractor will be in your area to install your new water meter.

Most customers will not need to schedule an appointment; however, appointments can be scheduled for customers on an as-needed basis. This includes appointments for customers who have meters that are inaccessible to the installer. If your meter is inaccessible, please contact PMI at (866) 965-0658 to schedule an appointment.

### Okaloosa County Water Meter Upgrade Project

Okaloosa County Water & Sewer will be upgrading water meters as a step toward a more modernized water metering system, which will help our community to better manage our water resources.

**Our contractor, Professional Meters, Inc. (PMI), will be coming by in the next two to three weeks to upgrade your meter.** You do not have to be present for the upgrade. If the meter needs replacing, you will have an interruption of service for approximately fifteen minutes. Please make sure we have easy access to your water meter. Your meter should not be blocked by bushes, vines, equipment, or other materials. If you have a meter behind a locked gate or your meter is otherwise inaccessible, please call PMI at 1-866-965-0658 (toll free) to schedule an appointment to replace your meter.

For answers to frequently asked questions regarding the meter upgrade project, please visit [www.okaloosaws.com](http://www.okaloosaws.com).



## How You Can Help

- After receiving your post card, schedule an appointment with PMI if your meter is inaccessible.
- Clear any obstructions from around the water meter, including trimming plants or bushes.
- Secure pets away from the water meter.

## Day of Installation

- On the day of installation, the installer will visit your meter box and exchange your current water meter for a new automated meter. The installation takes about 30 minutes to complete, during which the water will be shut off for about 15 minutes. When the work is complete, the installer will leave a door hanger which explains the procedure that took place, and communicates any further action(s) needed by the customer if a meter was unable to be exchanged.
- A new meter box and lid may also be installed.
- Pre and post installation photographs will be taken.

## Post-installation

- After installation of the AMI meter, you may still see the meter installation vendor in the area conducting quality assurance audits on the installations performed in your neighborhood. This action should not cause an interruption to your water service.
- Once your AMI meter is installed, your water usage will be read and transmitted via a secure radio transmission instead of the current manual monthly meter reads.

## Frequently Asked Questions:

**Q:** Will I see a charge on my bill for the meter exchange/upgrade?

**A:** No. This project is being paid for by funding from Okaloosa County Water & Sewer's Capital Improvement Project budget.

**Q:** Will this new meter cause my bill to increase?

**A:** Old meters with moving parts tend to slow down over time, allowing water to pass by the meter undetected. New Sensus iPerl meters have no moving parts, and are able to detect very small levels of consumption. Therefore, there may be an increase in the recorded consumption.

**Q:** Can I just keep the meter I have?

**A:** Some customers already have an updated Sensus iPerl meter. In those cases, the meter will remain the same and the only upgrade necessary may be the programming of a transmitter. All other meters will be replaced.

**Q:** Will the installers need access into my home?

**A:** Never. All installers will have identification, and there will never be reason why they need to enter your home.

**Q:** Does the meter use my home's electricity to transmit meter readings?

**A:** No. The meter uses a battery to transmit meter readings. The battery is expected to last 20 years, and it is Okaloosa County Water & Sewer's responsibly to replace it when needed.

**Q:** What other information gets transmitted?

**A:** The meter transmits consumption information, as well as alerts when it detects an empty pipe or signs of meter tampering.

**Q:** If I am taking a shower or doing laundry, will my water still be shut off?

**A:** Meters will generally be exchanged Monday – Saturday from 8am – 8pm. If there is movement on the meter, which indicates water is being used inside the home, PMI will leave a door tag and make a second attempt at a later time. If there is movement on the meter during the second attempt, PMI will leave a door tag requesting that the resident make an appointment. A third attempt will still be made by PMI, even if no appointment was made.

**Q:** Are there any health hazards associated with the new equipment?

**A:** No. The equipment operates at a low-power radio frequency, comparable to a cordless telephone. All equipment operates in compliance with state and federal communication standards. In addition, water meters are installed away from the house, so potential exposure is very limited.

**Q:** If I have any other questions, who should I call?

**A:** Any questions or concerns regarding the scheduling of your upgrade, or issues you may be having with your meter or water service immediately after the upgrade, should be directed to PMI at 1-866-965-0658.