



## FAQs

### Automated Water Meter Project: What You Need to Know

#### **Important Information on Project**

##### **Why is the Village replacing water meters?**

The Village is replacing water meters for the following reasons:

- Improve Customer Service.
- Implement a remotely read system that will no longer require meter readers to visit every property in the Village.
- Provide customers with easier access to their usage information via a customer portal. Give customers access to their usage information in near real time to help identify
- Help water customers be more knowledgeable about their usage and reduce their water consumption.
- Reduce the amount of unreported water usage in accordance with the Village's water allocation.

##### **What is AMI?**

AMI stands for Automated Metering Infrastructure. The Village of Northbrook is replacing existing water meters with new meters that utilize AMI technology to remotely read customer meters and relay the data to the Villages' Utility Billing Office, providing timely and reliable reading without having to gain access to your property. The Village will no longer have to go door to door or enter properties throughout the entire community to read meters.

##### **How does AMI work?**

A small box, or transmitter, is installed on the interior of your house or business near your water meter. It is connected to your new water meter inside your home and transmits a radio signal to a data collector. Your meter reading is then transmitted to the Village instantaneously and hourly. Each meter has a unique identification number that ensures only your reading is assigned to your account. This system reduces the need for manual meter readings, catches any leaks sooner, and is far more accurate.

##### **Is there a charge for this meter replacement?**

The cost of the meter, radio, and installation of those two components is paid for by the Village of Northbrook.

##### **How will the new meter affect my bill?**

The new water meter will be more accurate and capture all the water being used. You will only be billed based on the water that goes through your water meter.

##### **What if I recently changed my meter?**

If you recently installed a Neptune Mach 10 (most meters since 2020), it will not be replaced. However, you will need to make an appointment to have an ERT (radio component) added to it. If a resident or business recently purchased and installed a meter the Village will not issue a refund for that meter.

##### **What is involved with a typical installation?**

The Village has hired Veregy, LLC. to install your new water meter. Veregy, LLC. will schedule an appointment with you at a convenient time for you. Veregy, LLC. personnel will need access to wherever the



meter is located. It could be in your basement, utility room, crawl space, garages, etc. An adult (minimum of 18 years old) must be present while we work inside the premises. Please make sure that there are no obstructions around your meter that may hamper access to the device.

Under normal circumstances, the installation will take approximately 30 minutes. Momentary water service interruptions will occur to change out the meter.

Veregy, LLC. employees will provide proper identification when installing your meters while also wearing project specific clothing and having project decals on their vehicle.

### **How long does a meter installation take?**

When you make an appointment for the installation of your new water meter, the appointment block will be in 2-hour increments, however in most cases the meter change-out itself will take approximately 30 minutes.

### **Is there anything I, as a property owner, need to do?**

Yes, you must schedule a time to have the meter replaced after you receive a postcard. This is easy to do with very convenient hours. However, the best times are limited, and you should schedule your appointment as soon as you get a post card in the mail. It will make the process seamless.

### **I have pets in my home/at my business, is there anything I need to do before or during the meter change out appointment?**

During the appointment, the installer may have to enter and leave the home or business if parts are needed from their vehicle. It is helpful to isolate them in order to help the installer complete the replacement as quickly as possible and avoid them getting out.

### **Is there anything I as a property owner need to do before my meter appointment?**

Before your meter appointment, you can your meter accessible. Having a clear working space of 24 inches tall by 36 inches wide around the meter will help make the installation go faster. If the water meter is enclosed behind a wall, panel, etc. the meter will need to be made accessible.

### **Is there anything I need to do after the new meter is installed?**

Prior to using your water, we recommend that you flush your lines by turning on the cold water at the lowest level of your home. Avoid flushing from faucets that have an aerator. Do not use hot water faucets for flushing as that may draw sediment into your water heater's tank.

### **Will my information be secure?**

Yes, only meter consumption data and meter numbers are transmitted. Personal customer information is not loaded into the transmitter and therefore, cannot be transmitted.

### **With the new meter, my usage has increased. How can that be?**

Depending on the age of the meter that was replaced at your property, you may see a more accurate accounting of the water being used. The Village's old meters were mechanical and relied on moving pieces in the meter to account for water being used. Those mechanical meters can slow down and under record the water being used due to:

- Components of the old meters may have been stuck and not reading.



- Mechanical components of the old meters can slow down and under read the water going through the meter.
- The new meters do not contain any moving pieces and are guaranteed to be accurate for approximately 20 years.
- The meters only register the water going through/has gone through them into the home or business.
- Customers will have access to the customer portal that will help them identify their usage, allow them to setup alerts for excessive usage, and help diagnose their high bills.

### **How are the new meters different than the old meters?**

Most meters being replaced are mechanical meters. This means that they have moving pieces that spin to register the water being used. The new meters use soundwaves to detect the flow and velocity of the water in the meter.

### **What can I do if my bill is higher because it is registering a higher usage?**

Utilize the Water Smart App to track your usage and identify ways to reduce your water usage.

### **When can I sign-up for the new customer portal?**

You will need to have your new meter installed before signing up with the Customer Portal. When you have had your new meter installed, customers can register and create a username/password in the portal via this link below:

### **How Do I Sign-Up for the Customer Portal?**

After the installation of your new meter and/or ERT (radio) you will be able to sign-up for the customer portal and gain access to your current usage information. To sign-up, follow the instructions left for you after the meter was installed.

### **Does the water meter or radio (ERT) need to be plugged in?**

No, these two devices are powered by internal batteries.

### **Do I have to participate in the Automated Water Meter Project?**

Participation in the automated water meter project is mandatory and there are no exemptions or exceptions to participating in the meter replacement program. Not allowing the meter to be replaced may result in your water being turned off.

### **I or my contractor build a wall or compartment to hide the meter, will the Village or Veregy open that up? Will the Village or Veregy restore the area after the meter is replaced?**

Neither the Village of Northbrook nor Veregy will cut open walls or remove soffits to access water meters. That is the responsibility of the property owner.

After the meter is installed, it is required that the area remains open and accessible. The Village nor Veregy will restore any opened walls, soffits, etc.

### **After my meter has been replaced, can I replace the old glass block it was read through?**

After your meter has been replaced, you can replace the glass block it was read through. In lieu of replacing the glass block, property owners can use insulation to block out the glass block and provide some protection for the meter and internal plumbing.

### **Will the Village move the meter to a new location in my home or business?**

No, the intent is to remove the current meter and install the new meter in the same location.



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