Roseville Water Metering



City of Roseville Water Meter Retrofit Program Frequently Asked Questions

Why are water meters necessary?

- The city receives water from Folsom Reservoir which is owned and operated by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR). All water utilities that receive USBR water are required to develop and implement a water conservation program that includes metering of all water service connections with billing based on actual water usage. The federal law which requires metering is the Central Valley Project Improvement Act, signed in 1992. The law may be found at http://www.mp.usbr.gov/cvpia/title34/index.html.
- The city participated in the regional Water Forum process in which all water purveyors using water from the American River agreed to adopt water conservation measures, including metering, to ensure sufficient water supplies and to protect environmental values along the lower American River for the next 30 years and beyond.
- The Roseville Water Treatment Plant Environmental Impact Report, adopted by the City Council in August 1999, reiterated the city's commitment to water conservation through, among other measures, the implementation of water metering and conservation rates.
- Future growth will continue to stretch the supply of safe and reliable water. The city, through its USBR and Water Forum agreements, has made a commitment to conservation and responsible stewardship of water resources.

Are other areas in the Sacramento region being metered?

Yes. Water providers throughout the Sacramento region are in various stages of installing water meters. While metering is new to some areas of Sacramento, it is a common and long-standing practice in almost every city and region of California and throughout the country.

What are the benefits of metering?

All water service customers will benefit from water metering. Metering will help the city better manage its water supply, foster efficient water use among customers and ensure that customers enjoy a high-quality and reliable water source for decades to come. Water meters are also an efficient tool for detecting water leaks in your service line.

An additional benefit is more equitable charges for water service. Meters, along with a rate based on usage, will allow customers to pay for what they actually use. Customers then can directly benefit from conservation measures they choose to implement.

What if I don't have a water meter yet?

Within 10 to 12 years, full metering will be implemented throughout Roseville. Since 1992, state law has required water meters as part of all new construction. As a result, about 40 percent of the homes in Roseville already have water meters.

Eventually, every water customer in the city will have a water meter. Currently, there are three types of residential service conditions: 1) those who already have water meters; 2) those with meter boxes that only need a meter placed inside (meterready); and 3) those who do not have anything in place for metering installation (full retrofit). Some customers have been made meter-ready by the city as part of rehabilitation projects. Although they are "meter-ready," they are considered as needing a "full retrofit" for purposes of the surcharges discussed later.

Meter retrofitting and installation will take place on a neighborhood-by-neighborhood basis. The sequence in which neighborhoods (water meter zones) will be metered was randomly selected. Johnson Ranch will be the first water meter zone to have meters installed beginning in July 2001. The complete water meter installation schedule is available on the city's Web site at www.roseville.ca.us.

How much does a water meter cost?

When a water meter is installed during new home construction, the cost of meter installation is about \$375. In a retrofit situation the cost is higher because the service line must be located, excavated and cut into, and meter boxes, lids, re-setters, shutoffs and meters installed. Sometimes old service lines may need to be replaced. The average cost for a full retrofit installation is estimated to be \$775. The average cost to install a meter on a meter-ready service is about \$160. Once a meter is installed, all reasonable efforts will be made to restore the site to its previous condition.

Will I be required to pay this?

In January 2001, the City Council approved the Water Meter Retrofit Program and adopted a plan for citywide meter installation.

Currently, there are three types of residential metering customers:

- customers who already have a water meter;
- customers who had a meter box installed during construction of their residence but do not have a water meter; and
- customers who have no meter box or had a meter box installed by the city as part of a city-funded rehabilitation or repair project.

Customers who need a water meter will pay a surcharge applied to their monthly water bill beginning this summer. The following surcharges will apply for a ten-year period:

Already metered: No charge

Meter-ready at construction: \$1.58/month

Meter-ready by city: \$7.20/month

Full meter retrofit: \$7.20/month

Will assistance be provided to low-income water customers?

To assist low-income customers who require a water meter, the city is developing a low-income assistance program. The program will provide for a 50 percent reduction in the monthly surcharge for qualified applicants. Information about this upcoming program will be provided in *Roseville Reflections*. In addition, the Housing and Redevelopment Department can be reached at (916) 774-5720 for more information.

Will I be notified about meter installation?

Yes. Advance notification will be sent to you prior to installation or retrofitting. You will also be notified well in advance of when you will start paying for water service based on how much water you use (a metered rate).

How will metered rates affect my bill?

With metering, your water bill will be based on the amount of water you actually use rather than paying a flat rate. Metered billing is similar to the way you pay for gas, electricity or telephone service.

The city is in the process of developing a metered rate structure. City staff has started to read the existing meters to gather information about residential water use. Council will consider the metered rate structure this fall.

When will I be billed on a metered rate?

Once an entire water meter zone is metered, residents will have a one-year period of time before metered rates go into effect. During that time, customers will receive information about how much water they use and a comparison of current flat rates versus a metered rate. After the one-year period, metered rates will go into effect. Anticipated timeframes for this transition can be found on the water meter installation schedule at www.roseville.ca.us.

For water meter zones which are completely metered by the end of 2001, a flat rate versus metered rate comparison will appear in residential water bills beginning in January 2002, and metered billing will begin in January 2003. Each subsequent quarter, after one year of comparative billing, metered billing will begin for additional neighborhoods that have been completely metered.

How can I determine how much water I am using?

For one year prior to paying metered rates, your water utility bill will provide you with information showing how much water you use and a comparison of current flat rates versus a metered rate.

Are there things I can do now to conserve water?

Yes. To help you use water more efficiently, the city offers a free water use survey. A certified water auditor will visit your home to review your water use, check your irrigation system, inspect for water leaks and offer water saving tips specific to your property. Free water saving devices are available for customer installation.

What can I do to become more informed?

- Two special video presentations explaining the need for water meters are available for viewing at the Roseville Main Library located at 225 Taylor Street (near downtown Roseville and Royer Park).
- Watch for future FYI and Focus segments on Channel 11 (government access channel).
- Upcoming issues of *Roseville Reflections* will include timely information about the Water Meter Retrofit Program.
- A metering brochure will be distributed when city crews begin meter installation in your neighborhood.
- Information is available on the city Web page (www.roseville.ca.us, click on Water Metering under "Subject").

For questions or additional information, please contact the Roseville Environmental Utilities Department at (916) 774-5750 or by email at watermeters@roseville.ca.us.

This information was updated on March 22, 2001, and is subject to change. For future updates, please contact the Environmental Utilities Department at (916) 774-5750.