

Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) Frequently Asked Questions

What is Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI)?

AMI is a technology solution that allows two-way communication between electric, gas and water meters and City Utilities. In the future, this two-way network will also be used to communicate with other devices on CU's electric, gas and water distribution systems, thus providing a greater level of information about the status of those systems.

What is an Advanced Meter?

Advanced Meters allow for two-way communication on an Advanced Metering network. The meters collect usage data in increments. City Utilities will configure electric meters to collect usage in 30-minute increments, and gas and water meters to collect in hourly increments. The electric meters will also collect incremental data on voltage, current and temperature. The meters then transmit the data to City Utilities via the two-way network. Additionally, City Utilities personnel can remotely communicate with the meters to get current reads, check status, and disconnect and reconnect electric power.

Is Advanced Metering new technology?

No, Advanced Metering has been around for many years and is implemented at millions of homes and businesses across the United States. Advanced Metering is already implemented at many of the utilities that surround the City Utilities service territory.

When will Advanced Meters be installed at my home or business?

City Utilities will be installing Advanced Meters over the course of several years. Current plans are to perform installations from 2015 through 2023; however this pace can change for a variety of factors. A map on City Utilities' website (cityutilities.net/AMI) will show the most current known installation timelines and areas.

Will I be notified prior to any meter installations at my home or business?

On the day of installation, a uniformed City Utilities' employee or authorized contractor will knock on your door prior to any installation. A door hanger will be left on your door following the installation.

Will the new Advanced Electric Meter fit in my existing meter socket? What if the socket is damaged?

Yes, the Advanced Electric Meters we are purchasing will fit your existing meter socket. The swap is very easy and quick.

During installation, CU personnel or authorized contract personnel will carefully inspect your meter socket for damage. If it is determined that the meter socket is in need of repair, we will contact the homeowner to make arrangements for repair. Repair of the meter socket is normally a responsibility and cost borne by the customer. However, during this project to upgrade your old electric meter to a newer Advanced Meter, CU will bear the cost of repairing or replacing your meter socket. Our desire is that this project will not impose unexpected costs to our customers.

Will the appearance of my electric, gas or water meters be different?

The electric and water meters will look the same, with the exception that the usage read-outs will be digital with Advanced Metering. The gas meter will be the same, with the exception of a small gray box added just behind the meter dials.

Will my service be interrupted during installations?

Yes, for the electric meter there will be a brief outage of power while the meter is exchanged.

For water and gas meters, interruptions will depend on various factors. Water and gas meters don't have to be exchanged; they just get an upgraded part that enables them to be Advanced Meters. Our desire is to upgrade these parts at the residence, with no service interruption. However, various factors could change that, creating the need to interrupt service momentarily while the upgrade takes place. In some instances, the entire meter may need to be changed out. CU will seek the option that causes the least amount of interruption.

If I have questions about AMI, how do I get those answered?

- Our website (cityutilities.net/AMI) has a variety of information that may answer your questions.
- You may email CU with your AMI questions by accessing cityutilities.net/AMI and clicking the "Contact Us" button.
- For AMI-specific questions, you may also call 417-831-8800.

How does Advanced Metering benefit me?

At a high level, Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) will provide you with better information to utilize your utility resources more efficiently. As the system is developed, you will have access to more detailed information about your energy and water usage via "Manage My Account," the City Utilities customer web portal. Additionally, when the power at your home is interrupted, City Utilities will be automatically notified.

With Advanced Metering, City Utilities will be able to provide a higher level of customer service; offer better electric, gas and water reliability; and keep our operating costs low. The additional and timelier information available through AMI will enable us to better address customer questions and issues. That same information will give City Utilities a view of what is happening throughout the various distribution systems, thus enabling us to be more proactive and avoid outages or other system issues. Many functions that require sending crews out to the field today will be performed remotely with AMI, thus saving labor, fuel and vehicle costs, in addition to being more environmentally friendly.

Below is a short list of benefits related to Advanced Metering:

- Outage notification
- Customer portal – usage data
- Reduction of vehicle emissions (meter reader vehicles)
- Future ability for renewable resources (current solar energy program)
- Identification of theft (keeps costs low)
- Identification of water leaks or trouble shooting excessive usage
- Customer privacy – no meter reader on premise
- Reduced risk to utility employees – dog bites, vehicle incidents, other job hazards
- Fewer estimated bills due to inability to conduct manual reads due to locked gates, bad dogs, etc.

What will Advanced Metering cost me?

There will be no additional customer bill charges for this new technology. The project is being funded out of normal operating budgets. As City Utilities realizes financial benefits, those savings will also be used to fund this project.

Will I have access to my meter data?

Yes. As the system is developed, you will have access to more detailed information about your energy and water usage via "Manage My Account," the City Utilities customer web portal. Additional functionality will be added as we continually improve the system. This functionality will enable you to make better choices about how you use your utility resources.

Will anyone else have access to my meter data?

Just like today, the account owner and City Utilities will be the only ones with access to your usage data.

Will City Utilities be able to control anything in my home or business?

No. City Utilities has designed our Advanced Metering system such that our access stops at the meter. We have no intention of offering programs to control consumer devices in the home. If, in the future, it makes sense to offer such programs, they would be on a voluntary basis by each individual customer. Such programs can be financially beneficial to customers, but have to be signed up for by the customer. At no time would CU be able to control or monitor anything in the customer's home or business without the customer's permission, knowledge and installation of additional specialized equipment.

Will I still need to call when my power is out?

Initially, we are asking customers to still call in (1-888-863-8901) to report outages, even with an Advanced Electric Meter installed at their home or business. As we deploy the Advanced Metering system, we will be testing many aspects to ensure the communication is flowing efficiently and effectively, as it relates to outage notification. Once we are assured all is working as it should, we will notify customers that calling to report an outage is optional.

How does all of this work?

Water and gas meters communicate with nearby electric meters. The electric meters can communicate with other nearby electric meters and ultimately with a collection point, which creates what is called a mesh network. The mesh network is very redundant, resilient, and self-healing. Water and gas meters will transmit data to the electric meters once per day. Electric meters transmit their data every four hours back to the database.

Does this mean a meter reader will no longer come by my house?

Once all the meters at a residence or business are replaced with Advanced Metering functionality and communications have been tested and proven, then CU will cease to send a person to manually read your meters. Until ALL meter types (electric, gas, water) at your house are changed, we will still need to send a meter reader to your home.

What if I don't want an Advanced Meter?

City Utilities would request you contact us at our AMI phone number (417-831-8800) to discuss your concerns and options. We want to ensure you have the best possible information prior to making this decision.

City Utilities does have a mechanism to allow customers to Opt Out of the Advanced Metering program, under certain circumstances. Customers choosing this option will forego all the benefits associated with this technology, including valuable usage information, automatic outage notification, no longer having CU meter readers on your property, better utility problem resolution, etc.

There will be no initial charge for opting out of this program. However, in the years to come, when most other meters are read electronically, charges may be assessed due to the operating costs incurred with manually reading meters.