
ATTENTION MOUNT CARROLL CUSTOMERS

Beginning the week of April 16, 2018, the City will soon be starting to replace all of the residential and commercial water meters within its water distribution system.

All users will be contacted by Mechanical Incorporated to schedule an appointment to change out your old meter. Mechanical is a company out of Freeport that has been hired by the City to install the new water meters.

Construction of the \$405,800 project is being financed by a low interest loan from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency's Public Water Supply Loan Program (PWSLP). The City is securing \$202,908 in principal loan forgiveness and will be financing the remaining loan balance at an interest rate of 1.00%, to be paid over a 20-year period.

The Public Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) is administered by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA). A portion of the IEPA money to fund these types of projects comes from the US Environmental Protection Agency. SRF programs operate in each state to provide communities with the resources to build, maintain and improve the infrastructure that protects one of our most valuable resources: water.

The City's Water Meter Replacement Project is being done to replace the aged, outdated, and non-functioning water meters within the City's water distribution system, which includes a new meter collection device and meter software. The new meters can provide a multitude of functions that can provide valuable data in addition to more accurate readings of water usage. The new meters can detect tampering and will have the capability to detect excess water usage and leaks in a timelier manner, possibly eliminate damage to personal property if such a leak occurs. Data can be stored, and reports generated documenting usage if there are billing discrepancies.



For more information, please contact City Hall at 815-244-4424.

Mount Carroll, Illinois

Home of Brick Streets and Country Charm!

Water Meter Replacement Project Informational Sheet

What is it?

Approximately 850 water meters in Mount Carroll will be replaced starting in April 2018. The new meters which will greatly increase metering accuracy and will feature automated meter reading capabilities. The meters will eliminate the need for homeowners to manually read the meters, provide an accurate account of water usage, and will greatly enhance the City's record keeping and billing process.

Why is my meter being replaced?

Based upon 10 years of data collected by the City, its water loss is more than 45% per year and costs the City roughly \$28,000 a year to pump and treat. Unaccounted water loss is the difference between water pumped vs. water paid. Water meters and their registers lose accuracy as they age; therefore, they must be replaced every 15 to 20 years. More than half of Mount Carroll's meters are older than 30 years, with the remaining meters being more than 10 years old. The new system will include Automatic Meter Reading (AMR) technology that will save labor hours, freeing up staff to do other infrastructure projects. The AMR will also prevent recording errors, minimize the need for City staff to go on private property, and potentially identify in-house water leaks by analysis of data collected. The new meter technology will also streamline the process of transferring responsibility for an account when a customer moves in or out, offer monthly billing, and on-line pay options.

What does it mean for me?

The new system will allow water customers to identify waste and consider corrective measures which will translate into 'smarter' water use and increased energy savings. Efficient water use will reduce the City's use of energy and chemicals in treating and delivering water to you, the consumer.

When will my meter be replaced?

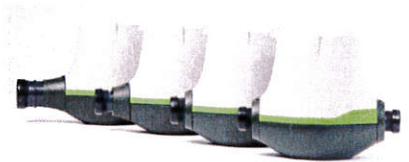
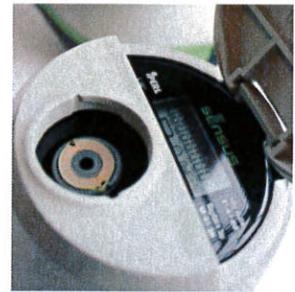
The meters will be installed over the next 6 months by employees from Mechanical Inc. Residents and businesses will receive notification letters from Mechanical to schedule an installation appointment. When the installer arrives, residents and businesses are encouraged to ask for and verify credentials of the installer (check the City's website for a complete list of registered installers).

What do I need to do?

This is a mandatory program. You will receive a letter from Mechanical asking you to schedule an appointment for your water meter replacement. Installation appointments will be scheduled from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. A Mechanical Inc. representative will arrive during that time and will require access to the water meter inside the home or business. Installation will take approximately 20-30 minutes.

This project is being coordinated by the City of Mount Carroll's Water Department, with funding provided by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. For additional information on the Water Meter Replacement Project, visit the City's website at www.mtcarrollil.org or call City Hall at 815-244-4424.

According to national research, 30 percent of households have water leaks (faucet, toilet, etc.). The new system will allow water customers to identify waste and consider corrective measures which will translate into smarter water use and increased energy savings for residents.



The replacement of the water meters will begin in April and will take roughly 6 months to complete. Access to basements will be required as this is where most meters are located. Customers will be contacted in advance to schedule appointments.

Mount Carroll
2017/2018 Water Meter
Replacement Project



Frequently Asked Questions

How does Automatic Meter Reading (AMR) work? The new meter that will be installed in place of your current meter has a Meter Interface Unit (MIU) that electronically sends a reading to the meter. The meter with MIU will transmit your meter reading to a handheld or drive-by unit that the City will have installed in its vehicle. This information will be downloaded into the utilities billing software. The City would be able to read all the meters in a couple of hours, rather than a couple of days.

What exactly will be installed at my property? There will be a new iPERL meter installed with an integrated MIU unit. Your current water meter will be replaced with a new meter to more accurately record water use. The new iPERL meter works to detect intermittent leaks, continuous leaks, reverse flow situations and zero usage situations.

What if there is a leak at the meter or any other problem after the meter is replaced? The installer will explain procedures for problems prior to leaving your residence. An emergency number will also be provided by the installer.

Can I cover up my meter after the install? No. Access needs to be available at all times. Per the Mount Carroll City Code Title 7, Public Works and Property Chapter 4, Water Regulations. The code requires that a suitable place shall be provided for the meter so as to keep it dry and clean and readily accessible at all times to the meter reader, City of Mount Carroll staff and the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency.

Is there any special care or maintenance that I need to do to my new meter? No. Your meter does not require any maintenance by the homeowner. As before, the City will take care of all maintenance; however, you should be careful not to damage the meter or allow it to freeze.

Will I pay more for water as a result of the change? The water meter rate will not be increased as a consequence of the meter replacement project.

Does this mean my bill will be increasing? Not necessarily. In some cases, your bill may increase if your current meter is underreporting usage. Presently, the majority of residents are paying for the water they are actually using, while due to outdated technology, some residents may only be paying for a portion of the water. This condition is not fair to all customers. The new system will ensure fairness and equality for all the residents and businesses from this point forward.

Will the appearance of my monthly bill change? No, the billing card you currently receive will remain the same.

What will be the timeframe for future bills? The billing cycle will not change as a result of the new water meters. However, there may be a month when the bills are sent out later than scheduled, but this would be a one-time occurrence necessary to provide near real-time billing and to implement the automated meter reading technology.

How much will the system cost me? The expense of the meter replacement project is being paid for by fees that you have already been paying into as part of the Capital Improvement Fee. The new Automatic Meter Reading is designed to help control costs by increasing meter reading accuracy and efficiency.

How accurate is the system? Meter readings obtained over radio frequency transmissions are 100% accurate. If after the new meter is installed and operating, and you do not feel the meter is reading accurately, the City will have the new meter tested upon your request. If the test shows the meter is not working, the City will replace the new meter at no cost. However, if the test shows the meter is working, the homeowner is responsible for all cost associated with the test.

How often will you read my meter? Residential and Commercial customers will continue to be read monthly.

Does Automatic Meter Reading have any other benefits for me? Yes! Automatic Meter Reading will allow the City and the property owner to detect possible leaks in your plumbing faster and notify you of problems before they become serious...and costly. The accuracy of water used will improve.

What is the exposure a person receives from radio frequency signals from the new meters? The new meters are low power devices and will transmit at power levels similar to or lower than common household devices such as Wi-Fi routers, cell phones, baby monitors, etc. For more detailed information, please refer to the Sensus Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document. This document provides general information about radio frequency (RF) electromagnetic fields from R900 wireless communication equipment. The Sensus FAQ is available on the City's website at www.mtcarrollil.org

Will I be able to read my own meter? Yes. The new meters will have a digital display so meters can be read manually. Shine a light on the meter to activate the LCD readout. It will show a meter reading and then, after six seconds, it will show the rate of flow. A flashing faucet icon on the readout represents an intermittent leak. A constant faucet icon represents a constant leak.

How is this project being funded? The City of Mount Carroll has secured a \$405,800 1% low-interest loan from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency's Public Water Loan Program, for which \$202,908 will not have to be paid back. The loan is being repaid with money collected from the Capital Improvement Fund.



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