

Frequently Asked Questions from Customers Regarding the Water Meter Replacement Project.

1. Can you explain the installation process?

- The project includes replacing about 14,000 residential and commercial water meters with new, technologically advanced meters and registers that can communicate usage data via wireless technology by driving by the meter.
- It will be a two phased project with Phase 1 being Redland, Blue Ridge, all areas south of Highway 170, the southern portion of Highway 9, and area south of Copeland Road. Basically Phase 1 will be the south half of our service territory. Phase 2 will be the north portion.
- We expect the project to last 300 days.
- All meters in Central Elmore Water and Sewer Authority's (CEW&SA) utility service area will be read using the automatic metering system.
- Installation of the new meter and communication module should take no more than 30 minutes in most cases, with your water service being unavailable for about 15 minutes of that time.
- CEW&SA and our contractors are committed to minimizing impacts from this important project and will, therefore, prepare and work according to reliable, updated schedules and ensure that interruptions in water service are kept to no more than 15 minutes in most cases.
- To ensure that the installation is complete, workers will briefly test the new meter.
- While most work will occur within public right-of-ways and easements, CEW&SA's contractor will restore to original condition any private property impacted by the installation.
- Before temporarily interrupting individual water services, crews will make every effort to ensure that doing so will not impose an undue hardship on the customer. Such efforts will include observing the meter to see if water is being used and knocking on doors to contact those who may be inside.
- Before leaving the site, door hangers will be left at the main entrance to the property or the resident's door informing the residents the installation was completed.
- Leaks prior to installation will be noted and documented by the contractor and CEW&SA representative. The meter will be changed out and left on unless the owner specifies differently.
- Customers that have had their meter changed out in the last 4-5 years may not see an interruption as the meter will not need to be removed to install the new hardware.
- Call the office if you realize you have no water after the installation. Check to see that the turn off valve was not left off by accident. It may be that your regulator has failed. If your regulator is more than a couple of years old, then it is most likely the issue. The regulator is your responsibility. (See the CEW&SA Service Installation Sheet sent to you 7/22/15 or on our website)

2. Do I need to do anything to prepare for the installation?

- To help keep everyone safe, dogs and any other domestic pets will need to be kept out of yards during installation.
- Always keep meter box lids unobstructed.

3. How will I be informed when the installation is taking place at my home or business?

- Since it will take up to 300 days to complete the project, check the notification window on your bill for an updated time line. We will also post online our anticipated schedule for change outs.

4. Who is doing the work?

- Contractors working on the project will carry proper identification and have successfully completed a background check.
- Contractors will not need to enter into residential property, nor will they be asking for any form of payment from customers.

5. How does the system work?

- The system works via wireless signals sent from a small radio unit inside the meter box that is connected to the water meter. The meter reading equipment installed into CEW&SA vehicles will send a “wake up” signal to the meter as they approach. The meter “wakes up” and sends the reading to the radio unit inside the vehicle. The readings are brought back to the office for download.
- Each meter will store 96 days of hourly usage.

6. How does this system benefit customers?

- Currently, every month, the CEW&SA has to manually visit over 14,000 homes and businesses to read meters. The advanced metering system will take vehicles off the road, significantly reducing the CEW&SA’s carbon footprint.
- Thanks to its advanced technology and backup systems in the field, the new system will provide accurate, timely water use data regardless of weather conditions or power outages.

7. How much does this cost?

- The total budget for the total project is 3 million, which is being funded through CEW&SA’s water utility fund. Through the state bid process, CEW&SA was able to secure a savings of about \$800,000 from the budgeted amount.
- Through operational savings and increased revenue, the project is estimated to have a significant benefit over the 20-year project life.
- Once the project is fully implemented, the CEW&SA will no longer require two staff to manually read meters. Every effort is being made to place the affected employees in vacant positions within the organization, so that overall budget savings are achieved without job losses.

8. What happens with the current meters and equipment?

- The existing meters being replaced during the project will be recycled.
- As is currently the case, water meters, and radio units will remain the property of the CEW&SA and we will continue to perform the required maintenance on these units.

9. Will wireless technology affect my health or privacy?

- The new meters will not negatively affect health or privacy. In fact, overall health will be improved and privacy enhanced by replacing vehicles and manual visits to your home with environmentally clean radio communication. The wireless portions of the system will be operated according to Federal Communications Commission rules, and will not interfere with other radio frequencies in the area. The transmitters use one-quarter of the power of a cellphone. The amount of exposure to radio waves decreases with the square of the distance from the source. Exposure to radio waves from smart meters is absolutely tiny compared to cellphones. In addition, transmission time for the units we are installing totals 15 seconds per month.

10. When will my meter be replaced?

Check back often on the web site for updates on scheduling. www.cewsa.com