

North Reading Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) Project

Questions and Answers

How will I know when the installation will take place at my home or business?

The project will begin in the spring of 2018, and will take up to 10 months to complete. One to two weeks before the contractor is in your neighborhood you will receive a postcard asking you to schedule an appointment. Appointments can be made by telephone, or by visiting a web site that will be provided on the postcard.



What will take place during the meter installation?

The installation of the new meter and communication module should take no more than 30 to 45 minutes in most cases. There will be a temporary interruption of water of approximately 15 minutes during the installation while the old meter is removed and the new meter is installed. Once the meter is in place, the new communication module will be mounted to the outside of the home or business and a wire will be run between the meter and the communication module.

To ensure the installation was completed properly, the technician will run the water briefly to test the new meter. The technician will clean the work area to restore that area to its original condition. Before leaving the site, the property owner will be provided with information on the installation and about the new meter.

What steps do I need to take before the installation?

If you know the location of your water meter, please make sure the meter is not blocked by furniture or boxes so that the meter is accessible to the technician. We do ask that an adult (18 years of age or older) be at the property for the appointment, and that dogs or other domestic pets be secured during the installation.

What if there are plumbing issues before the water meter?

The North Reading Water Department owns the water meter. The property owner is responsible for all other plumbing, including the valve before the water meter. If defective plumbing or deteriorated pipes prevent meter replacement, the customer will be required to make the necessary plumbing repairs.

Who is doing the work?

The primary parties involved in this project are:

- The Town of North Reading, through its Dept. of Public Works Water Department
- Weston & Sampson Engineer's, Inc. – the Town's Engineering Consultant on the project
- Neptune Technology Group/Ti-Sales – the equipment and meter supplier for the project, and
- Thielsch Engineering/USI Services – the meter installation contractor for the project



All personnel working for the installation contractor on this project – USI Services - will have been subject to pre-employment drug and alcohol screening tests as well as a Massachusetts Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) background check. The installation contractor will coordinate with the North Reading Police Department

and North Reading DPW on a daily basis as to where they will be working. All personnel will be wearing a uniform issued by the installation contractor, will have a picture identification badge, and will be driving a vehicle bearing identification signage.

How does this system work?

The communication module on the outside of the building collects and stores the hourly water meter readings from the water meter. Periodically, the communication module will transmit the hourly meter readings wirelessly (by radio) to Gateway units on the Town's water towers and utility poles, which will then transmit the readings to Town Hall.

Will wireless technology affect my health or privacy?

The new meters will not negatively affect health or privacy. 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. Exposure to radio waves from smart meters is absolutely tiny compared to cellphones.

How much does this project cost?

The bid cost of this project is \$1.73 million. The project is funded entirely through the North Reading Water Department's capital improvement program. There is no separate cost to the customer for the meter installation.

What happens with the existing meters and equipment?

All water meters and radio units – both existing and new – remain the property of the Town. The replaced meters will be recycled. The Town will continue to perform the required maintenance on the new meters.

Who do I contact for additional information?

Contact the North Reading Department of Public Works at (978) 664-6060 for additional information relative to this project.

