

Frequently Asked Questions:

What is AMR?

AMR stands for Automated Meter Reading. Columbiana Water Board (CWB) will be replacing existing water meters with an electronic transmitting device in order to provide better service to our customers. This wireless technology that the AMR system uses can assure customers of a timely and reliable reading resulting in an accurate billing.

Why is Columbiana Water replacing all of the meters?

Most of the water meters have been in service at least 15 years and have exceeded their expected life. Columbiana Water is upgrading the system to AMR, which will improve efficiency by no longer requiring employees to manually enter the reads. Also, CWB will be verifying that all meters 2" and smaller have backflow prevention/check valve, if not one will be installed at the time of meter change out.

How does AMR affect me?

AMR technology ensures that customers pay only for the water they use – no more and no less. It is important to understand that as some water meters age, they can run slower and under-register water use. When we change out your current meter with a new smart meter, the first bill may be higher simply because the new meter is running accurately.

How much will the upgrade cost me?

There is no cost to customers for the AMR upgrade.

How will AMR benefit me?

By ensuring that your bill is based on actual usage, AMR improves accuracy, eliminating the potential for human error in manual meter reading and can help to identify any irregularities in water usage such as leaks.

What is the difference between the new water meter and the old water meter?

The old water meter has moving parts that turn and generate a pulse to an outside remote that must be manually read by Columbiana Water Board staff. The new water meters have no moving parts and can be read remotely.

How long will it take to replace the water meter?

Under normal circumstances, the installation will take approximately 30 minutes. Your water service will be shut off for approximately 20-30 minutes while the meter is changed. Please be advised that there may be some trapped air or slight discoloration in the water when you are turned back on. This will clear up after running your water for a few minutes.

When will my installation occur?

Installations will be completed gradually based on meter reading routes throughout 2022.

How is the installation done?

The installer will locate your meter box containing your water meter. For residential customers, replacing the water meter will require installers to turn off the water briefly. This allows installers to remove the old meter and install a new one. Water service may be interrupted for commercial customers as well. When the new meter is installed, the installer will test the meter to ensure that it is operational.

Do I have to be home for the meter replacement work?

Since the water meters are located outside of the home normally near the street, you will not need to be home for the replacement work.

Who is doing the work?

Columbiana Water has partnered with Baird Contracting Company, Inc. to perform the meter change out project. All company vehicles will be marked with Baird Contracting and Columbiana Water Board. Baird Contracting Company, Inc., WILL NOT need to enter your home or business to install the new meter.

Will there be any difference in the delivery or quality of water after my meter upgrade?

No. You will continue to enjoy the same high-quality water you have come to expect from Columbiana Water Board.

Is my account information secure?

Yes. Only meter readings and meter numbers are transmitted. The transmitter is specifically coded to your account and meter serial number. Personal customer information will be not be transmitted.

What if I have questions about the last meter read before my upgrade?

Digital photographs will be taken of the last meter reading, should any questions arise. The installer will provide these photographs to Columbiana Water and our office staff will have this information available to answer your questions.

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

To help keep everyone safe, dogs and other domestic pets need to be kept out of yards during installation. Also please make sure that there are no obstructions around your meter that may hamper access to the meter.

What happens if I have a problem after the installation?

If you have a leak, low pressure or some other problem as a direct result of the installation, please contact Columbiana Water Board at 205-669-5805.

What is a backflow prevention/check valve?

Any reversal of flow of water from its intended direction that can potentially cause used water to return to the Columbiana Water's distribution system.