

# Village of Cattaraugus

Water System Improvements Project

CDBG Project Number 198PW39-13

## Additional information and FAQs about Water Meter Project

April, 2016

### **1. Why am I getting a new water meter?**

You are receiving a new water meter as part of a larger water system improvements project. This project is being undertaken by the Village in order to provide you with a safer and more reliable water service. The installation of new water meters will aid the Village in accounting for the water they produce and the water consumed by water customers. In addition to being able to more accurately bill its customers, the Village will also be able to more accurately evaluate how much water is being lost through leaks and other means.

### **2. How does the new radio read device work?**

The radio transmitter will be connected to the water meter and will be able to transmit the meter reading to a radio read device that can receive the radio signal from the road. Under normal circumstances, water personnel will not have to enter your house or even your property to read the meter. The radio transmitter will also be able to transmit alerts to the meter reading device to indicate a possible leak in the house plumbing or possible tampering of the meter.

### **3. Where is my water meter located?**

If you currently have a meter, it will most likely be located on your water service line near where it enters your house (basement or crawlspace). Typically, the water line enters your house on the wall closest to the street. If you do not currently have a meter, the new meter will be installed as close as possible to this location.

### **4. What exactly is going to be installed at my property?**

The installers will install a new water meter at the location of your existing water meter or as close as possible to the location where the water service pipe enters your home. The new meter will have an integral radio transmitter that will transmit a signal, so the installation will not have any additional equipment.

### **5. Do I have to receive a new water meter?**

Yes. All customers who are receiving water service are required to have a new water meter installed. This part of the water system improvements project is intended to help the water department monitor water use and control costs, including costs associated with reading the meters.

**6. What if I don't want a new water meter?**

This is not an option. New meter installation is mandatory and is required as part of receiving water service.

**7. How much will the new meter cost me?**

You will not receive a separate bill for the new water meter and you will not be required to pay the installer for the water meter installation. This project is an infrastructure improvement project that will be paid for by all of the users in the water district through normal billing.

**8. Do installers need to come inside my house?**

Yes. The water meter will usually need to be located inside your house, near the location where the water service pipe enters your home. The installers will need to come into your house to complete the installation.

**9. What will they do inside my house?**

The installers will install the water meter and radio transmitter. They will be instructed to clean up the work area once they are finished with the installation. They will also record important information such as the meter reading at the time of installation. They will also take photographs of the meter installation and the area immediately surrounding the meter before and after the installation.

**10. Do I have to be present for the installation?**

Yes. An adult (18 years or older) must be present at the time of the installation. The installers will not enter your home without the permission of an adult. This applies to residential services as well as commercial services.

**11. What if I am a tenant and I do not own this property?**

If you are a tenant, you will be asked to provide access to the water meter to allow for the installation to take place.

**12. I am an owner and have tenants, but I do not reside at the property. What should I do?**

The installer will contact you to schedule the meter installation. You need to make sure that the installer has access to the water meter at the scheduled time. You are also encouraged to inform your tenants of the water meter installation.

**13. Who will install the new water meter?**

Personnel from the Village Water Department or a professional contractor, hired by the Village will perform the water meter installation. The contractor will be selected by competitive bid. These personnel will be clearly identified by uniform and/or a name badge. If you have any questions, please call the Village offices.

**14. When will the new water meter be installed in my home?**

Once the installation contract is bid and awarded, you will receive notification through the mail, by phone, or by direct, door to door contact. The purpose of this notification will be to schedule

and installation time that is convenient for you. It is expected that the contract will be awarded during the Spring of 2016 and will be completed by the end of August 2016.

**15. What if I need to reschedule an appointment?**

If you need to reschedule an appointment, you will be asked to contact the Contractor by phone. The contact number will be provided to you during the initial notification once the project is awarded. More information regarding the contractor will be available at the Village Office or on the Village web site : <http://cattaraugus.org/>

**16. Will my water service be interrupted during the installation?**

Yes. Your water service will need to be interrupted for a short amount of time during the installation. A typical installation is expected to take less than 30 minutes to complete.

**17. How much room do installers need?**

The installers will need a 3 ft by 3 ft area if possible. Access to one side of this 3 ft by 3 ft area is also preferable.

**18. What if there is something in front of or blocking the meter?**

Please plan to have the obstructions removed for the meter installation. Also, please be aware that the water meter remains the property of the Village. Access to the meter at all times is required. It is your responsibility to make sure the meter is accessible and that the area is well lit.

**19. What if there is a leak at the meter or any other problem after the meter is installed.**

The installer will explain the process of reporting a problem before he leaves your location. You will be provided emergency contact information in the event that a problem arises.

**20. Can I cover up my meter after the installation?**

The water meter needs to be accessible at all times. It may be covered with a removable panel.

**21. Is there any special care or maintenance that I need to do to my new water meter?**

No. The Village is responsible for all maintenance aspects of the meter regarding ordinary wear and tear. However, you are liable and responsible for all damage to the meter while located on your premises including preventing the water meter from freezing. You will be charged for replacing the meter if it is destroyed or damaged in accordance with the Village's Current Water Law.

**22. How will this affect my water service?**

The new water meter is not expected to affect your water service negatively.

**23. Will I pay more for water because of the installation of the new meter?**

Water Rates are expected to change as a result of budgeting decisions necessary to service the debt being used to finance the whole water system improvements project. However, the increase in your rates will not be solely because of the new meter installation project.

**24. Will the appearance of my bill change?**

No.

**25. How accurate are the readings from the radio transmitter?**

The meters reading from the radio transmitter are considered to be as accurate as a manual read.

**26. What if I need a meter reading between regular readings?**

You may read meter yourself at any time by looking at the register on the meter. If it is a digital register, you may need to shine a flashlight on it to activate the display.

**27. Do the new meters have any other benefits for me?**

The meter will indicate flow through it. You may use this feature to check to see if there are any slow leaks in your house plumbing such as a leaky toilet. This feature can help you save water.

**28. Will I be able to read my own meter?**

Yes. See questions 26 and 27.

**29. Will the radio interfere with my television, cordless phone, pacemaker, or cell phone?**

The radio transmitter fully complies with all FCC regulations and should not interfere with other wireless equipment such as television, cordless phones, pacemakers, and cell phones.

**30. Why did the Village choose the new radio read meters?**

Radio read meters are the latest in technology. As radio read meters become more prevalent, the older, standard meters will become less serviceable. Keeping up with the latest in technology will ensure the best service to you by using technology that is most easily serviceable going forward. Radio read meters allow for more efficient meter readings. They also provide more information that can be helpful to the water department and to you, the customer. The radio read meters will reduce the amount of time spent gathering meter readings and improve the accuracy between meter reads and customer billing.