



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

TOWN OF ARLINGTON
51 Grove Street
Arlington, Massachusetts 02476
Telephone (781) 316-3108, Fax (781) 316-3281

Automated Water Meter Reading System Installation Completed

Over the past 18 months, the Town has been conducting the installation of an advanced water meter reading system at all properties in Arlington. The Water SaveSouce™ system, developed by Itron, will provide the Town with automated meter reading (AMR) technology. With the new system, meter readings will be collected wirelessly eliminating the need for on-site visits and will significantly reduce the need for estimated readings and provide consistent billing. In the past, meter readings were taken manually twice a year at each property. Depending on staffing availability, foul weather, or other unforeseen circumstances, these meter reads were not always obtained at regular six month intervals. The result was staggered billing where one billing cycle may have contained 7-8 months and the next would be 4-5 months. Not only did this cause difficulty for customers to budget accordingly, it also created confusion regarding the accuracy of a bill amount.

With the new system, meter read dates will be consistent from one billing cycle to the next, providing for a stabilization of the billing cycle. In addition, water use data from accounts will be received daily allowing greater customer service capabilities. When inquiries are received by the Public Works Department about water usage, the Department can now inform residents of how much water was used, and when, during a given timeframe. While the Department cannot determine *how* the water was used, indicating to residents and businesses the dates of spikes in usage can often help to understand why the bill may not be as expected.

In order for the new system to be successful, residents and businesses should take note of the following:

1. The Public Works Water Division should be notified of any work on a property which requires the outside meter reading unit to be disturbed in any manner (temporarily removed, relocated, etc...).
2. The wire connection between the outside unit and the water meter must always remain intact. If the wire connection is compromised, an alarm will register with the Water Division's computer interface and the DPW will need to dispatch a crew to the property to diagnose the problem.
3. Vegetation, fences, or any other landscape features placed in a manner which cover the outside unit will impair its ability to transmit data to the wireless network and should be avoided.
4. If an outside unit is found to be damaged or becomes detached from the building, please call the DPW dispatch at 781-316-3301.

The Department of Public Works is very excited to bring this new technology to the Town of Arlington which provides consistent billing and improved customer service. Questions regarding this new system can be directed to Michael Rademacher, the Director of Public Works, at 781-316-3108.



Image of new Itron water meter reading unit installed at all properties with a water account in Arlington.