



How to Read Your Water Meter

Why would you want to read your own water meter, you might ask? Well, there are a couple of reasons that appeal to most homeowners once they know how to read the meter themselves. First, you might be interested to know how much water you use in a day, week, or month. By reading your meter at the beginning and end of a day, week, or month you can compare the two readings to tell how much water you and your family have used or to ensure the billing accuracy of your water bill. The second reason is to check for leaks. To do this, you will have to turn off all the known water consuming devices in your house, then look at your meter. If there is a visible plus sign in the Flow Direction Indicator, chances are you have a leak somewhere. Here are some tips to help you find and read your water meter.

Tip 1: Locate Your Meter

Your water meter is generally located near the curb in front of your home or place of business in a direct line with your main outside faucet. It is housed in a round galvanized metal or plastic "meter box" usually marked "water" on a metal lid.

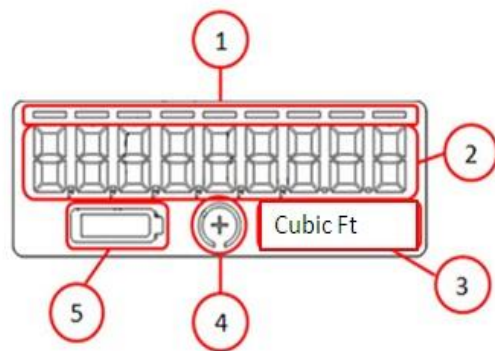
1. Carefully remove the lid by using a tool called a meter key that can be purchased at any local hardware store in your area.
2. Insert the key into the hole, turn counterclockwise, you will feel it catch on the locking mechanism- continue to turn and lift the lid off.
3. There is a transmission cable connecting the radio transmitter/receiver installed on the bottom of the meter box lid to the top of the water meter, be cautious not to damage the cable or the device itself. Any damage to the water meter or any of the accessories contained in the meter box could result in a repair fee charged to your water bill.
4. Before sticking your hand into the meter box, visually examine the area under the lid and around the meter to make sure there are no harmful insects or other animals such as snakes, spiders, or creatures that may bite. Black Widow spiders are fond of the dark environment and often hide under the lids and are very elusive.
5. Lift the plastic lid on top of the meter to expose the digital display underneath. This is where you will see the information needed to read your water meter. Be sure to replace the lid when you are done as this can become a danger to someone walking by who may step into the open void.

Tip 2: Read Your Water Meter

All customers served by the City of Wichita Falls have their water use measured by a meter. The City of Wichita Falls water meters are new state of the art low flow detection meters that have no moving internal parts and use electromagnetic flow (EMF) to record water use measuring in cubic feet (1 cubic foot equals approximately 7.48 gallons). Charges for the amount of water consumed are based on the number of units (1 unit equals 100 cubic feet or approximately 748 gallons) used during a billing period.

All water meters within the City of Wichita Falls service area are Digital Water Meters ranging from ¾-inch up to and including 16". Most residential homes will have either a ¾-inch or 1-inch meter serving their property that transmits meter readings via radio waves every hour to the City of Wichita Falls servers for billing. Meters greater than 1-inch may vary in the reading procedure and number of dials, please contact us for information on how to read those types of dials.

Introduction to the Sensus iPerl 3/4-Inch & 1-Inch Meters



1. There are nine digits/bars on the Sensus iPerl meter at the top of the digital display. Only the first four numbers at the far left will be programmed in 100 cubic feet and read. 1 cubic foot = 7.48 gallons. 100 cubic feet = 1 unit or 748 gallons. The meter in the picture above reads 37. If the reading earlier in the day read a 35, you have used 2 units x 100 cubic feet or 1496 gallons.
2. You can also monitor the 9th number to the far right to check for leaks. Example: If the number rotates from 0 to 1, that's equivalent to 1/1,000th of one cubic foot of water (which is approximately 1 ounce).
3. The City of Wichita Falls uses cubic feet as its units of measure.
4. To check for leaks, use the Flow Direction Indicator. If there is a plus sign in the middle of this circle, water is passing through the meter.
5. Battery life indicator.

Help Ensure Your Meter is Transmitting the Reading Consistently

Your iPerl water meter is an accurate and dependable water measuring device used to register all the water used in your home or building. The water meter is usually located in a small round metal galvanized or plastic "meter box" in the ground near the street or the edge of the property. The top of the meter box will have a metal round access lid, usually marked "water", and you will see a radio transmitter antenna that resembles a hockey puck that is visible on the meter box lid. To ensure consistent transmission of readings and access for servicing your meter, it is important that you maintain the area around your meter box. Most people are

not aware that their water meter is located within a utility easement. This means that when landscaping or fencing your yard, you need to maintain enough distance from the meter and box to allow us to receive the consistent transmission of data, visually read if necessary, service, and/or repair your meter. It also means that it is the property owner's responsibility to ensure that the meter box is visible and accessible at all times and should include the removal of overgrown grass covering up the meter when necessary.

Landscaping

Please keep these things in mind when landscaping:

- Permanent structures such as walls, fences, and gates cannot be installed in a utility easement area without permission from the City of Wichita Falls Public Works Department.
- Your meter area should be kept clear of shrubbery, trees, and low growing bushes. When planting trees, keep in mind that tree roots can become entangled around the underground pipes increasing the possibility of broken pipes and water leaks
- Shrubbery can become bushy and hinder the ability of your meter to transmit its readings to the radio towers consistently which may result in the estimation of your water bill.
- Customers who already have established landscaping should trim their plants to allow access to the meter box. If landscaping does cause access difficulty, we ask that you clear it. However, if we need immediate access, we may clear the vegetation without prior notice.
- Please note that the Public Works Department has the right to remove obstructions placed in a utility easement area and is not responsible for any damage that may be caused by removing the obstruction.

If you have any questions about maintaining your meter or need help in locating your water meter, please call The City of Wichita Falls Water Distribution Division at 940-761-4333. For questions about billing or reading your water meter, you may contact The City of Wichita Falls Utility Collections Division at 940-761-7414.