

Lithgow City Council is currently undertaking a project to upgrade all water meters across the LGA to automatic meter reading devices. This project was approved at the February 2019 Meeting of Council.

Works are being funded through Council's Water Fund and will not result in any increase in water rates for residents. This project is necessary due to the majority of water meters being over 10 years of age with some in excess of 20 years of age.

This improved water metering technology will go a long way to saving water as it identifies individual property leakage through hourly meter reads.

Utilities who have implemented this system have, on average, demonstrated savings of more than 10% in property leakage and 10% in system losses. System losses include water for flushing, leakage, unmetered services and water theft. These savings are very much achievable for Council with this new system implemented.

The implementation of this system will see the manual checking of water meters by staff 4 times per year unnecessary as meters can be read remotely. Staff can then spend more time pro-actively improving the system to reduce mechanical breakdowns and improve response times to reactive maintenance.

The benefit to water consumers is that the transmitted data, able to be accessed by the property owner, can assist in the management of water consumption, or, importantly promote the early detection of a water leak or unusual

consumption. Early detection can save money and possibly prevent property damage.

The information collected by the devices will be available in a secure format to customers from a web-based water management tool. Information will include daily usage, target usage, cost per day, alerts and reports. The system is designed to be available year-round, not just when the bill arrives.

Customers may experience periodic water interruptions while the devices are being fitted. Council will endeavour to disconnect the water for as short a period as possible, however the works depend on the length of the street, location of the property and isolation valves. Residents will be notified ahead of time when they should expect works to be commencing.



An example of the Smart Meter device to be installed

Smart Meter Frequently Asked Questions

Will my water be interrupted whilst the new meter is installed?

Yes, you will experience a short interruption to your water supply whilst the new meter is installed. The length of interruption will depend on the length of the street, location of the property and isolation valves.

How do I monitor my water usage?

Following completion of the installation, residents will be provided with instructions on how to register for the MiWater portal and access and monitor their own water usage.

Who will monitor the battery life of my automated meter?

The battery of your meter will be monitored by the system and will be replaced when required.

What protection will be in place to stop unauthorised access of data?

A secure log-in and password will be provided to all users. Taggle systems closely monitors the security of the system.

What data will be made available to customers?

All of the data will be made available to customers so they can monitor their own usage, but not the usage of others.

How will I be notified if I have a leak at my property?

Initially, Council will contact you directly via letter if a leak has been identified at your property. As the project progresses, this feature will become available to you directly, along with the ability to view and monitor your daily usage information.

Will the switch to automated meter readings save Council money?

Yes it will – this system will save staff having to manually check all water meters in the Lithgow LGA. Savings will also be made with on average 10% demonstrated savings in property leakage and 10% savings in system losses.

Does the system have a limited lifespan?

Yes, it has a limit of 15 years or 8,000kL. Replacement will be factored into Council's future budgets.

Are failed units a cost for Council or the ratepayer?

Any unit failures will be picked up by the system and covered by standard product warranties. If a unit fails then a meter can be read manually until it is replaced. Physical damage to the meter is ultimately the responsibility of the property owner, however malicious damage will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

How strong is the radio signal?

The radio signal transmitted by the smart meter is very small—it is about 30 times weaker than the signal transmitted by your mobile phone.

For more information contact:

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