

City of Galt

Water Meter Installation Program Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why is the project needed?

A: State law requires the installation and use of water meters by 2025 across the state. It also requires water systems to charge customers based on the amount of water they use. Water metering is part of a statewide water conservation effort to protect the reliability of California's water supply.

Q: How can I check if a water meter deposit has been previously paid for my property?

A: Email the City at publicworks@ci.galt.ca.us with the subject "Water Meter Fee Verification" and include a short summary of your request, your name, and your property address. Staff will check your address against our building permit data base and email a response. You may also phone the Public Works Department at 209-366-7260 to request this information. In general, residential units built prior to 1990 have not paid the meter fee.

Q: When is the installation work expected to take place?

A: Meter installation is anticipated to start summer of 2014.

Q: How much will the meter installation work cost me?

A: The proposed cost for a typical home with a three-quarter inch ($\frac{3}{4}$ ") meter is \$300 one-time fee for meter installation, and a 36-month payment plan will also be available. Larger meters will cost more. Customers will be notified in advance of proposed fees for their residence. Prior to implementation, the proposed fees must be approved by the City Council following a protest hearing.

Q: Who is paying for the water meter program?

A: The project is being paid for with meter installation fees (new meters) and water system replacement reserves (for existing meters).

Q: What is Proposition 218 and how does it work?

A: The "Right To Vote On Taxes Act" (Proposition 218) requires the City to provide a notice of the proposed meter installation fee to all customers who will be subject to the new fee, at least forty-five days prior to holding a public hearing. If a majority of the affected customers file opposition to the fee, the meter installation fee will not take effect. Only one protest may be filed for a parcel. If you own (or rent and pay the water bill) on more than one property, you may file only one protest for each property.

Q: When will my water bill change to a metered rate?

A: There will be no immediate changes to flat rate customer's water billing following installation. Once all the new meters are installed, the City will collect initial usage data and provide an "example" metered rate bill along with the normal flat rate bill for two billing cycles. This will allow customers time to determine how much water they are

using and what a future metered bill will be for the same water usage. This will allow customers a reasonable time to adjust usage patterns, fix water leaks, etc. Following the two “example” billing cycles, newly metered customers will be converted from flat rate billings to metered rate water bills.

Q: Will my water bill increase?

A: Currently metered customers will see no change in their billing rates. Current flat rate customers’ billings will be dependent upon actual water usage. Customers with above average usage will see larger bills. Those who conserve water, using less than average amounts of water, will likely see a decrease in their water bill. Following citywide installation of meters, water usage trends will be observed to determine the adequacy of the current water rate structure. Any proposed changes to future billing rates will be subject to noticed public hearings, pursuant to Proposition 218.