



# Frequently Asked Questions



## Q: What are the benefits of metering?

Meters are an important water management tool that empowers residents to understand how much water they use—and can save. With water meters, customers pay for only the amount of water they actually use above the base rate—just as natural gas, telephone or electricity services are paid. Water meters can also help customers detect leaks and stop waste. Federal and State governments have strongly recommended the use of water meters as a way to conserve water.

## Q: Will my water bill be less/more?

With water meters, customers pay a monthly service fee based on the size of their water meter and a charge for the amount of water they actually use. Compared to the current flat rate system, metered water bills are typically higher in the summer and lower in the winter. At this stage, it is impossible to analyze the effect on an individual bill; however, with the metered system, your bill will reflect your consumption.

## Q: How will my meter be tracked? Will someone read my meter?

As part of the Water Improvement Project, the City of Leslie is utilizing "green technology" radio read water meters. The meters have digital encoder chip displays instead of dials, and will use secure radio frequency transmissions to extract water billing reads. Instead of manually walking door-to-door to read each meter, customer water usage information will be obtained by driving near a home in a vehicle equipped by the City with a special radio receiver and computer.

## Q: When will residents be charged metered rates?

Once meters are installed throughout the City, it will take nearly a year to analyze the overall usage and to establish rates. Customers will receive data on their utility service bill or through a separate mailing demonstrating their current water usage. During this transition period, customers are responsible for paying the flat rate only.

## Q: Will the City meter its facilities too?

Yes, all City buildings will have meters and will pay rates according to consumption.

## Q: How much profit does the City make under this new system?

None. Cities are prohibited from operating their utility systems for profit. The rates that we charge are strictly to cover the costs needed to operate the water and sewer system along with necessary maintenance and capital improvements – this will not change with the addition of meters. All of the revenues collected for water service are used solely for the water system. They can not be transferred for use on roads, parks, or other City services.

## Q: When can customers expect to have meters installed in their homes?

The next step in the process, the evaluation stage, is scheduled to begin in late October 2011. The evaluation stage consists of technicians evaluating and documenting current water service conditions in all homes and businesses. This information will build on previous resident surveys and be used to create bid packages for potential water meter installation contractors. Water meter installations will begin immediately following the selection of contractors and will continue over a period of several months. Current funding guidelines encourage a Fall of 2012 start date of installations.

## Additional Frequently Asked Questions will be added as the project continues.

### Additional Resources:

Brian Reed, City Manager, City of Leslie (517) 589-8236

Gregory L. Minshall, P.E., Project Manager, (517) 887-1100



### Water Conservation Resources:

Michigan Water Environment Association: <http://www.mi-wea.org/>

25 ways to conserve water:  
[http://eartheasy.com/live\\_water\\_saving.htm](http://eartheasy.com/live_water_saving.htm)

100 ways to conserve water:  
<http://wateruseitwisely.com/100-ways-to-conserve/index.php>