

2026-27 Smart Water Meter Hardship Assistance Program

Purpose: To ensure all residents can complete smart water meter installations the City will continue offering financial support for plumbing-related challenges, either through direct assistance or a no-interest loan. Additionally, while the City still requires a permit to adjust/move/replace hot water tanks, the City will waive the \$50 permit fee if the adjustment or move (even temporary) is necessary to install the smart meter.

Program Options – Only one OR the other:

1. Hardship Grant.

- **Maximum Assistance:** Up to \$300 per household.
- **Eligibility Window:** August 4, 2026 – December 31, 2027.*
- **Requirements:**
 - Plumbing issue must directly prevent smart meter installation.
 - Resident must demonstrate financial hardship or have previously reported hardship with City Administrator having final approval.
 - Receipts required for reimbursement or verification.
 - Residents with prior hardship applications may reuse them but must submit receipts for this program.

*If a resident can demonstrate a financial hardship and previously paid for a plumbing issue that prevented a smart meter to be installed, the City Administrator can review their application as if it was submitted during the eligibility window.

2. 36-Month 0% Interest Loan.

- **Eligibility:** Residents who do not qualify for the hardship grant.
- **Loan Terms:**
 - Up to \$300 for eligible plumbing work.
 - 0% interest over 36 months.
 - Monthly payments of approximately \$8.33.
- **Requirements:**
 - Plumbing issue must be verified by installer or city staff.
 - Resident must sign a loan agreement and provide receipts.

- Loan is billed through the resident's water utility account.
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Application Process

1. **Assessment:** Installer identifies plumbing-related barrier.
 2. **Application Submission:** Resident completes form and attaches receipts.
 3. **Review & Approval:** City verifies eligibility and selects grant or loan option.
 4. **Disbursement:** Grant recipients are reimbursed, or at City's discretion, City pays contractor directly; loan recipients begin monthly billing.
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Communication Plan

- Include program details in letters to non-compliant households.
- Post on City's website and social media.
- Train installers and customer service staff to explain both options.