City of Rollingwood, Texas
Water Meter Upgrade Policy

Purpose

The City Council has prioritized updates to the City's water infrastructure and technology enhancements that will benefit the residents of Rollingwood. The City aims to install electronic water meters for all residential and commercial properties as soon as possible. As residential and commercial properties are being redeveloped, more and more property owners are requesting to upgrade their water meters. This Water Meter Upgrade Policy is designed guide the city's switch to and implementation of electronic water meter technology.

Background

The City of Rollingwood has approximately 600 residential and commercial water meters currently. These water meters are old, mechanical, and over 80% of them have over 1,000,000 gallons that have run through them, often rendering them inaccurate to the favor of the customer. The meters must be read manually, requiring two to three Public Works employees to devote 2-3 days per month reading and recording meter readings.

After a six-month pilot program, the City of Rollingwood has initiated a project to begin replacing these old meters with Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) technologies, or smart water meters. Replacing more, and eventually all, of the meters in the city with smart water meters will enable the city to automate water meter reading, detect water leaks, transmit water consumption data in real-time, and streamline customer billing. Electronic metering provides information such as gallons per minute of water flow, reverse-flow indication, and other operating data not available from mechanical meters.

Water consumption data, paired with a secure network, provide residential and commercial customers an online portal with a simple dashboard view to help keep them informed on their daily water usage. Among other benefits of smart water meters to customers, perhaps the greatest is that smart meters would allow them to detect even minor leaks before receiving a large bill at the end of a billing cycle. Additionally, smart water meters help customers conserve water effectively throughout droughts, inclement weather, and generally give them more control over their utility usage.

Policy

The Water Meter Upgrade Policy is as follows:

A. Overall Goal: To have all meters in the city replaced with electronic water meters so that the manual process of reading water meters monthly can be eliminated.

B. Prioritization of Electronic Meter Installation: Properties will be considered for installation of electronic meters in the following order:

    1. New development
    2. Replacement of broken meters
    3. As soon as possible installing street-by-street

C. Purchase of Electronic Meters by the City: The City will look into bulk pricing and financing options to secure electronic water meters to replace each meter in the city.

D. Responsibility to Cover Cost of Electronic Meters:

- ***New construction*** – The cost of the electronic water meter is to be borne by the builder with the cost of the meter to include the cost of the meter plus a 10% administrative and installation fee.
- ***Replacement of broken meters*** - The cost of the electronic water meter is to be borne by the city up to a 5/8" meter, with the cost differential of any larger meter to be borne by the customer, with the cost of the meter to include cost of the meter plus a 10% administrative and installation fee.
- ***As soon as possible, street-by-street*** - The cost of the electronic water meter is to be borne by the city up to a 5/8" meter, with the cost differential of any larger meter to be borne by the customer, with the cost of the meter to include cost of the meter plus a 10% administrative and installation fee.

Water Meter Upgrade Policy Updates

City staff will review this document periodically to ensure that it contains up-to-date information. Any potential changes or updates that materially alter this document will be brought to City Council for approval.