

AMI Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):

What is advanced metering infrastructure (AMI)?

Advanced metering infrastructure is a system of meters, communication networks, and software that transfers water usage information and service alerts over a secure, wireless network to a central database. This information is used to prepare water bills, analyze water usage trends, provide customers with hourly water usage information, and notify customers of potential leaks.

How will AMI improve my water service?

The AMI project will enhance the City's ability to provide you with safe and reliable water service through upgraded water metering technology. AMI will allow the City to provide timely responses to service issues and grant you access to hourly water usage information, alerts, and tools to make more informed decisions about your water usage. Rather than your meter being read monthly by City staff coming to the meter box, it will be read wirelessly every day via a radio device and receiver and the usage data will be available to you daily.

What about the new meter I received recently?

The City has been preparing and planning for the change to AMI since 2014 with the initiation of a system-wide Water Meter Replacement Project. This laid the foundation for the AMI project by replacing meters with AMI compatible meters. During this next phase of the project, our installation contractor will simply attach a radio device to your existing water meter to upgrade it to an advanced meter. This will enable secure wireless communication between your meter and the City's network.

When can I expect my advanced meter upgrade?

Radio device installation is scheduled to begin in winter 2022. The City will notify customers when installation contractors will be in your area and when online access to the AMI customer portal is available, currently anticipated in fall 2023.

Who will install the advanced metering infrastructure?

Concord Installation Services, the City's certified installation contractor, will handle all meter radio device installations.

How can I identify an installation contractor?

Concord representatives will dress in uniform, carry identification badges, and have City endorsed signage on their vehicles.



How long will the upgrade take?

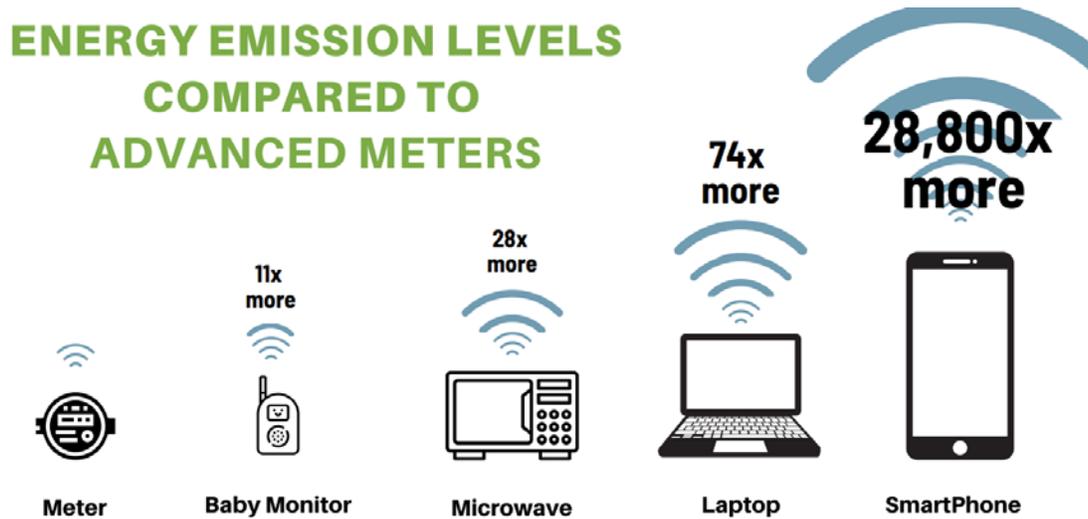
Each water meter radio device installation takes approximately 15 minutes under normal conditions. Your water service will not be interrupted during the upgrade.

Will AMI interfere with my home electronics?

No, the radio devices will not interfere with home appliances or other electronics.

Are water meter radio devices safe?

Yes. The radio devices, which are attached to the meters and transfer the service data, do not exceed health and safety standards set by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for energy emission levels. The energy exposure from an advanced meter's radio signal or radio frequency (RF) is significantly less than common household devices, including cell phones, laptops, microwaves, baby monitors and internet routers. It is also important to understand that advanced meters only transmit signals four times a day for less than a fraction of a second each time, unlike household devices that often transmit continuously, such as those in the image below.



*Measured in milliwatts per square centimeter

**Sources: Butcher, M. J. (2011, June 10). Florida Power & Light Advanced Meter Infrastructure & Distribution Automation RF Exposure Survey. SiteSafe. Electric Power Research Institute. (2011, February). Radio-Frequency Exposure Levels from Smart Meters: A Case Study of One Model.

- <https://www.fcc.gov/general/radio-frequency-safety-0>

Is my water usage information secure?

Yes, the City will use a private and secure radio frequency to deliver metering data. Encryption and other cyber security best practices are used to keep your information safe. Personally identifiable information (e.g. name, payment information, address, etc.) will not be transmitted via the advanced meter network.

How is this project being funded?

In accordance with the City's adopted Capital Improvement Program, \$7.5 million has been appropriated through the City's annual budget adoption process for the AMI project. Additionally, the City was awarded a \$1.5 million Federal Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Energy and Efficiency grant to help offset the cost of the project.

Who can I contact to learn more?

Please contact City Water Resources staff at (805) 564 - 5460 or AMI@SantaBarbaraCA.gov to learn more about the Advanced Metering Infrastructure Project.