

HWL Starts AMI Installation

As a part of planned technology improvements, Hope Water & Light (HWL) is making upgrades to our electric and water metering systems. HWL started replacing all of its mechanical electric and water meters at homes and businesses with advanced digital electric and water meters the week of February 12th. HWL is using a contractor, Vanguard Utility Service (VUS), to install the new meters. The work involves removing existing water and electric meters and installing new water and electric meter reading devices. Customers do not have to be present for this process. Vanguard Utility Service will be installing new electric meters and water meters Monday-Friday 8am-7pm and Saturdays 8am-4pm. All VUS employees will have HWL magnets on their vehicles and HWL ID badges. Should you have any questions or concerns for VUS related to the installation process or if you would like to schedule an appointment for your installation please contact VUS directly at 870-520-7738.

Each customer should receive a postcard with replacement information before the meter replacement begins. The postcard will contain information regarding the installation process with contact information for VUS.

New technology and communication capabilities are essential to maintaining the service our customers expect. Advanced meters and other technology upgrades provide a cost-effective way to ensure efficient and reliable electric and water service.

HWL is investing in necessary new equipment, including advanced meters. These meters transmit and receive data automatically and securely to servers located within our office. Two-way communication eliminates the need for manual meter reads and enables new programs for outage notification and alerts to help with troubleshooting and preventative maintenance.

With Advanced Metering, HWL will be able to provide a higher level of customer service, offer better electric and water reliability and keep our operating costs low. The additional and timely information available through AMI will enable us to better address customer questions and issues. That same information will give HWL a view of what is happening throughout the various distribution systems, thus enabling us to be more proactive and avoid outages or other system issues. Many functions that require sending crews out to the field today will be performed remotely with AMI, thus saving fuel and vehicle costs, in addition to being more environmentally friendly.

Below is a short list of benefits related to Advanced Metering:

- Outage notification
- Customer portal – usage data
- Reduction of vehicle emissions (meter reader vehicles)
- Identification of theft (keeps costs low)
- Identification of water leaks or trouble shooting excessive usage
- Customer privacy – no meter reader on premise

- Reduced risk to utility employees – dog bites, vehicle incidents, other job hazards

HWL's Advanced Metering, along with HWL's new Customer Information System, featuring the SmartHub application, will allow customers to track their usage, receive bill due notifications, pay bills electronically, receive electric outage notifications and communicate issues more efficiently. To learn more about SmartHub, Visit our website at <https://hopewl.smarthub.coop/Login.html#login>: for instruction on how to set up your login. All customers are encouraged to sign up for HWL's new SmartHub application to take full advantage of its conveniences by calling the HWL office to apply and provide necessary information or using the website. Help HWL deliver better service to all customers by providing your telephone number for up to date information.

For more information about the advanced meters and SmartHub, please go to HWL's website at www.hope-wl.com.