



2135 South Ammon Road, Ammon, Idaho 83406

## **Water Metering - Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1. How did the City come up with 7,000 gallons as a base rate amount of water?**

7,000 gallons is the average amount of water used by residents in the winter months when lawns are not being watered. This means that some use more and some use less than 7,000 gallons during this period. Under the test period rate, residents can use 7,000 gallons of water for a flat rate of \$30. Any water used in addition to 7,000 gallons is charged at \$1.25 per 1,000 gallons.

### **2. What research has the City done on water use within the City and the need for water meters?**

The City has been researching and reviewing water use within the city for many years. Within the past several years, the City started placing water meters to study the usage in different areas of town. The City has also been aware of the need to replace older water lines and build new tanks, pumps and lines. In 2017, the City formed a citizens' working water committee and hired Keller and Associates to complete a comprehensive study of our water system. The City also purchased a subscription to Waterworth software, to analyze the data it was receiving from the installed meters. Based on the research, it became clear that metering water would be the most economical and equitable way to stabilize Ammon's water use and meet the long term financial needs of Ammon's water system. This research was used in determining the base rate and usage rates.

### **3. How many homes in the City currently have meters installed and able to read?**

As of July, 2018, there are 2,767 installed meters that are being read. 108 meters have been installed year-to-date, with a goal of 300 new to be installed for the year, not including all new construction.

### **4. What is the plan to finish metering the entire City?**

There are currently 689 unserviceable vaults, of which 20 have been repaired year-to-date, and that work continues. Ammon Public Works has a goal to repair all unserviceable vaults by the end of next year's construction season. There are also approximately 750 properties with no meter vault or meter. These properties will likely require more significant work to install the meter vault and water meter. This work that will occur as quickly as is feasible.

### **5. What will happen to those homes that are currently not metered?**

The plan is for the City to install meters in all remaining unmetered homes. It is currently unknown how long this will take. Once the metered rate is determined and charged, it is expected that unmetered homes will be assessed a new water rate until their meters are installed and they have had the benefit of a test period.

### **6. What is the purpose of the test period?**

The purpose is to show residents and the City Council how a metered rate might work. On their water bill, residents can see how many gallons they use in a month and how much that would cost under the test period rate. This allows residents to determine if they need to reduce water use.

### **7. Will all homes be able to experience a test period before the metered rate is charged?**

Yes.

**8. How long will the current test period last?**

It is anticipated that the test period will end when the Council determines that there has been sufficient information provided to the public regarding the test period and how to reduce water consumption. At the conclusion of the test period, the Council will formally approve and begin charging a metered rate for water. The exact time of that decision has not yet been decided, but we anticipate it happening before the start of the next watering season.

**9. Has a metered rate been decided yet?**

No. See above. The metered rate on utility bills is there only for test period purposes, to allow residents to see what their water use could cost under a metered system and to adjust their water use accordingly. The actual metered rate, or the time when that rate will be charged for water, has not yet been decided, but will likely happen before the start of the next watering season.

**10. What is the process for approving the metered rate?**

The City Council would schedule a public hearing prior to approving the metered rate.

**11. How are the water meters read? Does it cost the city to read the meters in man power?**

All meters in Ammon are read remotely and require no additional manpower. Water meters are read every 15 minutes by radio frequency. Meters are programmed to read in 1 gallon increments. Ammon's system has leak detection, so the City can know whether the meter reading is caused by a leak. A meter proof report is reviewed each month to correct errors prior to billing. Ammon can chart individual meters by the day, week, or month for individual customers to answer questions and identify potential issues.

**12. What is the City doing to provide education to the public about water usage, water meters, and how they can prepare for metered water?**

The City has community education events every second Wednesday, at 7:00 pm, at the City building (unless the location is changed due to other meetings, at which times the community will be notified). Also, the Water Department sends out notifications to the 20 highest consumption users each month, and offers assistance as needed to help identify issues of high consumption.

**13. What do I do if I think that my meter reading is wrong?**

If you think there is a problem with your meter and it is reading incorrectly, please immediately call the Ammon Water Department, at 612-4030.

**14. Who do I contact for help in checking for leaks or with help in assessing the effectiveness in my water system?**

Call the Ammon Water Department, at 612-4030.

**15. Where can I find more information about the water study, needs in Ammon's water system, or the formula for the test period rates?**

Please visit our Water Department website: <http://b.ci.ammon.id.us/water/>. Scroll to the bottom of the page for more information. The full Keller water study is over 600 pages and is available to review at the Ammon City Building.