

*The City of Kingsport is aware of the problem with your water bill and we're working to address the issue. This is the number one priority within the water department. We do apologize and are working to return matters back to normal.*

### **What happened?**

The batteries in some of the water meters started to fail last December, which meant the city was not able to electronically detect an accurate reading of your water usage.

Due to staffing and equipment issues, the city initially estimated water usage for some customers. Estimating kept the water bills at a consistent amount and it got the bills out in a timely manner at first.

Then, to help speed up the billing process the city charged some customers the minimum amount one month and then physically read the water meter the next month. This was why your bill was higher one month and lower the next.

However, the amount of water billed over a two-month period is correct.

### **What's happening now?**

All meters are being read by an employee every month. We are over a month behind in billing.

We plan to resolve this issue by doing two billing cycles to cover 45 days and then begin monthly billing in August. This will cause your current bill to be higher than normal. If you're expecting to pay \$50 per month for 3 bills (\$150), you may end up paying \$75 per bill for 2 bills (\$150).

*We anticipate all billing issues to be resolved by your August bill. During this time, the City of Kingsport **will not** be charging any late fees or performing any cutoffs of water service.*

**Please note – Your water meter is registering the correct water usage and you're not being over-billed for your water.**

If you have any further questions about your water bill, please call 423-343-9860.

*Please review the information in the following pages for the most up-to-date information on the water meter replacement project.*

# Water Meter Update From Ryan McReynolds

We make every effort to perform accurate and efficient meter reading and provide exceptional customer services related to drinking water. The City of Kingsport employs 8 service workers who are dedicated to these tasks. We have remained diligent in our effort to improve reading and billing efforts, especially in light of our recent water meter issues.

We have reinstated monthly manual meter reading, with in-field personnel, to ensure every meter is read every month. Some meters are having to be located, as they haven't been manually read in several years.

For commercial accounts that have a meter inside the building (deduct or fire line detector check), a letter will be sent in a couple of weeks to begin scheduling monthly readings on these meters, until they are upgraded.

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As you may know, our existing 3G water meters that were read via drive-by programmers are no longer communicating due to dead batteries. In response, we began replacing these meters in 2020 with new 4G meters that we will be able to read from the utility office once the network and programming has been completed.

To date, we have replaced 16,000 of our 40,000 water meters with Master Meter Allegro meters and will continue working on updating meters in phases.

The 4G meters, coupled with the network and programming, will also allow us to better notify customers of potential leaks or issues that can result in high bills. Through the Leak Alarms function, meters can notify the utility system of excessive usage over a continuous 24-hour period, as well as give a report of the average consumption over that period of time.

## Steps to Self-Check for Leaks

1. Turn off all faucets and water-using appliances, including ice-makers and toilets.
2. Check the leak indicator on the meter. *(see diagram on page 2)*
3. If the leak indicator is moving, the leak is most likely in a line inside or running to the home.
4. If the leak indicator isn't moving, the leak is most likely one of the items turned off in step 1. Turn these back on one at a time until the leak indicator identifies a leak.



# FINDING YOUR WATER METER

Typically, water meters are located in the front of a home or business, near the street or curb. Most are in either a cast iron box with a metal lid, or a plastic meter box with a plastic lid. The plastic lids are typically outfitted with a hinged metal door.

For assistance in locating your water meter, or to report an issue with a meter box, please call 423-229-9454. Additionally, you can now report issues via the free city app, ConnectKingsport. Visit [www.kingsporttn.gov](http://www.kingsporttn.gov) for more information.



ConnectKingsport may be used to report many issues that are not related to the water meter, such as graffiti, code enforcement issues, a fallen tree, or a damaged garbage cart.

# UNDERSTANDING YOUR WATER METER

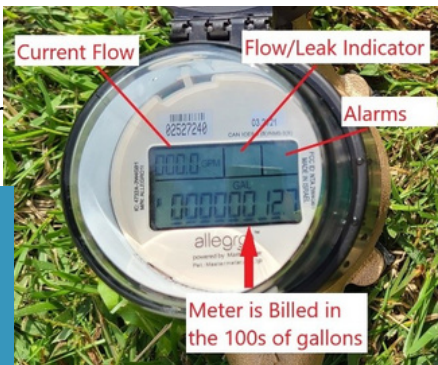
The water meter's totalizer works like an odometer. The numbers are read left to right, and the reading is the total amount in gallons the meter has registered over the course of its life.

Current flow is displayed in the top left of the new meters, in gallons per minute, to the tenth of a gallon. The middle box has a flow direction/leak indicator displaying an arrow in the direction of flow.



The older 3G meters are equipped with a silver star in the middle for a leak and flow indicator. Counter-clockwise rotation indicates water is flowing through the meter in the direction of the residence, while clockwise rotation indicates backwards flow towards the water main.

*\*Please notify the utility office if you notice clockwise rotation on your water meter.*



All of our meters have several things in common, such as a leak indicator, regardless of make & model.

For assistance with yours, please call 423-229-9454.

## CONTACT US

For more information or if you have questions, please contact us at 423-229-9454 during normal hours (7:00am-4:30pm, Monday-Friday).

**To report a water outage, water break, or other water/sewer/storm related issue after hours, please call 423-246-9111.**



Kingsport Public Works



Kingsport Alerts