



# CITY OF MILPITAS

455 East Calaveras Boulevard, Milpitas, California 95035-5479 • [www.ci.milpitas.ca.gov](http://www.ci.milpitas.ca.gov)

## How to read your water meter

The meter is located typically near the street, in a box labeled “water meter”. Sometimes, the meter is located in front of the building. Some customers have a separate meter for domestic, irrigation and fire usages. Some meters have 2 register heads.

Carefully, lift the meter box lid up or open to the side. You can use two large screw drivers to lift and pry the box lid open. There may be insects or small animals in the meter box. Do not drop the lid on the meter. The new meter has an electronic transmitter which requires extra care to not damage the wire and transmitter. The meter register head can be read after lifting the cover.

Meter box and lid



Water meter with meter cover lifted



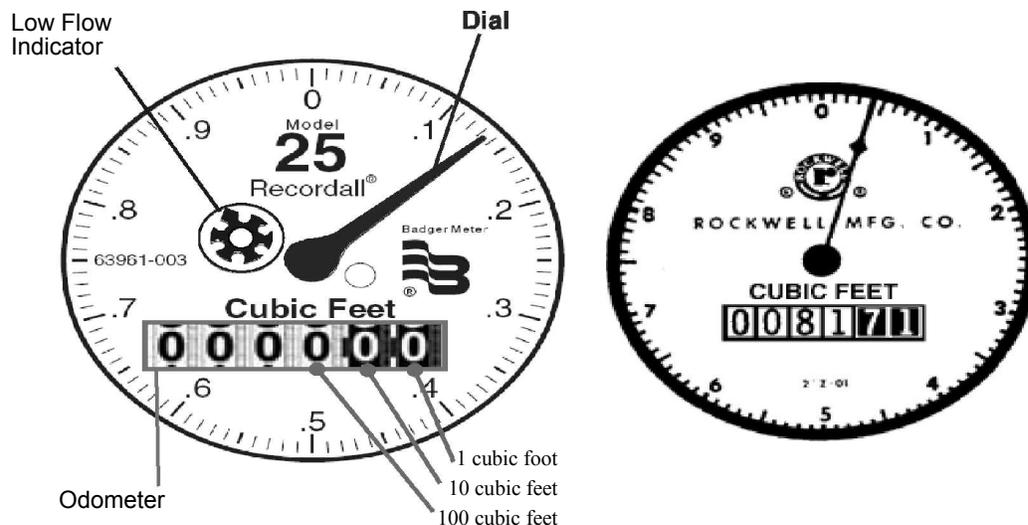


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There are two basic types:

**Odometer type:** this is similar to the odometer in your car for miles driven. The odometer type records water use in cubic feet and displays as follows: The digits from right to left represent 1 cubic foot, 10 cubic feet, 100 cubic feet and so on. The dial rotates one full circle for one cubic foot of water usage. Like a car odometer, the water meter odometer can not be altered. For billing purposes, only the numbers at and above 100 cubic feet are read (1 unit of water is same as 100 cubic feet and same as 748 gallons).



The left example reads .13 cubic foot, billing read would be 0 unit.

The right example reads 8,171.04 cubic feet, billing read would be 81 units.

## Low flow indicator or leak detection indicator:

Some meters have a triangular or asterisk shape wheel to indicate any water usage. Any water usage will cause the wheel to spin. If the main water valve is turned off and the indicator is spinning, you have a leak/usage between the water line from the water meter and the main water valve. Similarly, if you have turned off all your appliances and water fixtures, any movement of the wheel could indicate a small leak in your plumbing (hair pin hole in the pipe, sticking toilet valve, fixture drip, etc.). If you do not have an indicator, you can do 2 reads over an extended period (half hour), if the read shows any usage, you may have a leak somewhere.

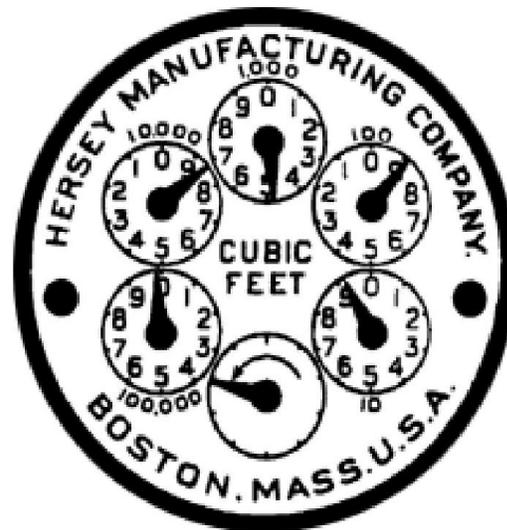
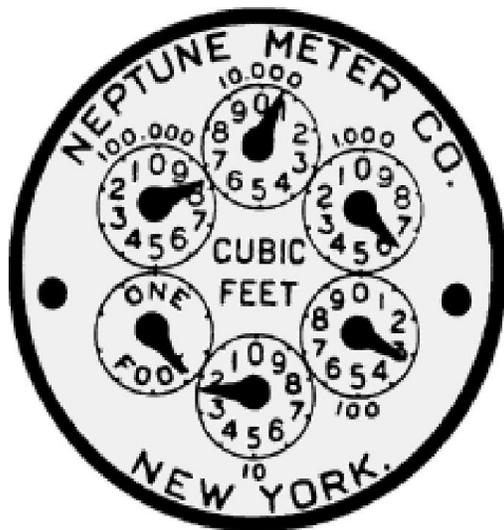


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**Clock type:** Consisting of a series of clocks:

1. Begin with the "100,000" dial at the left and record the number indicated. Then read each dial in a clockwise direction to the "10" dial. Record each number.
2. If the hand is between numbers, use the lower number.
3. In this example, the left meter registers 8, 0, 6, 3, and 2, respectively (80,632 cubic feet). Disregard the last two numbers (32), because billing is based on units of 100 cubic feet so the meter read for billing would be 806.
4. The meter on the right registers as 9, 8, 4, 8, and 9, respectively (98,489 cubic feet or 984 units). If you were to use 13 more units by the next time your meter was checked, the reading would be 997 units.



**Read the meter at start and end of a period to assess your water usage**

1. Read the meter and write it down completely. Then write down the date/time you read it. After a period (we suggest 7 days for usage monitoring or half hour for leak detection) read the meter again and write down the read and the date/time.
2. Subtract the first reading from the second reading. This is your water use in cubic feet during the period.
3. Multiply the water use by 7.48. This is your water use in gallons during the period.
4. Divide the water use in gallons by the number of days between readings. This is your average gallons per day during the period.