

Water Meter Replacement Project



What you need to know

What to expect?

Why is it happening?

Important reminders

What to expect

Work will be done in phases of 1500 homes at a time.

You'll see 5–10 Professional Meters Inc (PMI) contractor crews working out of clearly marked vans.



A flyer will be included in your utility bill with important info and updates.

Why is it happening?

Water meters have a lifespan of about 15 years

These new meters offer better technology, increased accuracy, and help us detect leaks almost instantly.

This upgrade is part of federal compliance and comes at no cost to the homeowner.

Important Reminders

You will get 24/7 notification from PMI as we get closer to the start date

If any damage occurs during installation, PMI is responsible for repairs, not the City.

Copy of Notice of Water Meter Replacement door hanger

Notice to Water Customers Water Meter Replacement

Dear Water Customer,

This notice is to advise you that the City of Commerce has upgraded your water meter to improve the water service we provide to you. Along with a new water meter we have installed a **dual check backflow device** as required by Federal and State Law. **This new dual check device may require you to install a Thermal Expansion Tank and a Pressure Reducing Valve (PRV) on your home's plumbing system.**

Why was the dual check backflow device being installed?

- The City is required by Federal and State Law to install a backflow device.
- The backflow device will protect the public water system by no longer allowing water to flow from the customer's plumbing back into the water main.

Why do I need a Thermal Expansion Tank?

As water is heated by your water heater it expands, taking up a half gallon to gallon more space in your plumbing. This in turn can increase the pressure in your plumbing by 40 psi. This extra pressure needs to be regulated to prevent your pipes from bursting. In 1994 the International Plumbing code required all new homes to be equipped with a device to account for this excess pressure. A Thermal Expansion Tank regulates this excess pressure and protects your homes plumbing.

How does it work?

The thermal expansion tank is filled with air. There is a rubber bladder inside the tank which separates the air from any entering water. As the water pressure builds, the air is compressed to allow the extra water to fill the tank.

How do I know if I need one?

- If your home was built prior to 1994 you may not have a "Thermal Expansion Tank."
- Homes built after 1994 should have a thermal expansion tank though there is no guarantee one exists in your home.

Where should it be and what does it look like?

- The tank is about the size of a basketball.
- It should be located within a few feet of your hot water heater on the cold water intake side.

Note:

These tanks have set operating pressure ranges. You may need to install a PRV if you do not already have one. This will ensure the tank works properly. The pressure in the public water main is very often over 100 psi. Pressure reducing valves come set around 50 psi which is a much safer pressure range to protect the pipes and plumbing fixtures in your house.

Is the City requiring me to install an expansion tank?

The City of Commerce **does not** require you to install an expansion tank and/or a pressure reducing valve. However, we wish to make you aware that these plumbing fixtures may or may not be currently installed in your homes plumbing system. We recommend that you do some investigation to determine if these fixtures are installed as a prudent measure to protect the plumbing in your house.

What do I need to do?

- Survey your existing plumbing and determine whether or not you have an expansion tank.
- Contact a licensed plumber for installation of a thermal expansion tank and possibly a PRV.
- Purchase Supplies at a local hardware store and perform the work yourself.

Who do I call?

- Visit the internet to find licensed plumbers that can check your system and/or install a PRV and Thermal Expansion Tank.

What if I have more questions?

Contact Commerce Water Department at
706-335-4200 or

Visit www.commercega.gov for more information.

Note:

There are other alternatives to help prevent pressure from building up in your lines such as a ball cock and thermal expansion relief valve, calibrated pressure relief valve, pressure relief valve with hose connection, and combination ball valve and relief valve. These are not recommended as they can cause water loss due to water being discharged or wasted.

General Information

Old meters must be manually read. Someone must touch each meter box and manually read the meter and key in the reading on a handheld device. This is a costly and less effective method of reading meters.

The City of Commerce has been keeping up with new meter reading technology to provide the best possible service to our customers.

New water meters have a 30-day hourly log stored on the meter. The City of Commerce has a customer advocate who can pull the data off the meter to help customers understand what happened in the middle of the month to cause their bill to be different than normal.

General Information

Will you have to dig up my yard?

1. The City will be installing a dual check backflow device to every meter that does not have one. The meter box will need to be dug up to install this device.
2. If the meter is sitting too high or too low, they may dig up around the meter to properly adjust the box. This will help protect the meter from damage and allow us to service the water meter efficiently.
3. If the water meter box is broken or damaged, the contractor will dig up around the box and replace it.
4. Any time the contractor disturbs a yard, they will repair the yard to as close to existing conditions as possible.

General Information

Will the new meter affect the plumbing inside my house?

1. If you have a house built after 1994, you may not have to make any changes.
2. If an old meter is changed out at your address and we have to install a backflow device, the crew will leave a door tag with some information. See other documents on the web site for more detailed information about Backflow Devices, Thermal Expansion Tanks, Pressure Reducing Valves, and potential changes to your plumbing.

If you have any questions or concerns
please reach out to the City of Commerce
Water Department
706-335-4200

