



COCHRANE LAKE GAS CO-OP LTD.

209 Railway Street East, Cochrane, Alberta T4C 2C3

Phone: (403) 932-2707 • Fax: (403) 932-2911

E-mail: admin@clgas.ca

Meter Exchange & AMR Retrofit Project FAQs

Metering is a safe and efficient means to promote sustainability, while allowing service providers to fairly bill for what residents use. The Cochrane Lake Gas Co-op (CLGC) meter upgrade involves the installation of a Measurement Canada Approved “ERT” (Encoder, Receiver, Transmitter). The ERT allows for Automated Meter Reading (AMR) to occur via a radio frequency where the read is received without having to enter the premises.

The following are the most Frequently Asked Questions that will help clarify the installation procedure. If you have questions that are not answered here, please contact our office at (403) 932-2707.

Some of the benefits that AMR will offer include:

- The elimination of customers having to read their meter every month.
- CLGC employees will no longer need to go into customers premises except for scheduled system maintenance and emergencies.
- The utility’s gas system can also be more accurately balanced therefore creating efficiencies that in turn generate cost savings benefitting all Co-op Members.
- Labour used to obtain monthly reads can be redirected into other areas of the gas utility such as system maintenance and construction.

Meter reads are important to us in many different ways:

- It allows for accurate billing, avoiding unexpected high bills through estimating.
- It allows us to pinpoint areas of gas loss on the low pressure pipelines due to line cuts, rodent chews and failed meters.
- It helps us monitor areas for gas volume, used for future development.
- It is used for assisting us in gas system balancing.
- AMR eliminates the need to reallocate valuable gas utility resources to read residential meters.
- CLGC pays for all gas as it enters our pipelines. If that gas never reaches an end customer due to a leak or failure, this money must be recovered in the gas rate to meet our budget.
- By reading meters, we are able to more quickly identify the location of a leak.

AMR Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Are Smart Meters created by installing this technology?

The term Smart Meter is commonly used in the electricity industry to describe a meter that may both measure and control the amount of electricity being used. The CLGC AMR program involves installing a battery powered index on the current gas meter that facilitates remote meter reading without the need to enter the premises. In no way does this technology control gas usage or transmit data other than the meter read.

Q. Can there be health hazards due to the Radio Frequency (RF) technology in use?

No. Health Canada clearly states that exposure to RF energy from technology such as this does not present a health hazard. The AMR device is in the same frequency range as common household devices such as cordless phones (different than cellular phones) and baby monitors.

Q. Is it possible that meters in close proximity to other wireless devices experience interference?

AMR is a tested and industry approved technology that has been in use for over 20 years. Interference from cell towers and power lines will not occur. Software installed with AMR devices offer further checks and balances to confirm precise readings and communication.

Q. How does the mobile collector function?

As a CLGC employee or contractor drives/walks/flies through or over an area that has had AMR installed, the mobile collector emits a signal through a radio frequency to gather only meter readings. The meter reads can then be downloaded to a computer program for further processing.

Q. What is the estimated life of the batteries in the AMR devices?

The AMR device uses very little energy therefore the one battery that powers the device lasts approximately 20 years.

Q. Is AMR easily tampered with?

No. Internal sensors detect and immediately relay any damage to the AMR device. Also the index also has a security seal to prevent tampering.

Q. Is customer information secure?

The only data that is relayed is the identification number of the AMR device and the meter read itself. No other personal information is transmitted or used.

Q. Will AMR cause interference with other devices that function via radio frequencies?

No. The ERT can use multiple radio frequencies to prevent interference with other electronic devices. If interference is detected when the ERT is transmitting the meter reading signal, it will shift to another frequency within seconds.

Q. I have a newer gas meter- will it be exchanged?

No, newer gas meters will be upgraded to accommodate remote reading by attaching a radio transmitter to the meter. This process generally takes 20 to 30 minutes and does not require the gas to be shut off. CLGC has contracted Calgary based Metercor to provide the installation services of the ERTs.

Q. Do the Installers have identification?

All CLGC and Metercor Installers wear uniforms and have photo ID and will be driving clearly marked vehicles when they come to your property. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our office (403) 932-2707.

Q. What are the benefits of Automated Metering?

AMR will help us detect leaks, ensure members are billed for gas consumption in an efficient manner. This process will ensure the Co-op's metering equipment is suitable for many years to come and will meet the goals of improved customer service, billing accuracy, and employee safety. Together we can promote sustainable practices and increase operational efficiencies in our community.

Q. How will the meters be read?

The meter has a radio transmitter attached that is used to perform the reading; no access to your property is required. Every month a CLGC employee or contractor will drive through or fly over the franchise area and collect the consumption data for billing purposes.