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**Advanced Metering Installation is Complete in Stephenville
Wireless water meter reading improves efficiency**

Stephenville, Texas – Water meter reading is now wireless in Stephenville thanks to the installation of an advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) system by Sensus. The innovative system has replaced monthly manual meter reads with a wireless system that collects multiple reads per day, allowing for better leak detection, increased billing efficiency and improved customer service. During the 12-month installation, which was completed on time and on budget, contractors upgraded more than 6,000 residential and commercial water meters.

Utility customers are already experiencing the benefits from this system’s innovative technology. With more frequent and more accurate meter readings, the city is able to help customers save water and money by helping identify, what might otherwise be, unknown leaks in a timely and efficient manner. Advanced metering works via wireless technology to send readings to regional collectors which then transmit the usage data to city hall. Regional collectors are located on existing water towers. The city estimates the system will conservatively save utility customers over three million dollars in just the first ten years of project life when compared to traditional manual water meter reading.

To learn more about the project, visit www.stephenvilletx.gov or contact the Stephenville Customer Service Supervisor at 254-918-1226.

PRIMARY CONTACTS:

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KEY MESSAGES

1. Advanced metering technology is an example of Stephenville's commitment to maintaining a high quality of life for our citizens through cost-effective, innovative programs.
2. The innovative system replaces monthly manual meter reads with a wireless system that collects multiple remote meter reads per day, allowing for better leak detection, increased billing accuracy, and improved customer service.
4. Advanced metering supports the city's commitment to preserving and protecting our environment in a number of ways, including: reducing carbon emissions by taking meter reading vehicles off of the road; enhancing our ability to quickly detect and stop leaks.
5. Advanced metering will help keep Stephenville workers safe by reducing job related injuries like shoulder, ankle, wrist and back injuries as well as spider bites and bee stings.
6. Advanced metering will enhance privacy by removing the need for monthly visits by meter readers. Further, as has always been the case, the city will continue to protect the privacy of utility customer information according to all state and federal laws.
8. Advanced metering will enable the city's Customer Service Department to better serve the public and answer questions regarding water usage and billing.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. What is the installation process?

- a. The project included replacing about 6,000 residential and commercial water meters with new, technologically advanced meters and registers that can communicate usage data via wireless technology directly to city hall.
- b. All meters in Stephenville's utility service area, including domestic water and irrigation water, will be read using the advanced metering system.
- c. During the first phase of the project, crews with Bronco, a subcontractor for Johnson Controls, Inc. physically conducted a visual inspection of a sample of nonresidential meters throughout the city to help determine specifications for the new system. Customers experienced no interruptions to their water service during the inspection.
- d. Installation of the new meter and communication module took approximately 5 to 15 minutes in most cases, with water service being unavailable for just a short period of that time.
- e. The city staff and consultants are committed to minimizing impacts from this important project and, therefore, prepared and worked according to reliable, updated schedules and ensure any interruptions in water service were kept to no more than 15 minutes.
- f. To ensure the installation is complete, workers briefly test the new meter.
- g. While most work occurred within public rights-of-way and easements, the city restored, to original condition, any private property impacted by the installation.
- h. Before temporarily interrupting individual water services, crews made every effort to ensure doing so would not impose an undue hardship on the customer. Such efforts included observing the meter to see if water was being used and knocking on doors to contact those who may be inside.

- i. Before leaving the site, door hangers are left at all entrances to the property informing the residents of the status of the visit such as, installation complete, installation pending - water was being used, unable to access water meter, other.

2. Do I need to do anything to prepare for the installation?

- a. To help keep everyone safe, dogs and any other domestic pets need to be kept out of yards during installations.
- b. Always keep meter box lids unobstructed.

3. Who is doing the work?

- a. The project is being managed by the city staff which was ultimately be responsible for the day-to-day execution of the project and ensuring the highest level of customer satisfaction.
- b. Contractors working on the project will carry proper identification and have successfully completed a background check.
- c. Contractors will not need to enter residential property, nor should a contractor ever ask for any form of payment from customers.

4. How does the system work?

- a. The system works via wireless signals sent from a small radio unit inside the meter box that is connected to the water meter. The meter radio unit sends readings to regional collector units installed on water towers that then transmit the meter reading data to city hall.
- b. Each radio unit will send a 111-millisecond usage report from the meter to city hall four times per day.

5. How does this system benefit customers?

- a. With the old system, city staff had to manually visit about 6,000 meters every month, which took approximately two weeks out of every month. The advanced metering system will take vehicles off of the road, and allow customer service employees to focus on other job duties.
- b. The next step in the project includes the addition of a new web-based reporting system to allow customers to track their daily water use and reduce their water bill. This web-based system will allow customers to receive detailed information on how to take advantage of its offerings.
- c. Thanks to its advanced technology and backup systems in the field, the new system will provide accurate, timely water use data regardless of weather conditions or power outages.

6. How much does this cost?

- a. The total budget for the project is \$2,988,450.00, which is being funded through an Energy Service Performance Contract. This means the project must have a self-funding guarantee and ensure the increased revenue due to meter accuracy
- b. Through operational savings and increased revenue, the project is estimated to have a benefit of over \$3 million over the first 10 years of project life.
- c. The project has a scheduled ten year payback and has positive cash flow starting at year one. The cost savings can be used to fund capital projects to provide better water pressure and increased fire protection.

7. Is there a project warranty?

- a. Yes, because the equipment, particularly the residential meters, the meter is guaranteed to read at least 98.5% accurate for 20 years. The meter has a full replacement cost warranty for the first ten years after installation and a prorated replacement cost warranty for the next ten years.
- b. Additionally, because the project was completed as a performance contract, the annual benefits must exceed the annual costs and Johnson Controls provided a guaranteed cost savings to the city whereby they are contractually obligated to write the city a check for the difference should the increased revenue, due to meter efficiency and accuracy, not meet or exceed the projections.

8. What happens with the current meters and equipment?

- a. The existing meters being replaced during the project will be recycled.
- b. As is currently the case, water meters, and radio units will remain the property of the city and the city will continue to perform the required maintenance on these units

9. Is my new water meter a “Smart Meter”?

- a. The new residential water meters are iPerl model meters manufactured by Sensus. They are not the “Smart Meters” being used to monitor electricity usage. While the meters use advanced measurement technology, the meters are not able to shut off water service or reduce water pressure. The meters simply record the usage and wirelessly send the reading to city hall. The transmitter will also report if the water meter has been removed from the water line. There is also a feature for “continuous flow” which means that if you have water running for several hours, it will send a message to city hall to make contact with the customer to investigate a possible leak.

10. Will wireless technology affect my health or privacy?

- a. The new meters will not negatively affect health or privacy. The wireless portions of the system will be operated according to Federal Communications Commission rules, and will not interfere with other radio frequencies in the area. The transmitters use one-quarter of the power of a cellphone.

11. Where can I get more information?

- a. Call the Public Works office or Customer Service Office any time at (254) 918-1223 or (254) 918-1226 with questions or feedback.