

## General

### What are digital meters?

We are proposing a program to install digital technology on existing customer water meters that record the volume of water consumption at the water meter and transmits the data to a central database for billing, problem identification, reporting and analysis. The technology works through a device, a data logger, which is attached to customers' existing water meter.

### Why are Coliban Water installing digital technology?

We are always looking for innovative ways to identify cost savings and network efficiencies for our customers.

We will primarily be using data loggers for customer billing. The digital data we receive will enable us to identify network efficiencies, manage and maintain our assets, and make informed decisions on repairs and decisions on capital works.

Data loggers can also provide us with a better understanding of customers' water usage and play a role in reducing water wastage.

### How will data loggers benefit customers?

Data loggers will enable us to understand our customers' water use which will help us to detect leaks quicker, ensure accurate meter reads and identify abnormal water use patterns.

Water meters are currently read quarterly so in the event of a leak it could take months before it is identified when a bill arrives. Data loggers will assist in quickly detecting potential leaks at customers' properties, which will save water and consumption charges.

It will also mean that we won't have to enter your property each quarter to read the meter manually. This eliminates the need to estimate reads when it is not possible to access the meter, so there will be no surprises when an actual read is taken.

In the future we are working towards customers being able to access their own consumption data and monitor their usage.

### Where is digital technology being used?

Digital technology for water meters is being used by other water corporations in Australia and has been successfully trialled on commercial customer meters in our region.

### Are data loggers safe?

Data loggers do not pose a health risk to customers or the community. Data is transmitted every hour through low level radiofrequency waves, which are well within Australian safety standards. The digital meters are battery operated and use a low level of power. The signal sent by the data logger is lower than that of a text message sent from a mobile phone. The data transmitter spends the majority of its time in 'sleep' mode and is typically on for less than half a second each hour.

### How do they work?

The installation involves attaching a data logger (digital component) to the existing customer meter. Data is transmitted to our IT infrastructure, connecting the required software systems to record consumption at the property and store this information for billing purposes.



## What happens to my usage data?

All data is collected and is held on secure servers in accordance with national privacy policies.

## Can the data logger be tampered with?

The data that the digital device collects is encrypted and does not contain any personal information. All data is collected and is held on secure servers in accordance with national privacy policies.

## Is the digital technology reliable?

The data loggers will be verified after our contractor installs it. We will periodically verify that the device is operating accurately.

Manual water meter reads will still continue as we monitor verification of the device with the rollout of data loggers across our network.

There will be no job losses as we phase out manual water meter reads in the future.

## Installing your data logger

### When are Coliban Water installing data loggers?

Our program to install data loggers is commencing in March 2018 with stage one in Trentham, Wedderburn, Korong Vale, Wychitella, Mysia and Borung. We have already communicated with customers in these towns in late 2017.

It is proposed that there will be a further four stages (five in total) over a six year period. Our proposal is for all residential and non-residential customers in our region to have a data logger in place at the end of the proposed full rollout period.

### How will I know when my data logger is being installed?

Only towns in stage one have been confirmed and in these towns, we will provide customers with a notification letter with the period for the installation identified at least seven days before your data logger is installed. On the day it will take less than 30 minutes to install the device on your water meter.

Our contractors will be recognisable and have Coliban Water authorised identification on them.

You may continue to see contractors in your area a week or so after your device has been installed as they verify the network and signal operations.

### Do I have to be home for installation?

No. You don't need to be home when your data logger is installed but you must ensure there is safe and clear access to your water meter.

### Will I be without water when my data logger is installed?

No. There will be no impact to your water supply during the installation of your device.

### What will happen to my old water meter?

A digital device is added to the existing water meter so your old water meter will remain in place.



## How much will this digital technology cost?

The digital device will be installed on your existing meter at no cost to you. There will be no other costs other than your normal access and usage charges.

The data logger is battery operated, with the battery having a lifespan of 10 years. Coliban Water will maintain or replace the device when required.

## Who is responsible for the maintenance of the data logger?

Just like your water meter, the data logger is the property of Coliban Water. Customers are not required to perform any maintenance on the meter and should be mindful not to damage it when mowing or landscaping.

It is important that Coliban Water staff have safe and clear access to your water meter and that it is not covered by any rubbish, landscaping or debris.

## Can I still place protection over the water meter for frost?

The operating temperature range of the digital device, including the batteries, is -20 degrees Celsius to +65 degrees Celsius.

The signal from the meter can be interfered with if there is a metal cover or cover containing metal (eg: old tyre) over the meter.

We will be providing meter covers for all households in the stage 1 rollout to assist with frost protection, as covers that customers may have previously had in place will need to be removed following the installation of the data logger.

If you have your own meter cover, please ensure you have removed it from the meter prior to the installation period.

Further information on frozen meters and pipes is available on our website.

## Further information

### How can I find out more about digital meters?

Further information is available on our website – [www.coliban.com.au](http://www.coliban.com.au) or call our Customer Support Team on 1300 363 200.

We will be mailing information on our program to our customers prior to installation taking place.

We will also be holding *Your Town* visits in the lead up to installation where customers can see a model of the data logger on a water meter and ask any further questions.

*Disclaimer: Information contained in this document was correct at the time of publication (March 2018). Coliban Water reserves the right to alter or amend these Frequently Asked Questions and Answers at any time.*