

Why Should I Have a Separate Water Meter for My Irrigation System?

Did you know that you can cut your utility bill significantly by simply installing a second meter?

Irrigation accounts for between 50% and 70% of all the water we consume in the U.S. and the money you spend on irrigation water in the summer months can be as high as 90% of your water bill.

There are a number of steps you can take to reduce consumption, such as having an auditor run through your system, installing a rain sensor, upgrading to an ET-based controller (waters based on soil moisture rather than a schedule), converting to more efficient watering devices (rotary nozzles on turf and drip emitters in beds), but adding a secondary irrigation meter may be the fastest way to cut that bloated water bill down to size.

Your Village Utility Bill

Your Village water bill is divided into two parts; the water consumption and the sewer or waste water fee. Water usage is the part of the bill that most home owners think about when looking at the bottom line. This is how much water you actually used during any given month.

The other half of the water bill is the sewer fee (sometimes called waste water) and this is the fee for the Village (water purveyor) processing the water because all of that water goes down the drain and into the Village sewer where it must be dealt with.



That irrigation water, which is often the bulk of your water consumption during the summer months, does not go back into the sewer to get processed, it goes into the soil. Because of this, most cities and villages allow customers to have a secondary dedicated irrigation water meter installed which is not subject to the sewer fee.

Install 2nd Water Meter for Irrigation

Here's how it works: You will need to fill out a Plumbing permit for the second meter. They are available at <https://www.mattawanmi.org/permits/>. The cost is \$160, which includes:

Application fee \$75

Water Distribution Pipe \$5

Reduced Backflow Preventor \$5

Final Inspection \$75

You may install the irrigation meter/splitter yourself or hire a licensed plumber. The Village does not install the irrigation meter/splitter.

Once installed, you should contact Rich Goris, the Village plumbing inspector (269.207.1543) for the final inspection. Once Rich has completed his inspection, please call or email the Village office (269.668.2128 or offices@mattawanmi.com) to schedule a visit by the Mattawan DPW staff to attach the MXU wire which then activates the meter.

Once your new irrigation meter is installed and activated, you will see a second line-item on your monthly bill for the irrigation meter.



Irrigation Meter Savings

The water that passes through the irrigation meter will not be charged the sewer fee. While it is important to understand that this does not reduce your water consumption, it can drastically reduce the amount of your monthly water bill. It also provides an accurate assessment of how much water your sprinkler system is using on a monthly basis.

The ROI for most Village home owners, that are in their homes long-term, more than justifies this up-front expense and many homeowners see a return in between one and two years.