

## How to Read a Water Meter

To read a typical water meter, simply read across the numbers in the box. The current reading for the sample meter below is 4076230 gallons. Some meters have only six digits instead of seven, but they are read exactly the same way. If the reading you had taken earlier was 4062110 you would have used 14,120 gallons.



The 0 on the far right is a fixed number and never changes. Each number on the round dial represents one gallon so from 0 to 1 is one gallon, 1 to 2 is one gallon, etc. One complete turn of the read needle is 10 gallons.

The small red triangle shaped piece on the dial is a low flow indicator that will rotate if there is any flow through the meter. It is useful when checking for leaks. To check for leaks, shut off all water flow in the house such as faucets, washing machines, etc. Watch the red triangle for at least 5 minutes. If it moves then there is flow through the meter and you have water running somewhere.

Another way to check for leaks is to write down the numbers and the location of the dial indicator. Do not use any water for 2 hours. After the 2 hours read the water meter again. If the dial has moved you have a leak and need to contact a plumber as soon as possible to avoid a high water bill.

These meters are called *positive displacement* meters. The water entering the meter fills a known volume of the measuring chamber on one or the other side of a movable disc that separates the chamber into two sections. As water enters it moves the disc (nutates), forcing a known volume of water out of the meter from the opposite side of the disc. The process repeats as the sections refill and empty in turn. The nutating action of the disc is coupled magnetically to the register to indicate the volume of water that passes through the meter. The meter cannot register water unless it actually does go through the meter.

If you have any questions please call the North Brookfield Water Department at 508-867-0207.