

MOSL Toolbox Talks #7

Meter Location Data (Self-lay providers)

The competitive water market opened in April 2017, enabling more than 1.2 million non-household customers, from the smallest not-for-profit to the largest industrial businesses, to choose who provides their water and wastewater retail services. It is the biggest competitive water market in the world.

The market allows customers to shop around for, or renegotiate, better deals and additional services such as water efficiency audits, more frequent meter reads or bundling utility services.

The water companies are still responsible for treating and supplying water and wastewater and own the physical assets such as pipes and water meters.

However, the retailer has the direct relationship with the customer and is responsible for reading the meter, billing customers and handling complaints and enquiries, as well as liaising with water companies behind the scenes in relation to asset-related issues such as fixing leaks, repairing or replacing meters, and so on.

Arguably the most important part of the non-household market is the humble water meter and the information it provides.

As well as ensuring customers' bills are timely and accurate, regular meter reading are essential in determining how much water non-household customers have used and therefore how much money Retailers owe water companies. This is known as 'settlement'.

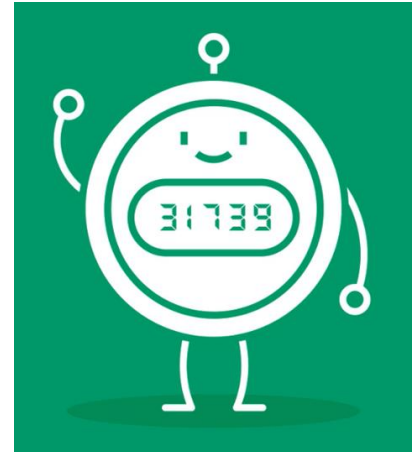
That is why your work in fitting meters is so important.

If you fit a new meter

If you fit a non-household customer's water meter, it is extremely important to ensure that you have collected and recorded all the data required to easily locate and read the meter in the future.

As a minimum you should be collecting:

- The meter serial number
- The meter manufacturer
- The meter size
- The number of dials
- The initial read
- A clear photo of the installed meter showing the meter serial number and initial read
- The meter's GIS X/Y co-ordinates (and [What3Words](#) location reference, if available)
- The meter location (including internal/external classification), with a reference point using [the standardised abbreviations](#). References to left or right should be made from the perspective of the technician facing the building.
- A photo of the meter location
- Whether the chamber cover requires a two-person lift or is deeper than usual.



This information should always be provided to the water company within one business day of installation so they can update Central Market Operating System (CMOS), where all meter data is held.

CMOS should be the “one version of the truth” and must always be kept up to date to ensure meters can be located and read easily.

So, what does the water company need from you?

If you install a non-household customer’s meter, then please contact the water company ASAP with all the relevant details, such as the exact location information, new meter type, size, manufacturer and reading. Photographs can provide valuable assistance.

Some water companies may publish installation guides on their website for meters. Please co-ordinate with the water company to obtain these guides.

Please remember that any failures to provide accurate and timely data to CMOS may carry a financial penalty for the water company and may impact an Ofwat target!