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**Residents in Victor Community Receive a Splash of Refreshing News with
Cost Efficient Water Meters to Be Installed in their Neighborhoods**
Action Hailed for Saving Time, Labor and Expense While Encouraging Water Conservation

(STOCKTON, CA) – The San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors gave the green light last week to invest in an Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) system for Victor; a 300-resident rural community just east of Lodi. The County operates and maintains a special district that provides water to the community, which has relied on manually read water meters for the past 29 years. The Board of Supervisors unanimously agreed it was time to put in a more modern state-of-the-art system as the time came to replace the aging meters. On June 9, the Board approved a contract of nearly \$204,000 to install the technologically advanced meters beginning in July.

“While we’re happy these old meters more than withstood the test of time, it’s long overdue for them to be replaced by an automated system that will free up crews from going door-to-door to 95 different metered connections and allow computers to do everything remotely, resulting in significant savings to ratepayers,” said Kathy Miller, Chair of the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors.

After seeking and evaluating proposals, the Department of Public Works ultimately selected the Utility Service Company (USC) to upgrade the system. Under the terms of the contract, USC will replace all existing manually read meters with AMI compatible equipment capable of transmitting meter readings and other information such as tampering alerts, along with uploading usage data into automated billing software. The meters will also have remote service turn-on and turn-off capabilities, and the system includes an internet portal that will allow customers to monitor their water use.

According to Public Works Director Kris Balaji, the new AMI system will enable staff to perform automated meter reading and billing and provide the ability to remotely connect or disconnect water services, resulting in a net savings to the district of about \$15,000 annually.

At this savings rate, Director Balaji says the approximately \$100,000 incremental cost of the AMI system will be recouped in just over six years, and savings to the residents will increase as additional districts are added to the system.

“This step toward automation is a win for everybody, especially the rate payers,” said San Joaquin County Supervisor Chuck Winn, who represents the community of Victor. “Residents’ water services will be provided more efficiently, and County monitoring staff time will be reduced and redirected to other important projects to enhance constituent services. Additionally, increased consumer awareness of their water usage may lead to further district and customer savings.”

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