

WaterSmart
SOFTWARE

Create your free, personal WaterSmart account today!

- See how you use water & where you use it most
- Find ways to save water & reduce your bill
- Compare your usage with similar households
- Sign up for high usage & leak detection alerts

Your information is always kept safe & secure. WaterSmart will never sell or provide your personal information to third-party vendors.

Create your account at: honolulu.watersmart.com

WaterSmart helps you take control of water usage

The Board of Water Supply is offering interested customers access to detailed online and mobile water consumption data to encourage them to take control of their water usage.

WaterSmart, an online program, provides a regular Water Report that compares a customer's water use with similar users and recommends measures tailored for the customer, based on information they provide for a household profile, to

improve water-use efficiency. Customers receiving online Water Reports and access to the companion website and mobile application, have proven to have a better understanding of their water use, higher satisfaction with their water utility, and are more likely to use water efficiently.

To sign up, visit www.honolulu.watersmart.com. BWS customers can also sign up for high consumption alerts or other communications from BWS.

Help available for customers affected financially by the COVID-19 shut-down

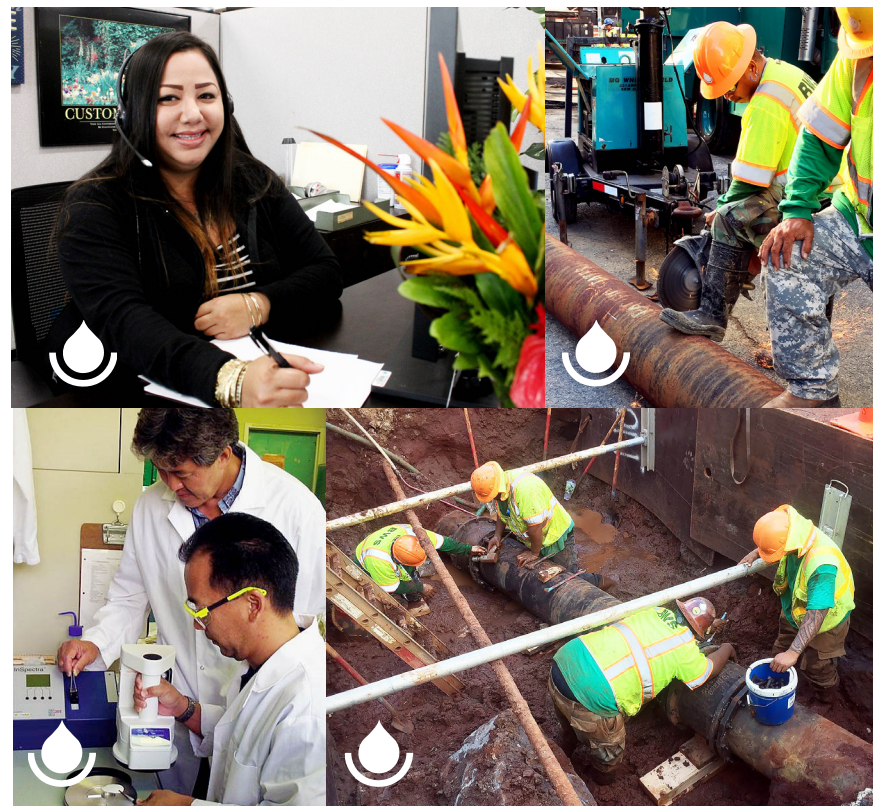
If you are experiencing financial hardship that directly results from COVID-19 guidelines and policies, the BWS is willing to work with you for bill payment. Please call the BWS's special line at 748-5070, or visit boardofwatersupply.com/help for helpful information, including an online payment arrangement request.

Costly Drip

The Costly Drip:
A 1/16" stream of water dripping from your faucet wastes 100 gallons per day; 3,000 gallons per month, and adds **\$12.00** to your monthly water bill!



Work at BWS, Apply Now!



- Customer Care • Civil Engineers • Mechanical Engineers • Finance
- Information Technology • Trades Apprentices • Clerical
- Hydrogeologists • Microbiologists • Data Processing Systems Analysts
- Listings Updated Continuously, Check Back Often!

Visit the City and County of Honolulu Department of Human Resources at www.honolulu.gov/hr or submit a resume with your detailed work experience to bwshr@hbws.org.

More information at www.bwsjobs.org



WATER MATTERS

Safe, dependable, and affordable water, now and into the future

Volume 7 - Issue 2

Summer 2020

Board to transfer Haiku Stairs to the City

At their April 27, 2020, meeting, Board of Water Supply (BWS) board members unanimously chose to transfer ownership of Haiku Stairs – and all the land around them – to the City and County of Honolulu, with an 18-month time limit to complete conveyance. If the transfer is not completed within that time, then the BWS will begin to remove the stairs, as stated in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). The city plans on hiring an operator

to manage and maintain the stairs.

“We are pleased to have our Board make a decision that allows us to move forward and ultimately remove liability from BWS,” BWS Manager Ernest Lau said. “However, as long as we retain ownership, we want to assure the residents of the area that we will continue with our security measures and will continue to work with them to mitigate the negative impacts to their community.”

This decision does not mean the stairs are open. It is still illegal to climb them and trespassers will be cited and prosecuted to the full extent of the law, including possible jail time and fines.

Once the stairs are conveyed to the city, it will be responsible to maintain security until an operator is chosen.

All testimony and a video of the meeting is posted at hbws.me/haiku.

Keeping Oahu's water supply sustainable despite potential climate change challenges

BWS is proactively working on adaptive strategies to prepare for challenges associated with the effects of climate change and sea level rise. The BWS's focus is on making the water system more resilient in the face of these potential impacts:

- Less rainfall in Leeward Oahu due to rising temperatures and changing weather patterns that would decrease groundwater recharge.
- Coastal erosion, sea level rise, and flooding that would impact the design life of coastal infrastructure and the ability of Field Operations crews to repair main breaks in flooded streets.

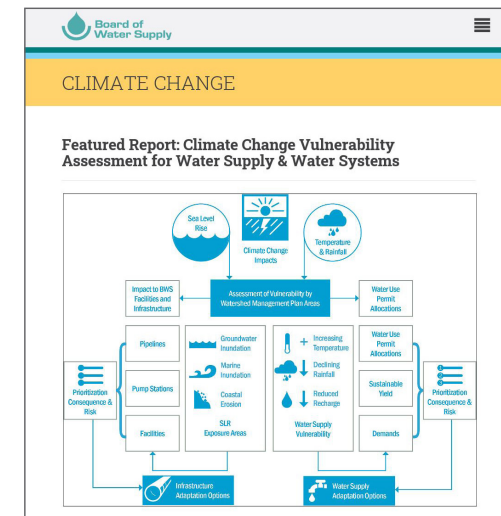
As part of this effort, the BWS partnered with the Water Research Foundation to fund a tailored study that assesses the vulnerability of BWS water sources and

infrastructure and identifies adaptive strategies for drought and sea level rise to the end of the century in collaboration with State and County agencies. The study is available online on the BWS Climate Change web page at: hbws.me/climate.

Also, the BWS is a member of the Water Utility Climate Alliance; it consists of 12 of the nation's largest water utilities. The alliance is “dedicated to enhancing climate change research and improving water management decision-making to ensure that water utilities will be positioned to respond to climate change and protect our water supplies.” – www.wucaonline.org

Because the BWS is working now to evaluate risks from climate change and sea level rise and develop possible adaptive measures, we can phase them into our Capital Improvement Program over time

and continue to provide safe, dependable, and affordable water to our customers now and into the future.



BWS staff offer outdoor water-saving tips on KHON Take2 program

BWS staff from the Halawa Xeriscape Garden make regular guest appearances on KHON's Take2 program to offer timely tips for reducing your outdoor water use and to promote water-efficient gardening. The segments air on the 4th Thursday of each month on KHON2 from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. The segments are also posted on the Halawa Xeriscape Garden's Facebook page for easy watching.



BWS Upgrading Automated Water Meter Reading Equipment



A Board of Water Supply (BWS) contractor will be changing out meter transponder units (MXU) in BWS water meter boxes throughout the year, ending in December 2020.

The project will increase the efficiency of the automated meter reading (drive-by) process.

The BWS will replace roughly 80,000 of these devices throughout Oahu. The BWS has been gradually exchanging aging meter transponder units for newer ones; this project will accelerate those efforts.

The BWS has contracted Royal Contracting Company to install the new transponders and EKNA Services, Inc., as the construction managers. The project tasks include:

- Notifying customers of upcoming work in their area 1-2 weeks

prior. The actual work will occur within 3-4 weeks of that notification. Most meters are in the public right-of-way.

- For meter boxes on private property, arranging with the customer, in advance, to gain access to the box.
- At the meter box, changing out the old meter transponder unit for a new one, taking about 15-20 minutes per meter.
- Performing Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC) work to ensure transponders are operating correctly. This will include a drive-by test.

Work will occur seven days a week, from 7:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m., except on state highways where work is allowed only from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Water service will not be disrupted. Note that the BWS is NOT changing the water meter; only the meter transponder.

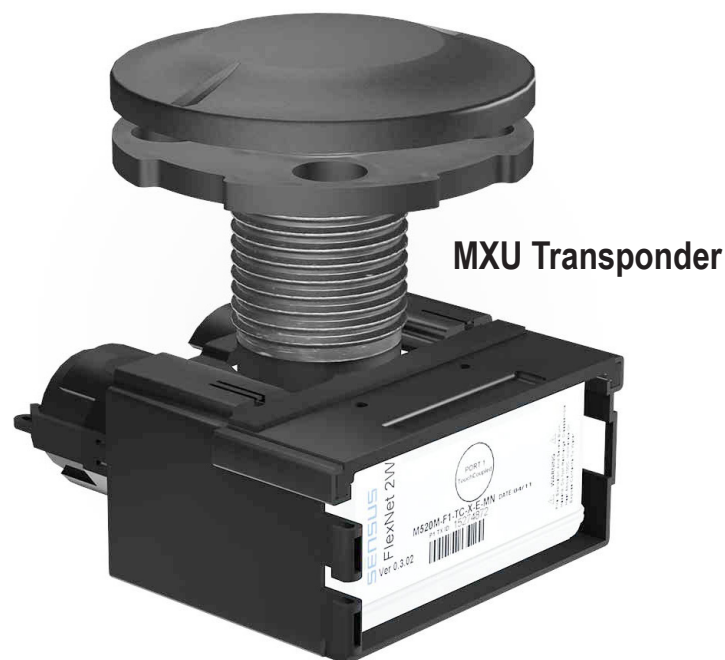
To address concerns that the project may be used to mask illegal activity:

- All contractor employees will have special BWS Contractor ID badges.
- No BWS employee or contractor shall ask the customer for any type of payment in conjunction with this project.
- BWS will post information online noting locations where contractors are working, along with maps and updates on the project:

- **BWS MXU website:** hbws.me/mxu
- **Facebook.com/BWSHonolulu**
- **Twitter at @BWSHonolulu**
- **Nextdoor.com**

If customers have concerns or questions about the project, they can contact the BWS via:

- **Email** ContactUs@hbws.org (Monitored 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Mon. through Fri.)
- **Phone** at **748-6500** (Monitored 7:45 a.m. to 10:30 p.m., including weekends. After hours, please leave your name and phone number so that we may return your call.)



MXU Transponder

MXU Project Frequently Asked Questions

What does this project involve?

Board of Water Supply (BWS) contractor Royal Contracting Company will be changing out roughly 80,000 aging meter transponder units in water meter boxes throughout Oahu. Work around the island began in January 2020 and is expected to finish by December 2020.

What is a meter transponder unit?

A meter transponder is 1 of 3 components of Automated Meter Reading (AMR) equipment in the water meter box:

- An electronic register that is physically attached to the water meter;
- A meter transponder that is connected via wire to the electronic register; and
- A vehicle transceiver in the BWS's drive-by vehicle.

As a BWS vehicle equipped with a transceiver drives along a meter-reading route, the transceiver sends a radio signal to meter transponders within range to notify them to transmit, via radio signal, meter reads back to the transceiver. The meter transponder gets the reading from the electronic register and sends it back via radio signal, to the transceiver where it is collected for bill processing.

Why is the BWS changing out transponder units?

The change-out will significantly increase the efficiency of the automated meter reading process (drive-by).

In 2017, the BWS started to replace aging transponders with newer ones in one of the 20 meter reading cycles, resulting in the AMR read rate rising from 80% to 92%. That cycle now has a consistent read rate of greater than 95%. Similar results have occurred in other cycles that were steadily changed out. This mass change-out project was initiated to speed up those efforts and the BWS anticipates that, after completion, AMR read rates will be at 95% or higher.

Will I be billed for the change-out?

No. Customers will NOT be billed for this project. No customer shall ever be approached for any type of payment by any BWS employee or contractor for this project. This project is funded by BWS in its FY2020 Capital Improvement Project budget. There will be no additional costs passed on to ratepayers.

How much does the project cost?

The project will cost about \$5.01 million.

How long will the actual work take?

The change-out at the box should take about 15-20 minutes. As part of the QA/QC work, you also may notice the contractor conducting drive-bys to ensure that the transponder is connecting and transmitting. This drive-by test will occur within the following 24-hours after the change-out.

Can I schedule a specific date and time for this work to be done?

The contractor will only be scheduling appointments for those residences where the water meter is located on private property and access is required. Most water meters are located in the public right-of-way.

Will the contractor do any other repairs when they come to replace the transponder?

The contract is for transponder replacement, but through the inspections of the meter boxes, it has been noticed that another piece called the ECR may need changing as well. This is far less common. Royal will replace all transponders in an area first, then return later to change out those meter boxes with both transponders and ECRs. However, if they note any other condition issues in the meter box, they will let the customer and the BWS know that a follow-up visit may be needed to assess and conduct any additional work. Customers may call 748-5000, extension 1, to report and follow-up.

Once the change-out is complete in my area, will the contractor have to come back?

The contractor is working to replace transponder units as quickly and as safely as possible. There will be times, such as when there are meter readings taking place, where the contractor will pause their work and have to return to the area at a later date.

I reported a leak in the meter box to the BWS. Can the contractor fix that since they are already coming here?

If you already contacted the BWS about a possible leak in the meter box, a BWS employee will come to investigate it. If you need to report a leak in the box, please call 748-5000, extension 1, and speak to a BWS dispatcher. The contractor will not be repairing leaks.

Are you replacing or upsizing my meter?

We are NOT replacing the meter, only a component in the meter box.

Will the contractor notify customers in advance of doing the work?

Yes, Royal Contracting Company is mailing postcards to residents about 3-4 weeks in advance of their work in an area.

Is there a way to identify the contractor's employees who are working on this project?

Employees from Royal Contracting Company will be wearing bright yellow vests with their company logo. They will have identification badges indicating they are BWS contractors. They may be on foot or in vehicles that are marked with Royal Contracting Company's logo and they will have a rolling cart with their equipment on it. Please refer to the pictures below to

see the vests and badges.

My meter box is on my property, behind a fence or at the back of the lot, so how will the contractor handle the change out?

The contractor will pre-arrange with you to gain access to the meter box.

Will I still have water service during the change-out work?

Yes. Water service will NOT be disrupted during the work.

Is this work limited to regular business hours?

No. Work will occur seven days a week, from 7:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m., except along state highways where work is allowed only from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. However, work is limited to the meter box only.

There is activity occurring on my street that could be related to this project, but I am not sure. How can I check if work is being done in my area?

The BWS regularly updates information about where the contractor is working via a webpage at hbws.me/mxu and its social media channels – Facebook, Twitter, and Nextdoor.

Also, unless a customer is notified in advance, the contractor's employees should not enter private property before, during, or after the change-out activity.

I saw someone working in my neighbor's meter box but they didn't do mine. Later, I saw someone else down the road working in a meter box. Why?

The contractor will deploy teams of employees, each of whom have specific meter boxes assigned to them, into an area. So one employee may work on a neighbor's box while another works on the one servicing your home or one further down the street.

Besides making the drive-by readings more efficient with these new transponders, have there been inaccurate readings being generated by the existing meters?

No – the readings have not been inaccurate. The reason we are doing this project is to increase the drive-by read rate. If we do not get a drive-by reading from a meter, then the Water Data Collection Clerk has to return and read the meter manually, which is not an efficient use of staff time. When completed, this project will increase the number of meter readings the staff can collect via automated meter reading (drive-bys) and reduce the number of manual reads needed to bill our customers.

What if I have other concerns or questions about the project?

If you have other questions or concerns, contact the BWS by:

- **Email:** contactus@hbws.org monitored Monday – Friday, from 7:45 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
- **Phone:** **748-6500** which is monitored daily, from 7:45 a.m. – 10:30 p.m. After hours, please leave your name and phone number so that we may return your call.



TROUBLE CALL: (808) 748-5000
Customer Service: (808) 748-5030
Billing & Payments: (808) 748-5020
GET THE HNL.INFO PHONE APP FOR
Phone & Email Alerts: <https://hnl.info>

Follow on social media: @bwsHonolulu



Board of Water Supply

630 S. Beretania St., Honolulu, HI 96843
www.boardofwatersupply.com