



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT'S ORDINANCE TO ADDRESS WATER AFFORDABILITY
PASSES CITY COUNCIL**

CHICAGO – An ordinance introduced by Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and the Department of Water Management (DWM) has been passed by the City Council. The ordinance restarts the MeterSave water meter installation program and comes as part of the Mayor's strategic plan to address water affordability and improve municipal services citywide.

"I've been clear since the beginning of my administration that all residents should have access to safe, high-quality drinking water regardless of their income," said Mayor Lightfoot. "Today, we have ensured that our water system will remain a public utility and preserved water affordability for future generations."

"We are ready to begin safely restart the MeterSave program so that residents can save money on their water bills," said Dr. Andrea Cheng, Commissioner of the Department of Water Management. "Based on our research, we have made modifications to the MeterSave program so that we confidently begin installing meters again as soon as possible."

"I am thrilled that the City Council has joined the Mayor in prioritizing water affordability," said Alderman Matt Martin, 47th Ward. "Passage of this plan represents a huge step forward in improving City Services."

The MeterSave Program, which began in 2009, offered residents free water meter installations, and water conservation kits. Water meters measure the actual amount of water a residence uses, so people are billed only for the water they use resulting in substantial savings on water bills. Over 130,000 meters were installed, and residents saw an average savings of over 50% upon switching to a meter. The program was halted in 2019 due to preliminary results from a study that showed a slight elevation in water lead levels.

Following the pause of the MeterSave Program, DWM launched the Ultrasonic Meter Study to investigate whether ultrasonic meters might have less frequent or no



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impact on residential lead levels post-installation. Based on the study results, the City plans to resume the program with new modifications that will protect the health and safety of residents. Restarting this program allows DWM to provide the most affordable water service to nonmetered households.

For information on how to sign-up for a water meter, please visit metersave.org and follow the instructions for registration. The Department of Water Management will be contacting those who have previously registered for a meter to gauge interest. Priority will be given to low-income residents and those who have been on the waiting list for an extended period.

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