

Q. What is CONNECT® for ACCESSplus®?

A. CONNECT for ACCESSplus is Badger Meter's newest software product for automated meter reading. CONNECT receives meter readings from Badger Meter ACCESSplus meter reading modules via the telephone. In this way, meter reading is totally automated. ACCESSplus modules phone in their meter readings, and the CONNECT software collects them, allowing you to then transfer the readings to the billing system without ever having to go out and collect meter readings.

Q. Is this product just a windows front-end to your old DOS ACCESSplus reading software?

A. No, CONNECT for ACCESSplus is a 32 bit Windows® application running under Windows 95, 98, or NT. It uses a very simple yet powerful user interface allowing you to easily summarize and manipulate the reading information the system receives.

Q. What's the difference between a 32 bit software product and an older software product? Don't they both work?

A. CONNECT has a big advantage over older programs because it was designed specifically for Windows 95, 98, and NT. Older programs can still run, but cannot take advantage of the power of the new features. Because CONNECT was designed for Windows 95, 98, and NT it is very easy to use and even complex operations become easy to perform.

Q. How does the ACCESSplus meter reading process work?

A. Through the CONNECT software you can instruct meter reading modules to phone their readings into the system on a daily, weekly, monthly, or quarterly basis. In addition, you can communicate with almost any module at any time you wish to get the latest meter reading (called a Demand Read), making those final meter readings (for example, for customers who are moving) very easy.

Q. If I am using the computer when a meter reading comes in, do I have to stop what I am doing so that the meter reading can be received?

A. No, you can continue working on your computer with no loss of meter readings. CONNECT for ACCESSplus processes meter readings as they come in, even when you are doing something else. (Note that your PC must be on and running the CONNECT software for this to occur.)

Q. Can I watch the meter readings as they come in?

A. Sure. CONNECT for ACCESSplus has a special screen for doing just that. When a new meter reading is received, it is displayed on the Automatic Meter Reading screen. If you wish to print the reading, just click on the Print button. If you wish to print all readings as they come in, or just those readings with an alarm condition, you can set these print options by clicking the Options button on the screen.

Q. If I tell a module to report meter readings quarterly, and a problem occurs, do I have to wait until the end of the quarter to discover the problem?

A. No. If a problem condition arises, the ACCESSplus module will

immediately phone in an alarm reading to the CONNECT system. You will be notified of alarm conditions as soon as they occur.

Q. What kind of alarm conditions are reported?

A. ACCESSplus reports the following alarm conditions:

- Unauthorized use
- Steady use
- Potential leaks
- Security problems
- Module tamperers
- Lead line tamperers
- Low battery conditions

Q. If I set one meter to report weekly, do all meters then report every week?

A. No. You can choose any of the available reporting periods for any meter. This allows you to get daily readings from just a few meters (maybe some highly used commercial or industrial meters), and weekly and/or monthly reads from the rest of your meters that use ACCESSplus.

Q. What information do I get from an ACCESSplus PREMIER™ meter reading module?

A. An ACCESSplus PREMIER module will send you its meter reading, as well as information about every active alarm it sees, the usage during three different time periods for the day, and peak rate information for each of the three time periods.

Q. Tell me more about the usage reporting for different times of the day. What is this all about?

A. For PREMIER modules, three time periods can be defined for each day. When an ACCESSplus module reports a meter reading, it also reports the usage it measured during each of the three defined time periods. This is very helpful information, especially for commercial or industrial meters.

Q. I have customers that would like usage information on first, second, and third shift operations. The Time of Day reporting looks very good. But what about those days when the plant is closed?

A. In CONNECT, you have the ability to define which days to "skip the time of day processing". These days are called Exempt Days, and are easily defined just by clicking the date and the month of each exempt date.

Q. What is the Peak Rate information that PREMIER modules report?

A. Besides the Time of Day usage, the PREMIER modules will also monitor and report the Peak Rate of Usage for each of the three time periods. When a new peak rate is detected, the rate as well as the time and date will be stored and reported with the next meter reading.

Q. What happens if the meter reading module cannot call in the reading because of a phone line problem? Do I have to wait until the next scheduled time?



A. No. ACCESSplus modules have a special retry feature built into them. If the call cannot get through, they will try again according to how often the meter was scheduled to report. In fact, they try again in the very same day. If an alarm condition is being reported and the phone line is a problem, the module will try again within minutes!

Q. What kind of reports can I get from CONNECT for ACCESSplus?

A. CONNECT for ACCESSplus has a number of standard reports that will satisfy most of your reporting needs. However, if you need specific information for a specific group of meters, the CONNECT Custom Reports feature allows you to create a report containing any information in the CONNECT data base for any meters you wish. In addition to the printed report, the Custom Reports feature allows you to send the requested information to a file that can be read by spreadsheet or database programs. You can then perform specific analysis on the information in CONNECT using

your favorite spreadsheet.

Q. Is CONNECT for ACCESSplus a different product from the first released version of CONNECT?

A. No. CONNECT for ACCESSplus is an extension of the previous features within the CONNECT software. This update allows you to use radio, proximity-read, telephone based automatic meter reading, or manual. Using CONNECT, you can choose the appropriate meter reading technology for each individual meter in your system. For example, you can use the TRACE® radio reading technology for Residential meters, and other meters that need to be read monthly. For your Commercial and Industrial meters which may need to be read daily or weekly, the ACCESSplus technology can be used. In this way, you can choose the appropriate level of meter reading automation on a meter by meter basis. This gives you great flexibility while also minimizing your meter reading costs.

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