



Badger Meter (BMI)

Updated April 21st, 2021 by Nathan Parsh

Key Metrics

Current Price:	\$93	5 Year CAGR Estimate:	-8.1%	Market Cap:	\$2.7 billion
Fair Value Price:	\$44	5 Year Growth Estimate:	5.0%	Ex-Dividend Date:	5/26/2020
% Fair Value:	211%	5 Year Valuation Multiple Estimate:	-13.9%	Dividend Payment Date:	6/15/2021 ¹
Dividend Yield:	0.8%	5 Year Price Target	\$56	Years Of Dividend Growth:	28
Dividend Risk Score:	A	Retirement Suitability Score:	D	Last Dividend Increase:	5.9%

Overview & Current Events

Badger Meter was founded in 1905 in Milwaukee, WI. The company's first product was a "frost proof" water meter. Today, Badger Meter manufactures and markets meters and valves that are used to measure and control the flow of liquids, such as water, oil and various chemicals. The company's products are also used to control the flow of air and other gases. Badger Meter generates over \$470 million in annual revenues. The company is also a founding member of the American Water Works Association, a trade group that sets water measurement standards in the U.S.

Badger Meter announced first quarter earnings results on 4/20/2021. Revenue grew 9% to \$117.8 million but was \$3 million less than expected. The company's GAAP earnings-per-share of \$0.47 was a 14.6% increase from the prior year and \$0.05 ahead of estimates.

The utility water business remains strong, with sales growing 12%, primarily due to recently acquired businesses. Core growth was flat for the year. The company did see record orders, which exceed sales during the quarter. Flow instrumentation sales declined 3%, but improved on a sequential basis. Fourth quarter sales for these products were a double-digit decline. Operating margins expanded 30 basis points to 15.1% while gross profit margin improved 200 basis points to 41.9%.

Analysts now expect Badger Meter to earn \$1.84 of earnings-per-share in 2021, up from \$1.68 previously. We have updated our estimates accordingly.

Growth on a Per-Share Basis

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2026
EPS	\$0.64	\$0.98	\$0.85	\$1.03	\$0.90	\$1.11	\$1.19	\$1.54	\$1.61	\$1.69	\$1.84	\$2.35
DPS	\$0.30	\$0.33	\$0.35	\$0.37	\$0.39	\$0.43	\$0.49	\$0.56	\$0.68	\$0.72	\$0.72	\$1.12
Shares²	30	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29

Badger Meter has increased earnings per share by 11.4% per year over the past decade. The company's business was resilient in the face of the pandemic last year, showing Badger Meter's underlying strength. We are raising our earnings-per-share growth rate to 5% from 3.4% as much of the growth since 2011 occurred during the past few years. We believe that the double-digit growth rate may not be sustainable as the company increases in size. Badger Meter's ability to control costs, and thereby boost margins, should help offset any weakness in revenue that may occur.

Badger Meter has increased its dividend for the past 28 years. The company has increased its dividend by an average of 9.3% per year over the past 10 years. Badger Meter raised its dividend 5.9% for the 9/11/2020 payment.

¹ Estimated dividend payment date

² In millions of shares

Disclosure: This analyst has no position in the security discussed in this research report, and no plans to initiate one in the next 72 hours.



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Valuation Analysis

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Now	2026
Avg. P/E	28.0	18.9	28.8	25.6	33.2	30.6	34.8	31.8	34.9	39.1	50.5	23.9
Avg. Yld.	1.7%	1.8%	1.4%	1.4%	1.3%	1.3%	1.2%	1.1%	1.1%	1.1%	0.8%	2.0%

Shares of Badger Meter continue to trade at the stock's most expensive valuations over the past five years. As these years could be outliers, they were not included in the 2026 multiple estimate. Shares of Badger Meter have increased by \$1, or 1.1%, since our 1/31/2021 update. The stock has a current P/E ratio of 50.5, well above our target P/E of 23.9, meaning that shareholders are very likely to see significant headwinds from valuation reversion in the coming years. Annual returns would be reduced by 13.9% over this period of time if the stock were to revert to our target by 2026. We see a declining valuation as the catalyst for the yield to rise to 2% from the current yield.

Safety, Quality, Competitive Advantage, & Recession Resiliency

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2026
Payout	47%	34%	41%	36%	43%	39%	41%	36%	42%	43%	39%	48%

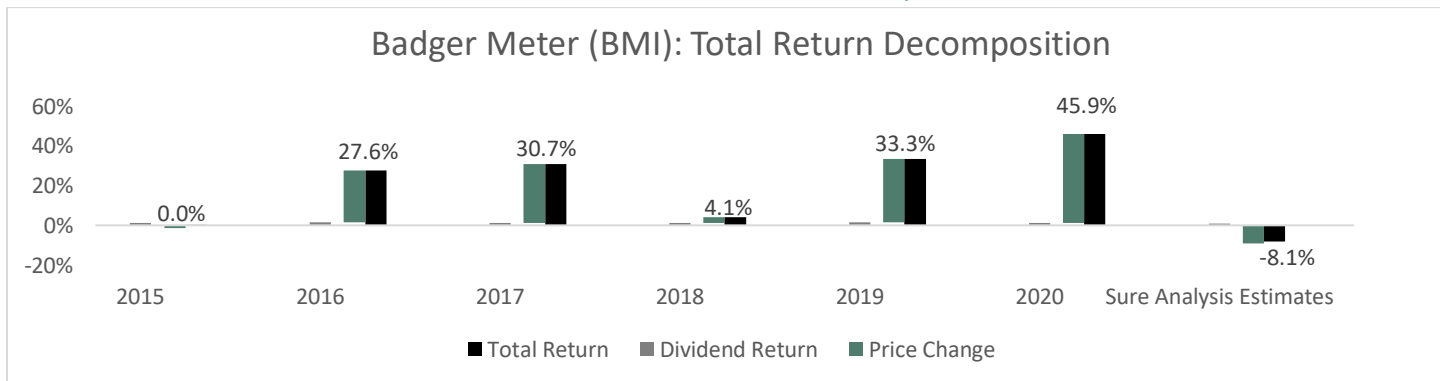
Given Badger Meter's 28-year dividend increase streak and low payout ratio, the dividend is very safe today. We also see plenty of room for growth in the payout, so Badger Meter is certainly attractive from a dividend growth perspective.

Unlike many companies at the height of the last recession, earnings-per-share for Badger Meter actually improved. The vast majority of the company's sales are made to municipal water utilities. A key competitive advantage that Badger Meter possess is that consumers require access to water, regardless of economic conditions. In addition, it is estimated that there are more than 30 million water meters in the U.S. that are not monitored with the advanced equipment that Badger Meter offers. And with some states like California looking to improve its water monitoring systems for use in times of droughts, the company is in a prime position to benefit from upgrades and improvements.

Final Thoughts & Recommendation

Following first quarter earnings results, Badger Meter is projected to lose 8.1% annually through 2026, compared to our prior estimate of a loss of 10.7% per year. Our estimated return stems from a 5.0% earnings growth rate combined with a 0.8% starting yield, offset by a low double-digit headwind from valuation reversion. Badger Meter continues to see strong order results in its water utility business and flow instrumentation sales declines have deaccelerated. Acquisitions have also made a positive contribution. We have raised our 2026 price target \$9 to \$56 due to EPS estimates for the year and a higher expected earnings growth rate, but note that the stock trades in excess of twice our fair value. Therefore, we continue to rate shares of Badger Meter as a strong sell.

Total Return Breakdown by Year



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Income Statement Metrics

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Revenue	263	320	334	365	378	394	402	434	425	426
Gross Profit	90	122	117	131	136	151	156	162	164	168
Gross Margin	34.2%	38.2%	35.0%	36.0%	35.9%	38.2%	38.7%	37.4%	38.5%	39.5%
SG&A Exp.	62	78	78	85	93	98	99	105	101	103
D&A Exp.	9	12	13	16	21	22	24	24	24	25
Operating Profit	28	44	39	46	42	53	57	57	62	65
Operating Margin	10.5%	13.9%	11.7%	12.6%	11.2%	13.4%	14.1%	13.1%	14.6%	15.3%
Net Profit	19	28	25	30	26	32	35	28	47	49
Net Margin	7.3%	8.8%	7.4%	8.1%	6.9%	8.2%	8.6%	6.4%	11.1%	11.6%
Free Cash Flow	26	27	21	23	16	46	35	52	73	81
Income Tax	8	15	13	15	15	18	20	8	14	16

Balance Sheet Metrics

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total Assets	219	290	316	341	355	350	392	393	422	468
Cash & Equivalents	5	7	7	7	8	7	11	13	49	72
Accounts Receivable	41	46	50	54	57	60	58	66	61	62
Inventories	49	61	61	72	79	78	85	81	82	82
Goodwill & Int. Ass.	43	94	105	114	105	101	133	132	125	148
Total Liabilities	40	119	119	127	123	93	114	89	91	107
Accounts Payable	11	16	19	16	19	18	29	22	32	35
Long-Term Debt	2	67	70	76	71	38	45	18	4	-
Shareholder's Equity	179	171	197	214	232	256	277	304	331	361
D/E Ratio	0.01	0.39	0.36	0.35	0.31	0.15	0.16	0.06	0.01	-

Profitability & Per Share Metrics

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Return on Assets	8.8%	11.0%	8.1%	9.0%	7.4%	9.2%	9.3%	7.1%	11.6%	11.1%
Return on Equity	11.0%	16.0%	13.4%	14.4%	11.6%	13.2%	13.0%	9.6%	14.9%	14.3%
ROIC	10.6%	13.4%	9.8%	10.7%	8.7%	10.8%	11.2%	8.6%	14.4%	14.2%
Shares Out.	30	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29
Revenue/Share	8.74	11.10	11.57	12.68	13.07	13.55	13.82	14.86	14.53	14.56
FCF/Share	0.86	0.92	0.71	0.81	0.56	1.57	1.19	1.77	2.51	2.75

Note: All figures in millions of U.S. Dollars unless per share or indicated otherwise.

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