



FACT SHEET

Important Information From Your Local Non-Profit Utility

ADVANCED METER FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why is the PUD replacing its existing meters?

As of the end of 2017, over 78.9 million advanced meters have been installed in the United States – accounting for over half of all U.S. electricity customers. This trend is expected to continue as utilities and customers alike realize the benefits of the new technology. The PUD, after careful evaluation of its existing meters deployed across its service area, determined that it is now both feasible and cost-effective to enter into a forward-looking meter strategy to bring the PUD's meter technology up-to-date and be well-positioned for the future growth and needs of Clallam County PUD customers. The PUD will be rolling out advanced meter upgrades over a 4 to 5 year period beginning in 2019.

What are these new advanced meters?

The advanced meters record customer energy usage data just like your old meter but the readings are sent to the PUD via radio frequency (RF) waves, similar to communication by cell phones and wi-fi but at a significantly lower energy level. In some regions of the county with challenging terrain, the information will be sent over the power lines. Over time, this will reduce the need for meter readers to physically go out into the field to conduct meter readings, and for linemen responding to trouble calls.

How do these meters benefit me?

In 2016 the PUD began implementing a core software conversion that brought us SmartHub – a customer portal on the PUD website and mobile app that allows customers to track their energy usage, report outages, and enjoy greater control over their account, including options such as prepaid meter accounts. Advanced meters leverage this technology and will allow customer to take advantage of future benefits as they are introduced. In addition, advanced meters will provide many immediate benefits including:

- Enhanced customer privacy due to significantly reduced need for PUD employees to access customer property
- Consistent billing cycles and no meter estimates (sometimes used when weather or other access issues prevent meter readers from reading meters)
- More accurate bills (old meter technology such as analog electromechanical meters lose accuracy over time)
- Remote disconnect meters offer faster service for connect and disconnection of service

- Enhanced employee safety and reduced accidents
- Energy theft protection
- Enhanced outage assessment and restoration capabilities - even if you are not home, your meter will report an outage at your location, a huge benefit for "snowbirds" or anytime you're away from home
- Improved electrical distribution system operations, including voltage control and customer power quality investigations. If an issue is reported, PUD employees may be able to diagnose a problem remotely without having to send PUD employees to the site
- Reliability improvements, including a faster diagnosis and response to outage situations
- Reduction in the PUD's carbon footprint by reducing the need for as many vehicles making trips for meter reading, disconnect/reconnect, and trouble calls.
- A net reduction in utility operating costs of over \$300,000 per year – as a public utility such savings will ultimately benefit rate payers

Are the meter readers losing their jobs?

There are currently 6 meter readers. Because this project is being implemented over 5 years, these employees can be utilized for conversion labor and then transitioned into new positions.

What if I have concerns about advanced meters?

Advanced meters have come a long way since their inception and are accurate, safe, cost-effective, and offer many benefits to both utilities and customers. Some customers have concerns about radio frequency and we recognize these concerns. The advanced meter RF is 900 MHz in the unlicensed UHF band, and the average transmission is at 425 mW occurring within a range of 300ms to 2000ms once per day. This plus communication checks total up to several milliseconds per day. Based on average reads the total transmitting period over a full year will average about 12 minutes. Standing in front of an advanced meter for an entire year is roughly the same exposure to RF as a 6 minute 4G cell phone call or wirelessly streaming anything.

What kind of information are the meters sharing?

The PUD's meters will only transmit total power consumed, instantaneous voltage, device numeric identification,

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disconnect position (on/off).

What if I do not want an advanced meter?

If, after consideration, a customer still does not wish an advanced meter to be installed at their address, there are options:

1) A customer may request that a simple digital meter without RF technology be installed. In order to recover the cost of a meter reader to physically come out and read the meter monthly, there is a monthly opt-out fee added to the customer's bill for this service. There is also a one-time charge for an employee to make a special trip to change out the meter outside of the route conversion window. Customers also will not receive the benefits that advanced meters provide such as automatic outage reporting, consistent billing periods, or other benefits as listed above.

2) A customer may request an electromechanical (analog) meter be installed. Because this is significantly older technology there is an additional monthly surcharge added to the monthly opt-out fee to recover the cost of maintenance including periodic calibration to ensure meter accuracy. There is also a one-time charge for an employee to make a special trip to change out the meter outside of the route conversion window. Note: this option is only available as long as the PUD has a supply of calibrated analog meters.

If a customer chooses to opt-out of the advanced meter technology, they must file an opt-out request with our Customer Service Department. This form will be kept on file and the opt-out fee will not be charged until the customer's service area is scheduled for meter upgrades. Prior to this occurring, opt-out customers will be notified that their area is about to be upgraded and that the monthly opt-out fee will commence. This notification will give the customer an opportunity to remove the opt-out at that time if they do not want to be charged the fee. Multiple meters at the same address with the same account holder name will only be assessed one fee. Some types of accounts are ineligible for the

opt-out program. These include:

- Customers who participate in services or optional rates that require advanced metering (e.g. Net Metering and Pre-Pay);
- Customers who are found to tamper with the meter or cut the meter seal;
- Customers who have poly-phase service or are served by a demand meter;
- Any field trip made to the location to disconnect for nonpayment;
- Locations enrolled in the Continuous Service program for landlords. Continuous service allows an account owned by a tenant to revert back into the landlord's name in the event of a vacancy;
- Customers whose meter(s) are inaccessible to read (e.g. physical conditions, hazardous conditions and/or aggressive animals).

Where can I find out more information about advanced meters?

<https://www.eia.gov/tools/faqs/faq.php?id=108&t=3>

http://files.www.whatissmartgrid.org/smart-grid-101/fact-sheets/myths-vs-facts-the-truth-about-smart-meters/SGCC_Myths_vs_Facts_Fact_Sheet.pdf

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL1wGgMuL4z9qNh2PGcYkx_DuKANuNXFs1

<https://www.smartgrid.gov/>

<https://www.utc.wa.gov/consumers/Documents/2013-6-11%20FINAL%20Smart%20Meter%20Basics.pdf#search=Smart%20meters>

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/property/smart-living/health-benefits/>

<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/cancer-causes/radiation-exposure/smart-meters.html>

Visit our Advanced Meter Information page at <https://www.clallampud.net/advanced-meter-information/>

