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WA-18

Advanced Meter Infrastructure Frequently Asked Questions

My past few Ruralite back page articles have started a lot of conversations, and we have had numerous customers reach out to us with questions. The questions tell me you are interested in these issues, and we will continue to reach out with information. We have already had four community meetings where we have discussed the issues facing the PUD and, therefore, issues facing you as a customer. The feedback and support at these meetings have been heartening.



I'd like to share a few of the questions that have been asked most often.

Can the PUD control my thermostat or other equipment in my home?

No. While we will have communications to the meter, we have no way to reach into your home, and we do not wish to.

Are advanced meters safe?

Yes, they are safe. The strength of the radio frequency signal emitted by an advanced meter is about the same as a low-power cellphone. The frequency used is similar to that used by a cellphone or a baby monitor. More information is on pages 4 and 5.

Can I opt-out?

Maybe. We have an opt-out option, but there are several things you need to know.

First, you can opt-out of the advanced meter's communications ability. While we do not believe there are safety issues with radio communications, and while more than 70% of all utility meters in the United States are advanced meters, some people feel strongly about this safety issue. Therefore, we are making this option available.

However, the data is still required. As such, you will be charged the cost to read your meter to get the information monthly. You cannot opt-out of having a meter with the capability of reading hourly information. There is no real change from the meter itself. We could read each meter multiple times a day and get the same information, but it would be hard to do this, and it would be expensive. Advanced meters make it possible to do these readings hourly or in real time as issues arise.

Lastly, you can only opt-out if you meet certain requirements. We will evaluate each request individually. For example, you cannot opt-out if you have been disconnected for nonpayment in the prior 24 months, if meter tampering has occurred or if there is a documented threat from persons living at a specific address.

For complete details on these issues and other aspects of the advanced metering project, visit our website, www.klickitatpud.com.

Jim Smith
General Manager