



From: DMFPO Board of Directors

PGE is actively deploying smart meters and developing smart grids to automate the collecting of Electric and Gas usage and billing related information. This new system will replace analog meters which are read monthly by a mobile PGE employee. According to PGE, the smart meters implementation will be a benefit to consumers saving them money through real time adjustments to power consumption and will improve the response to power outages since the meter will continuously (every 15 minutes) convey power status to the control and dispatch centers assisting in pinpointing the outage location. The cost of the devices will be paid for by PGE customers through rate adjustments. Overall, the environment is improved through more effective use of the power grid operating the power sources only when demand exists and thereby improving overall reliability and dependence on offshore oil and natural gas. This efficiency improvement may help defray some of the cost incurred through the smart meter implementation.

Many concerns have been expressed by consumers particularly about health issues potentially caused by proximity to the cellular transmitters located in the meters which are used to transmit data to the data processing center.

According to Monterey County Health department report dated March 5 2011, the health issues are not a concern – their findings are included here:

- Currently available literature indicates that exposure to RF energy from smart meters should be less than that experienced by routine mobile or cell phone use.
- The lower exposure levels likely to be experienced from the deployment of smart meters compared to mobile phones should provide consumers some reassurance that there is a lower potential for adverse non-thermal health effects from the operation of smart meters.

Several options were presented to the Monterey Board of Supervisors and one was recommended quoted as follows:

“It is the recommendation of the Monterey County Health Department that the Board of Supervisors direct staff to send a letter to the PUC requesting the PUC continue to study through independent experts the effects of long-term exposure to low level EMFs and report out findings to all county health departments.”



The privacy of the collected data and the unilateral control of power sources are also of concern to consumers. PGE maintains that they have no interest in using the data other than to measure usage; they also maintain that they will not use the meter to shut off power and have to follow PUC mandated process to disconnect delinquent users.

Another concern expressed by consumer is the unknown costs of future enhancements to the system when the second transmitter in the smart meter is used to transfer individual appliance usage information. This requires a new controller device and sensing units associated with the washer, dryer, heater, TV, etc being monitored, all paid for by the consumer. PGE has not offered any comment on the costs and has stated that the business customer will rapidly adopt this technology and use these readings to further save energy costs. Consumer adoption is many years from now.

A final concern is the OPT OUT provision requested by Marina, Seaside, and Pacific Grove. This pertains to a PGE customer electing to not use the smart meter. PLEASE NOTE that the smart meters will be installed there is no choice—if OPT OUT is elected the customer will be charged a disable fee, a monthly reading fee and if the smart meter is elected to be placed back into the grid, a turn-on fee will be charged. Currently the CPUC is deciding on the OPT OUT rates proposed by PGE and also whether to allow for on OPT OUT provision.

It is clear that nothing can be done by DMFPO, PBC, or PBCSD to alter the deployment of the smart meter program. The DMFPO will inform our members of this program via publishing this letter on our Website and offer interested member's access to technical and health reports collected during the course of research. Please call the DMFPO Office to make an appointment to view the Smart Meter reports.