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September 19, 2011


Smart meters have arrived: The straight facts

SMART METERS WORKING FOR YOU



\$1.6 Billion

... in avoided costs and increased efficiencies over the next 20 years, keeping our rates among the lowest in North America.



\$30-40 Million

... in direct wages and will create approximately 350 temporary jobs throughout B.C.



17,000 Homes

... could be powered across B.C. each year with the reduction in wasted electricity helped by smart meters.



HYDRO TO HOME: THE ENERGY STORY

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See also

- > [Smart Meters are here](#)
- > [A Modern BC: Upgrading the grid](#)
- > [Benefits for you](#)

10 facts to help you better understand smart meters

Starting this summer, we began replacing B.C.'s old analog meters with new smart meters. It's all part of our plan to renew B.C.'s electrical systems and to ensure clean, reliable power for generations to come.

Here are 10 facts that should help you better understand the switch to smart meters:

- ◊ **Fact 1: Smart meters will pay for themselves.**
Over the next three years alone, smart meters will save British Columbians an estimated \$70 million through energy savings, operating efficiencies and reduced theft of energy. And that will help us keep your rates low.
- ◊ **Fact 2: Rate structures stay in place.**
While smart meters are installed across B.C., rate structures will remain the same. If voluntary or mandatory time-of-use rates are considered in the future, they'll be implemented only after extensive public consultation and an independent regulatory review.
- ◊ **Fact 3: Stolen power hurts us all.**
Electricity theft costs BC Hydro customers more than \$100 million each year. Smart meters will help locate unexplained electricity usage and illegal power diversions.
- ◊ **Fact 4: Smart meters will allow for real-time outage alerts.**
If a tree knocks down a power line today, BC Hydro has to rely on someone contacting us to let us know there's a problem. Smart meters will provide automated and instant notification of power outages, enabling crews to restore your power faster.
- ◊ **Fact 5: Knowledge is the power to conserve.**
With smart meters, customers will be able to access timely information about their electricity consumption through a secure BC Hydro website, mobile applications or optional in-home display devices. Research shows that customers using these tools can reduce their energy use by up to 15 per cent.
- ◊ **Fact 6: Smart meters create new economic opportunities.**
Modernizing our grid will create about 350 jobs and generate \$30 to \$40 million in direct wages throughout B.C.
- ◊ **Fact 7: Smart meter installation takes only a few minutes.**
Residents will receive advance notification of their installation date along with preparation instructions. And most won't be required to be home during installation.
- ◊ **Fact 8: Smart meter signals are short and last less than one minute per day.**
The exposure to radio frequency from a smart meter over its entire 20-year life span is equivalent to a single 30-minute cell phone call. See the FAQs on [Radio Frequency and Smart Meters](#) for more information.
- ◊ **Fact 9: Your consumption data will remain private.**
Information will be handled using the same data encryption as online banking systems and in accordance with the British Columbia Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.
- ◊ **Fact 10: Smart meters are more accurate than existing meters.**
Federal regulations from Measurement Canada require that all meters in service in Canada, including new smart meters, are within a 1 per cent accuracy tolerance.

We are committed to providing important information on smart meters to customers in a transparent and timely manner. All information about the program, including a comprehensive business case, can be found in our [smart meters section](#).

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