

**Truckee Donner Public Utility District (TDPUD)
Electric Meter Replacement Program Project
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)
3-21-18**

Why is the TDPUD replacing my meter?

The TDPUD is replacing existing (~20years old) Automatic Meter Reading (AMR) electric meters that have reached the end of their useful life with industry-standard Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) electric meters which are the most efficient and cost-effective electric meters available today.

What are the benefits of this project?

In addition to the need to replacing aging meters, this project offers significant benefits to the TDPUD and its customers including: eliminating the need for the TDPUD to drive by monthly to read the meters, improving the TDPUD's response to outages, and providing more timely customer usage data. The new electric meters give TDPUD customers secure access to their electricity consumption, the ability to monitor their electric usage, and provide opportunities for energy efficiency and conservation.

Will there be an additional cost to participate in this project?

No, the funds needed for this project are already included in your current TDPUD electric bills and no additional charges are needed at this time.

Will my electric bill increase?

The meter itself has no impact on energy consumption. You will continue to receive TDPUD bills that reflect the energy usage that has been consumed.

What type of meter are you installing?

The TDPUD made a transition to Automatic Meter Reading (AMR) electric meters almost 20 years ago, and your existing meter has reached end-of-life and has now become obsolete. The new Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) electric meters will also use technology very similar to the current system. The differences include the type of radio communication technology and the use of solid state electronic meters for all customer classes. The current meter system is one-way communication only, while newer systems have two-way communication capability significantly improving the TDPUD's ability to provide high-quality electric service, respond more quickly to power outages, and enhance customer service.

I am concerned these new meters are a privacy threat.

No personal data is collected or stored by the meter. Energy usage data recorded by the meter is fully encrypted and is used only for billing and customer service purposes. This data is kept only by the TDPUD and is not shared externally. Maintaining and protecting the confidentiality of customer information is required by TDPUD's District Code and California law. The TDPUD is committed to protecting the privacy and security of our customer's personal information, including electricity usage. This project will not change the confidentiality of customer information and will give our customers secure access to their usage data and many other benefits.

Will the utility know when I am home or what devices I am using?

The new electric meters cannot detect the presence of people in their homes, nor does it indicate what you are using electricity for. The new electric meters simply measure the consumption of electricity and transmit this securely for access only by the TDPUD and the individual customer.

Will you turn off or control my thermostat or my appliances through these new meters?

No. Although some utilities offer such programs, which require specialized equipment such as thermostats, the TDPUD does not currently offer this type of program participation would be voluntary for each individual customer.

Do these meters create a health hazard in my home?

No. The existing TDPUD electric meter that you have today uses very low-power radio frequency (RF) waves to transmit your energy usage data to the TDPUD. The new meters also use RF to transmit energy usage data but will transmit less frequently than the existing system. Most of us are very familiar with devices that communicate with RF because we use them daily. These devices include cell phones, tablets, wireless home routers, cordless phones, baby monitors, and garage door openers, just to name a few. More information on RF exposure guidelines can be found at: (ref. *Health Impacts of Radio Frequency Exposure from Smart Meters*, [California Council on Science and Technology](#), 2011).

Will I lose power when my new meter is installed?

You will lose power for a short period of time (typically less than 20 minutes) and you will be notified by the TDPUD prior to when your meter is scheduled to be replaced. As always, make sure that your appliances and electronics are isolated with surge protectors. If you have a Nest thermostat (or other internet-based devices), they will lose power and may send a message but should reset once the power is back on.

Are other communities pursuing advanced metering projects?

Yes, this is the industry standard today. The TDPUD is among hundreds of utilities upgrading meters. According to the Edison Foundation Institute for Electric Innovation (IEI), as of July 2014, over 50 million AMI meters had been deployed in the U.S., covering over 43 percent of U.S. homes. Various research groups (e.g., Berg Insights, NPD Group) predict nearly 100% by 2020.

Where can I find additional information?

There are many sources of information on AMI meters and associated technologies. Two sources include the Department of Energy (www.energy.gov), the American Public Power Association (www.publicpower.org), and the Smart Grid Consumer Collaborative (www.smartenergycc.org).

What is happening to the old electric meters?

The TDPUD has been and will be repurposing and/or disposing of the end-of-life meters in an environmentally responsible manner.