

What is a Smart Meter?

Currently, most homes are equipped with a meter that measures how much electricity was used during a billing period, typically one or two months. However, a smart meter records how much energy is used and when it was used, therefore allowing different electricity rates to be applied during different times of the day. This empowers you, the customer, to regulate your electricity use during peak times and shift use to Off peak times where the cost of electricity is lower. For example you could control your energy costs by switching the time you do certain energy-using activities away from On-Peak to Off-Peak usage.

When are the Smart Meters being installed?

The Government of Ontario has established targets for the installation of smart meters for all Ontario customers by December 31, 2010. Smart Meters should be installed in Fort Erie and Port Colborne by March 2010.

What are the Benefits of Smart Metering?

Here are just some of the benefits you'll see as soon as your smart meter is fully operational and Time-of-Use (TOU) pricing is in place:

1. You'll be able to take action to manage your electricity bills. With attention to how and when you use electricity, you'll be able to contain or reduce your costs.
2. You'll get real feedback about your electricity use. Your electricity bill will show how much you consumed within each TOU period – and, in the future, detailed information may be available to you via the Internet or by telephone.
3. You'll get more precise electricity bills. The bills you receive will be based on the hourly readings taken and sent by your smart meter.

Will I See a Smart Meter Charge on my Bill?

The cost of the smart meter initiative will be recovered through the electricity rates paid by all customers in the same way that costs for existing meters and services are recovered today.

Will Someone Still Come to Read my Meter?

Yes, for now. Ensuring you continue to receive timely and accurate billing is of primary importance. Once all the smart meter systems are fully operational, we will then be able to rely fully on the smart meter system to remotely read meters and discontinue manual meter reading.

How long is It Going to Take to Install My Smart Meter?

Approximately 5-10 minutes. There will be a brief power outage while the existing meter is removed and the smart meter is installed.

Will I See Lower Electricity Bills?

With TOU rates, you'll see the results of your conservation efforts – and you'll save money if you can shift your heaviest electricity use to off-peak hours. Equipment like air conditioners, electrical heating, ovens, dryers, and even lighting, can use a great deal of energy.

Where Will the Meter Data be Stored?

The Government of Ontario's current plan is to develop and then host a central meter data repository, which is known as the Meter Data Repository. All Local Distribution Companies would transmit customers' hourly smart meter data to the Meter Data Repository on a daily basis.

Once the Government's Meter Data Repository has been put in place and tested, consumers will have access to their historical meter data. With access to your previous meter data, you will be able to make personal choices to change your electricity usage patterns in order to take advantage of the TOU rates.

Will everyone get a smart meter?

Yes. All residential and small business customers will get a smart meter. The Government of Ontario has established targets for the installation of smart meters for all Ontario customers by December 31, 2010.

Are smart meters already being used in Ontario?

There are several residential smart meter pilot projects currently underway in Ontario. Many large businesses have interval meters to measure time of use as part of their energy management systems.

If I am with a retailer will I get a smart meter and will I get TOU?

Yes, you will receive a smart meter, but your rates will be determined by the terms and conditions of the contract you choose to sign with the retailer.