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A letter to our members:

Many of you may have seen, or heard about, the letter to the editor that appeared in the *Durango Herald* on Sunday, January 19, 2014. <http://durangoherald.com/article/20140118/OPINION03/140119567/-1/opinion03>

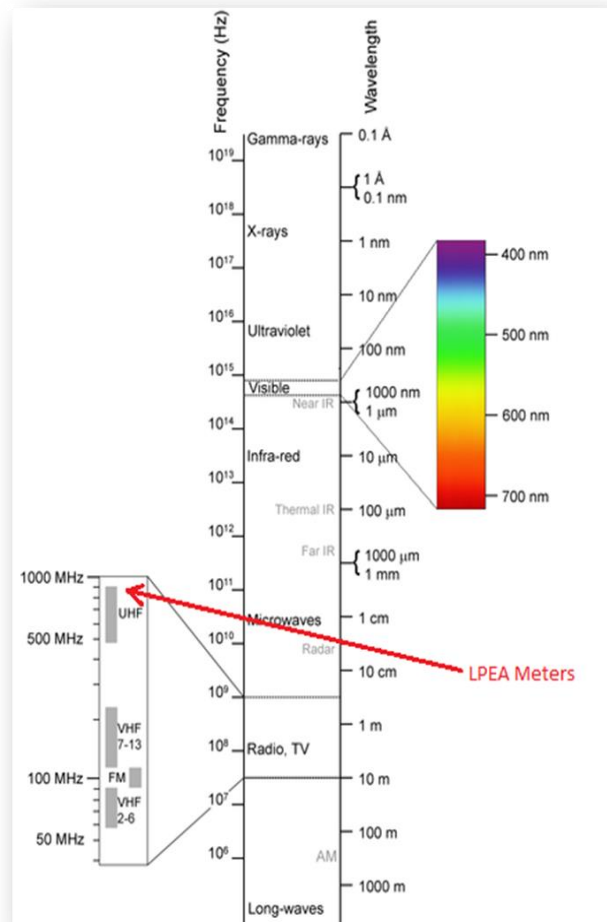
As you may have surmised, several inaccurate statements were made. Following is some information in response to many of the claims:

“Without notification” – LPEA held 3 well-publicized public informational meetings last year prior to the deployment. We also publicized our efforts through *Colorado County Life* articles, in local print media and on radio.

“change-out costs are responsible for the ever-increasing base charges” – The new meters have nothing to do with our rates increasing and they should help reduce rate increases in the future. The AMI meters cost no more than the AMR meters we have been using for more than 10 years. Recent rate increases have primarily been caused by increases in wholesale costs and inflation.

“microwave radiation” – Our AMI meters actually operate in the radiofrequency spectrum, not the microwave spectrum. Although radiation is a scary sounding term, without it we would not have sound, light or even the transfer of heat from your fireplace. People today typically associate the word “radiation” with ionizing radiation (x-rays, gamma rays) which have 10 billion times more energy than what we are talking about with our AMI meters. Our AMI meters operate in the non-ionizing spectrum and are in the same frequency band as devices such as radio, TV, and cordless phones with a big difference being that the AMI meters only transmit once or twice per hour for less than a few seconds. With these low transmittal times and the fact that only a 1/3 watt radio is being used, our transmissions are 400 times less than the FCC limit and 5,000 times less than the OSHA limit.

“expose all your privacy concerns by utilizing metered surveillance” – It is a meter that sends kWh and voltage readings – nothing more. We have absolutely no knowledge of what device is using the power.



“possible Group 2B Carcinogen” – The World Health Organization classifies things into one of three categories. Group 1 is not carcinogenic, Group 2B is possibly carcinogenic, and Group 2A is probably carcinogenic. If it is not carcinogenic and it cannot be deemed absolutely not a carcinogenic, the item lands in Group 2B along with coconut oil, baby powder, coffee, and pickled vegetables. Also, the list does not single out “smart meters.” Rather, it lists magnetic fields, which means it is the movement of the current, not the meter itself that is possibly carcinogenic.

“American Academy of Environmental Medicine requested suspension of Smart Meter installations” – This organization is not recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties. It is listed as a “questionable organization,” an “illegitimate organization” and a “dubious certifying board.”

“causing many fires” – Tantalus, the system we are using, has more than 1 million modules that have been installed for many years across North America, with billions of hours of runtime, and not one fire. It is certainly possible for a fire to start due to bad wiring at the meter base, but that can happen with an old meter the same way it can happen with any new meter regardless if it is “smart” or not.

If you are interested in learning more about our AMI meter deployment, we invite you to give us a call at 970.247.5786 while doing your own research. There is both good and bad information out in the world today.

Ultimately, if you decide you don’t want a new AMI meter installed, please do let us know. Opt-Out forms are available on our website, or we can send you one. If you do opt-out, please understand that you will also be choosing to opt-out of LPEA’s various optional rates such as net metering and Time-of-Use. Also, unlike those who have the new meters, we will not receive indication of power outages at your house. You will be giving up having better information about your energy usage through LPEA’s SmartHub, which can allow for you to make better decisions about your electrical energy usage. Likely, a fee will also be assessed in the future for “opting out,” to cover the costs for manually reading your meter.