

LPEA Metering FAQ

Why is LPEA changing out all of its meters?

The new meters being installed by LPEA offer features that will allow you to better understand your electrical consumption and make more informed decisions regarding your usage. The meters will also provide LPEA with important diagnostics that will help increase power quality, increase ways to optimize the electrical system, and pinpoint outages. The new metering system will also produce significant savings to LPEA members over the cost of the current meter system by reducing meter reading expenses and administration of some metering programs.

Why doesn't LPEA continue to use its existing automatic metering system?

LPEA's existing metering system has reached the end of its life and replacement parts are no longer available.

What kind of meters will LPEA be installing?

LPEA will be installing solid state meters with a Tantalus communications module. Tantalus is a wireless communications system that primarily uses ½-watt radios at 900 MHz frequencies to transmit data.

How is this going to benefit me?

Among the many efficiencies on LPEA's side that benefit the entire membership, the new meters will assist our members and staff troubleshoot high-bill problems by providing information about power consumption patterns, outage and blink count history and voltage information. They will also improve billing accuracy, eliminating misreads or inaccurate readings.

Does LPEA have an opt-out program?

Yes, details can be found on our website or just give us a call at 970.247.5786.

Is there a fee for me to opt-out? Why?

Yes there is a fee, it is called "Manual Meter Reading Fee" in our Electric Service Regulations (http://www.lpea.coop/pdf/policies/rules_regs.pdf). LPEA, working with our opt-out members, has developed a "self-read opt-out" program to help reduce costs to those members who are opt'ing out. Currently LPEA will read the meter four times a year, and only charge the Manual Meter Reading fee when we do. Currently that fee is set at \$20.00.

How long will I be ineligible for the opt-out program after I receiving a disconnect for non-payment notice?

This question was not anticipated during the development of the opt-out program. We will be reviewing the program in the near future and will consider it then.

Aren't you "double-dipping" on charging me for reading my meter manual when you already charge me for reading my meter through the facility charge?

No, while costs for reading all the meters are included in our rates; the cost for manually reading a meter are more than the current fee being assessed with the Manual Meter Reading fee.

Who will be receiving a new meter?

All LPEA members that have not opt'd out will receive a meter upgrade by the end of 2015.

What data will LPEA retrieve from the meter?

LPEA meters are programmed to retrieve voltage and kilowatt-hour readings. The meters will also notify LPEA in the event of meter tampering, as well as pinpoint the location of outages more quickly, meaning a faster response time.

Will LPEA control appliances within the customer's home?

The only appliances that will be controlled by LPEA are those that the customer voluntarily decides to allow LPEA to control such as ETS heaters and water heaters. Control of these appliances will not be performed by the meter but a separate device and only when the member chooses to install the proper equipment.

Are LPEA's new meters capable of net metering?

Yes, the metering system will allow any meter to be capable of "net metering". We are currently rolling out this enhancement and are scheduled to be completed by the end of Summer 2015.

Will LPEA be able to offer pre-pay services with the new meters?

Yes. Using an optional rate, the Tantalus metering system has the ability to communicate your daily account balance back to the meter. Unlike LPEA's existing pre-pay system, there will be no need to place money on your swipe card at our office. You will have the ability to transfer money to your account over the phone.

Will more Time-of-Use options become available with the new meters?

Yes. Time-of-Use billing currently depends on the meter keeping track of on and off peak usage. With the new metering system, Time-of-Use schedules will be applied to the interval data at the office. Using this method, if the Time-of-Use hours change, we will not need to visit the meter to reprogram it. It will also give LPEA the ability to offer new Time-of-Use programs and easily move a member from one program to the other upon their request.

I currently use my Time-of-Use meter to control loads in my home. What options will I have with the new meters?

A portion of existing Time-of-Use meters come equipped with a control wire that some members use to control their water heaters and ETS heaters. The new meters will not have this control wire and another method of controlling the load will need to be used. There are a variety of solutions that can be used depending on your specific situation. If you are currently using the meter control wire, LPEA will be contacting you before exchanging your meter to discuss the solution that will best fit your needs.

Can I request that my meter be installed sooner?

Yes. Just give us a call at 970.247.5786.

Will the metering network be secure?

Yes. LPEA considers privacy and security a top priority. We treat each member's personal information and data as confidential. LPEA can only share a customer's data with someone else if the customer gives us written permission, or if we receive a court order to do so. The Information Technology (IT) security controls LPEA has in place reflect energy industry's best practices. They are designed to provide a very high level of assurance that our systems cannot be compromised.

How do I know that my meter is measuring accurately?

LPEA meters are tested at the manufacturer and then a sample is tested again by LPEA before they are installed. Accuracy results from testing have shown that digital meters are more accurate than analog, or spinning dial meters. Meter accuracy is mandated by state and federal regulations.

How will my billing be affected by the meter exchange?

The first month following the meter exchange, members will receive a bill with two readings: one for the old meter and one for the new meter. It is possible that due to the timing of the meter exchange, more than 30 days of usage will be represented on the first bill resulting in a higher than normal billing. If this occurs, the following month will contain a few less days to make up for the difference.

How much radio frequency (RF) power is emitted from the meters?

Extremely little. The Tantalus meters have been tested in accordance with Title 47, Part 15b of the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations, and have been certified by the FCC. When the meter is transmitting, the exposure to radio frequencies is magnitudes lower than exposure limits set by the FCC.

How much is this going to cost me?

There will be no additional costs to our members to install the new meters.

Will I see a meter reader on my property?

A meter reader will not be visiting your meter for a monthly reading. LPEA personnel may, however, occasionally come by to inspect the system. If anyone appears to be accessing your meter, and they haven't identified themselves as an LPEA employee, call LPEA immediately at 970.247.5786.