

Smart Meters

Virtually all PGE customers have been using smart meters since 2010. These meters allow PGE to read the meter remotely over a private, secure network. Meter readers no longer need to visit your home or business to read the meter. Here are some answers to frequently asked questions about smart meters.

How smart meters work

What are smart meters?

Smart meters are digital meters that are read remotely over a secure wireless network. The system enables PGE to read all electric meters remotely every day and send special commands to the meter. The two-way communication enables PGE to more easily perform special meter reads, turn power on for new customers without having to send out a technician, or determine if your electricity is out after a storm.

How does it help me learn about my energy usage?

The smart meters collect electricity usage data in one-hour increments for residential customers and in 15-minute increments for most business customers. With this information, customer service representatives can help customers understand their usage patterns, and customers can take steps to modify their energy use.

Can I still read my meter?

Yes. Smart meters have visible digital read-outs that customers can examine at any time. The digital display may show multiple types of readings, including kilowatt-hour consumption, which is used to calculate most customers' bills, as well as time-of-use or possibly peak demand in some instances.

Do I own the smart meter?

The smart meter is owned by PGE and is part of the utility's electrical distribution system. However, the meter base, or socket, the meter fits into is owned by the customer. Customers must maintain this equipment and repair or replace it if it is damaged or unsafe. Meters periodically



Smart meters at a glance

- 850,000 PGE meters installed
- Smart meters save \$18.2 million annually through operational efficiency.
- Having fewer meter-reading vehicles cuts 1.2 million miles of driving, saves 80,000 gallons of gasoline and reduces CO2 emissions by 1.5 million pounds every year.
- Customers can now select a preferred billing date with the PGE Preferred Due Date program.
- Customers can now monitor their energy usage online with the Energy Tracker program.
- Smart meters can tell PGE if you're experiencing a power outage. That can help us dispatch repair crews more efficiently and speed the restoration of service.

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need to be tested or upgraded to ensure safe, reliable service. At such times, PGE has the right to access the meter to perform the necessary work.

Does the communication network interfere with TV reception or electronic equipment?

There is no impact on the use of household or business equipment. The meter data is sent to PGE over a low-level (power) licensed radio frequency reserved for this purpose that does not interfere with electrical or radio equipment.

When smart meters communicate, do they emit harmful levels of radio frequency?

No. Our smart meters fully meet U.S. Federal Communications Commission guidelines concerning exposure limits to radio frequency energy and non-ionizing radiation. National research and our own measurements show the radio signal exposure created from the smart meter are far below levels emitted by common household appliances and electronics, including baby monitors, microwave ovens and cell phones.

PGE's smart meter program

Which PGE customers have smart meters?

Virtually all metered customers, including residential and commercial, are covered by the new system. A few very large commercial and industrial customers are served by a separate system that also includes automated meter reading and interval data collection.

How do the meters communicate with PGE?

PGE's 850,000 meters deliver electricity usage data for billing purposes directly to our operations center over a Federal Communications Commission-licensed network. No personally identifiable information — such as customer names, addresses, account numbers, account balances or other personal data — is collected or sent through the smart meter system.

Sensus, a global provider of metering solutions for utilities, developed PGE's metering system. PGE constructed, owns and operates the system. Communications equipment, which operates much like a cell phone network, was installed on approximately 48 radio towers and communications facilities to enable two-way communication.

How does the system benefit PGE's operations?

PGE is able to more accurately pinpoint excessive line losses, under- or over-utilized transformers, and instances of possible energy theft or diversion. Smart meters are foundational to smart grid initiatives. And during outages, PGE operators are able to "ping" individual meters to determine the extent of outages and more accurately deploy restoration crews.

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Are there environmental benefits?

Because we can now read energy usage on the meters remotely, we have fewer vehicles on the road. This means 1.2 million fewer miles driven, saving 80,000 gallons of gasoline and reducing CO2 emissions by 1.5 million pounds every year. Not only does this help the environment, but it also lowers labor costs, helping PGE control expenses and keep electricity prices as low as possible.

For more information

Residential customers: 503-228-6322 or 800-542-8818

Business customers: 800-822-1077