



## SMART METER FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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### General

#### **What are smart meters?**

A smart meter is one equipped to communicate using digital technology – like your smartphone. Our new smart meters allow for two-way communication, which enables us to read them remotely, start and stop power remotely in most cases, and change price plans for customers without having to change the meter.

We use the data from smart meters to generate bills, to run a more reliable and efficient power grid and to deliver a higher level of service to our customers.

Smart meters securely capture and transmit energy and water use. We then provide you the information through online tools such as My Account and Usage Dashboard, giving you better control over your utility use and budget.

Because smart meters do not require manual meter reads, they offer several additional benefits such as reduced transport, fuel, labor costs and decreased carbon emissions.

#### **Why smart meters?**

Smart meter technology allows you to better monitor and manage your energy and water use so you can make simple changes that can save money on your utility bill. You'll have access to daily – and even hourly – usage information.

#### **How long has Colorado Springs Utilities been using smart meters?**

We installed our first smart meters in 2005. Our first smart meters used Automatic Meter Reading (AMR) technology and were designed for an operational life of approximately 15 years. These meters are nearing the end of their life and we are no longer able to purchase hardware to keep them maintained so we are replacing them with an Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) meter.

#### **How can I see my energy and water data from my new smart meter?**

You'll need to [log in to My Account](#) to view your energy and water use data. If you don't have a My Account set up, please [register for one](#). The registration process is simple and takes only a few minutes. Be sure to have your account number available.

You can currently view your trending and daily energy and water use data. Once your new smart meter is installed, hourly use data will be available.

#### **Can my service be connected or disconnected remotely?**

Yes, electric service can be disconnected or connected remotely. For example, if you're moving, you'll no longer need to wait for a field service technician, leave your gates open or worry about your pets.

## **Installation**

### **When am I getting my smart meters?**

The installation process began in 2021 and concludes in 2024. Most installations will occur Monday through Friday during business hours, but there may be cases when evening or weekend installations are necessary.

You'll receive at least two notices by mail – at least one month before and then a few weeks prior to your installation – letting you know when we'll be in your area. You'll also receive a phone call about two business days before we plan on being at your home or business. Visit [csu.org/smartmeters](https://csu.org/smartmeters) to view a map outlining our deployment plan and timeline.

### **Who is installing my smart meter?**

The meters will be installed either by our personnel or by our installation subcontractor, Texas Meter & Device (TMD). All our installers will be carrying proper identification. If the installer cannot show you an identification card, or if you have a concern about the person's identity, please call us at (719) 448-4800.

### **Do I have to be home when my smart meters get installed?**

No. On the scheduled date of installation, be sure your existing electric and natural gas meters are free from obstructions, all pets are secure and access to your property is safe and clear. This will ensure the meter can be changed and/or the gas and water modules upgraded. Depending on your situation, we may require more than one visit to finish the job. You will receive a notice on your door to confirm a successful exchange.

If the technician cannot access your meter to complete the work, a notice will be left on your door requesting you call to schedule an appointment for installation. Please call as soon as possible to schedule your appointment.

### **Will my service be interrupted?**

For homes, there may be a brief interruption of electric service as the meter is being installed. For businesses, your power might be interrupted during installation. When we arrive onsite, we'll assess your situation. If we can install your new meter without interrupting service, we'll take care of it then. If it requires a power outage, we'll work with you to schedule a time that's least disruptive to your business.

### **What if I operate medical equipment?**

If you operate life-support medical equipment at your home or business, call us at (719) 448-4800 to let us know if you have special needs or circumstances requiring you to have advanced notice of the meter exchange.

### **Whom do I call if I have questions about the meter installation?**

Please call our installation subcontractor Texas Meter & Devices (TMD) at (833) 220-2428.

### **What if I do not want a smart meter installed at my location?**

Smart meters provide several benefits to customers. Today, approximately two-thirds of all U.S. households now have smart meters. However, if you do not want a smart meter installed at your residential location, and there are no meter access issues or on-site generating devices present, you may qualify for our Opt-Out Program. If you opt-out, we will visit your premise each quarter to read your meter(s). There is a set-up fee of \$109 and a \$35 ongoing quarterly fee per premise for customers requesting a nonstandard meter. For more information about this program, call (719) 448-4800.

## **Safety & Health**

### **What are the possible health effects of radio frequencies emitted from smart meters?**

Although smart meters utilize radio frequency (RF) technology, they represent no known health hazards. Key factors for exposure risk are the power and frequency of the emission and distance from a person. Smart meters emit significantly lower exposure levels than most other typical devices emitting RF, such as cell phones, wireless routers and microwave ovens. When installed, no transmitter is located within your home or business. Cell phones are considered riskier since they are held to your head. Our smart meters meet all FCC testing and certification. [Learn more about radio frequency emissions.](#)

### **Will smart meter radio frequency (RF) fields interfere with medical devices?**

The smart meters we use have been certified by the FCC and shouldn't interfere with devices in or around your home or business. A study by the American Cancer Society examined the effect of smart meters on pacemakers and implantable defibrillators and found they did not interfere with these devices. Modern pacemakers are shielded and have built-in features that insulate them against outside interference, including transmission from meters and household appliances like microwaves, cell phones, and Wi-Fi.

### **How does the smart meter help protect the environment?**

Smart meters help protect the environment in several important areas:

- By no longer needing a meter reader to visit your home or business each month, our smart meters will reduce pollution, cut back on fuel consumption and result in fewer vehicles on the road.
- You'll be able to make informed decisions about your energy use, which can reduce the demand for electricity.

## **Privacy & Security**

### **Will Colorado Springs Utilities share my smart meter information with third parties?**

Protecting customer data is a priority for us. We do not share personally identifiable customer information obtained by the smart meter system with any third party, including government agencies, except pursuant to a lawful order, warrant or subpoena.

### **Will the new meters enable Colorado Springs Utilities to collect information on my activities within my home/business?**

No. The meters collect data on our system's performance on our side of the meter only. This information can tell us about usage at a point in time at the service location, such as whether there is power going to the meter, how much power is going to the meter and the voltage level, but it does not tell us the purpose for which the power is being used.

### **Are smart meters secure?**

From physical restrictions to layered security approaches to unique identities, multiple levels of cyber security protect smart meters, our customers' data and our energy grid. The system is continuously monitored to safeguard against potential threats.