



## District of Columbia Public Service Commission

*"People Serving the Community"*

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The public can visit our offices  
Monday through Friday  
(except holidays) between  
9:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.

The Mission of the Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia is to serve the public interest by ensuring that financially healthy electric, natural gas and telecommunications companies provide safe, reliable, and quality services at reasonable rates for D.C. residential, business, and government customers.




1/23/13 Rev.

## District of Columbia Public Service Commission (PSC)



## What You Need To Know About Smart Meter Installation



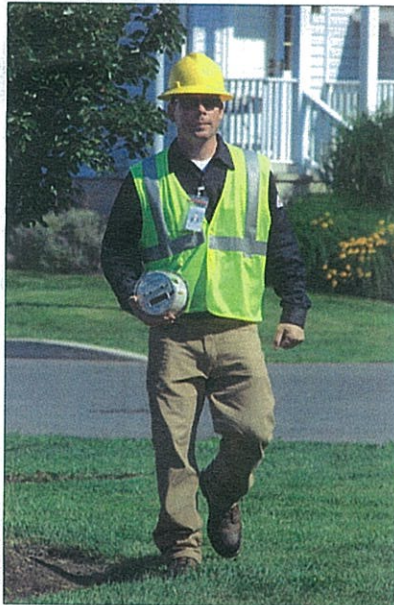
**GRI****Education**

*Promoting Smart Consumption*



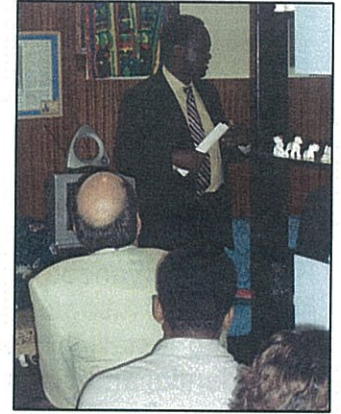
As a part of a national goal to modernize the nation's aging electrical transmission and distribution system into a "Smart Grid," the Obama Administration has awarded federal stimulus grants to utility companies. Pepco received \$44.6 million in federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds to deploy Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) in the District of Columbia. AMI is a network that allows two-way communication between smart meters that have been installed in homes and businesses and the local utility company's electrical system. It enables the company to collect usage data, by customer, on an hourly basis so consumers can track and alter their energy use as a way to minimize their bills. Pepco began deployment of 280,000 smart meters in October 2010. The smart meter installations are projected to be completed in 2012.

This brochure provides Frequently Asked Questions about the smart meter deployment so you will know what to expect when a smart meter is installed in your home. If you have questions about the smart meter installation or any other issue, please contact the PSC's Office of Consumer Services (OCS) at 202-626-5120 or Pepco's Customer Care Call Center at 202-883-7500.

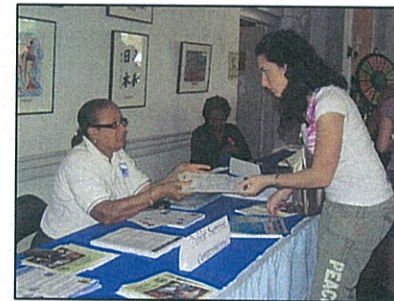


## Smart Meter Outreach

The PSC has established an AMI Task Force, which is responsible for educating consumers about the implementation of smart meters and AMI in the District of Columbia. The AMI Task Force is comprised of staff from the PSC, the Office of the People's Counsel (OPC), the District Department of the Environment (DDOE), Pepco, Politics and Prose's Climate Action Project, and AARP-DC (formerly known as the American Association of Retired Persons).



To have someone speak to your community group about smart meters and AMI, please contact OCS at 202-626-5120 or visit us on the web at [www.dcpsc.org](http://www.dcpsc.org). OCS will coordinate with the AMI Task Force to schedule the event.





## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **About the Smart Meter Installation Program**

#### **What is a smart meter?**

A smart meter is an electronic digital meter that has an internal chip to enable it to communicate two ways – from your meter to Pepco and from Pepco to your meter. These meters use advanced technology to help you and Pepco track your energy usage. Pepco is currently deploying smart meters and installing a two-way communications system for all residential and business customers. Upon completion of the system after the end of 2011, Pepco will activate the chips in the smart meters and customers will then experience a number of benefits. Until activation, the smart meters will continue to operate and be used like the previous meters.

#### **What are the benefits to customers?**

After smart meter activation, customers will receive fewer estimated bills, and they will have access to more detailed electricity usage data on their bills and via Pepco's online *My Account* system. This information will enable customers to manage their energy use and minimize their bills. In addition, customers will no longer need to call Pepco to report an outage and Pepco will be able to restore service more quickly. In the long run, the new system will enable Pepco to offer additional pricing options that vary with the time of day and usage so consumers will have new opportunities to save energy and money. Finally, the new infrastructure will make it easier to integrate renewable energy, such as wind power and plug-in vehicles into the electric system.

#### **Why do you need a smart meter?**

Smart meters are a necessary step in modernizing Pepco's electrical infrastructure. Equally important, smart meters and the AMI communications system will enable

Pepco to provide more detailed energy usage information so you, as a consumer, can make informed decisions in managing your electricity bills.

#### **When will you get a smart meter?**

The goal is to have smart meters installed in all residences and businesses in the District of Columbia by the end of 2011. As a Pepco customer, you should receive a new smart meter before the end of 2011. Pepco is deploying the smart meters on the basis of their meter reading routes.



#### **Will you receive any notice before the meter exchange?**

Pepco will mail you a letter, along with a fact sheet, approximately one to four weeks before your old meter is exchanged for a new smart meter.

#### **Who will install the new smart meter?**

Scope Services, a Pepco contractor, will exchange your old meter with a new smart meter. The Scope Services vehicle and installer will have the Scope insignia so you can easily identify them. A Scope Services installer will knock on your door before installation.

## **Do you need to be home?**

Not if your meter is outside of your home. If you are not at home, the Scope Service installer will exchange the meter and leave a door hanger with a phone number that you can call if you have any questions. If you are not at home and your meter is not accessible, the Scope Services installer will leave a door hanger so you can call to make an appointment for the meter to be exchanged.

## **What should you do to prepare for the meter exchange?**

If your meter is on the outside of your home or business, please make sure your meter is easily accessible. As a reminder, you are responsible for providing access to your meter in order to read, test, disconnect, remove, and/or replace your meter. You must make certain that there is a minimum of 48 inches of clearance around the meter box. No permanent obstructions such as trees, bushes, or walls may be placed in front of the meter. If reasonable access is not provided, service can be disconnected until access is provided.

## **Will you lose power during the meter exchange?**

The meter exchange may result in a brief interruption of electric service, so you may need to reset your clocks and other electronic equipment after the exchange.

**Important Note:** If you have medical equipment and have registered for Pepco's Emergency Medical Equipment Notification Program, the Scope Services installer will knock on your door before beginning the installation to make sure it is OK to interrupt your service for a brief period. If you are not present or you cannot take a brief power interruption, the Scope Services installer will leave a door hanger instructing you to call to set up an appointment.

## **Can someone steal my usage data from Pepco's wireless network?**

Pepco's wireless network is required to employ a high level of security to protect your usage data. Security and protection of all aspects of the electric system and associated sub systems is of the utmost importance. The smart grid systems and components will be guarded against cyber and physical attacks. As the smart grid is deployed, the security guiding principles will be implemented and applied as recommended by the manufacturer and industry best practices. For example, firewalls, virtual local area network (VLANS), encryption, and other methods as defined in technology standards will be used to defend, deter, detect and minimize security threats. Most electric, natural gas, and water meters in the District are already being read by a similar system.

## **Can you refuse to accept the smart meter?**

No. Legislation enacted by the D.C. Council requires Pepco to install smart meters for all customers.

## **When will you be able to receive detailed usage data from Pepco?**

You will begin to receive information on your daily and hourly energy usage after Pepco completes the deployment of the smart meters and the AMI communications system. Once smart meter deployment is complete, Pepco will activate an internal chip in your smart meter that will enable two-way communication between your meter and Pepco over a private secure wireless network. This feature will enable Pepco to provide you with hourly energy usage data so you can track and manage your consumption to minimize your bill and save money. With activation of the meters, you will have more detailed and timely information



about your electricity usage to help you make smarter choices about how you use your energy.

Pepco will notify all customers when this information becomes available. In the meantime, Pepco recommends that you sign up for its "My Account" service, an online feature that provides information on how to better manage your energy use. Go to [www.pepco.com](http://www.pepco.com) and click on the "My Account" section on the home page.

### **Will the new smart meter begin with a reading of zero or will it pick up from your last kilowatt reading?**

The new meters will start at zero. However, prior use will be billed from the old meter reading.

### **Is the PSC able to conduct a refereed meter test on the new smart meters? If not, who can?**

Your smart meter can be tested by Pepco just like your previous meter. The PSC will continue to witness Pepco's testing of meters.

### **Will I have to call Pepco if the power goes out?**

The two-way AMI communications system will help Pepco to identify and respond to outages. However, you can still continue to call Pepco to report an outage.

### **Are smart meters capable of net metering?**

Yes, smart meters are "net metering" capable for customers with on-site renewable generation. However, it is important to notify Pepco if you are planning to install renewable generation such as solar electric panels. Pepco will have to program your smart meter to accommodate net metering. To receive the appropriate programming for a smart meter, you will need to have a registered net-metered account with Pepco. Please call Pepco's **Green Power Connection Team** at (202) 872-2040 to submit an application and to obtain additional information.

### **If you have a net metered account, will your smart meter be capable of gathering data regarding energy production?**

Currently, you would need to have an electrician install a second meter to obtain energy production data. Customers who prefer to avoid the electrician's costs and the physical presence of another meter are permitted to rely on an engineering estimate for Renewable Portfolio Standards market purposes.

Meanwhile, two manufacturers have announced plans to construct devices that will permit retrieval of production data through the installed smart meter network without the installation of additional meters. Pepco's technical team is evaluating manufacturer capabilities at this time and will test equipment performance.

## **Will apartment building owners be able to access individual usage data without a customer's consent?**

No. If the apartment building is not a master metered building, owners will not be able to access individual usage data. Therefore, only the account holder has access to the data and this information cannot be shared with a third-party without the written consent of the account holder. If the apartment building is a master metered building, owners will be able to access usage data for the building.

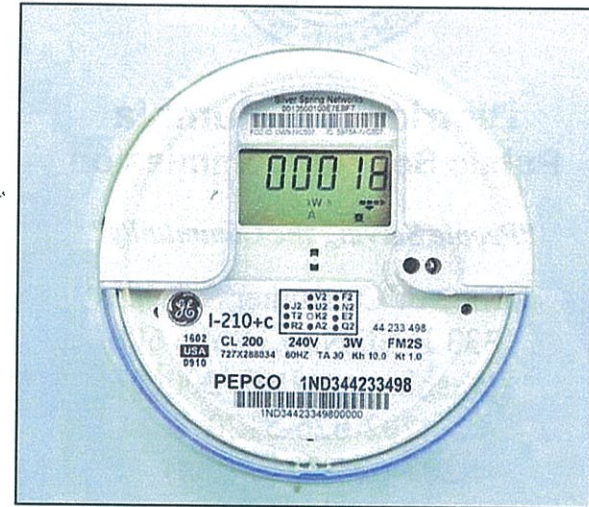
A master metered building is any apartment building where the owner, agent, lessor or manager of the apartment building is billed directly by the utility company for a particular utility service furnished to the apartment building, and the building is occupied by tenants.

## **How will Pepco notify you when your smart meter will be activated?**

Pepco will provide a comprehensive education campaign using bill inserts, web site, advertising, direct mail, and other communications vehicles to all customers when its smart meters are activated.

## **How long will Pepco store your energy usage data?**

Pepco will retain customers' energy usage data for seven years.



If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact the Office of Consumer Services at 202-626-5120 or visit the PSC website at [www.dcpSC.org](http://www.dcpSC.org).