

# Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative

## WEBSITE: Frequently Asked Questions: AMI Meters

### AMI TECHNOLOGY

#### **What is AMI?**

AMI stands for Automated Metering Infrastructure. This proven technology enables Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative to communicate with electric meters remotely and integrate new cost-saving activities, including reading electric meters remotely and automatically detecting outages.

#### **How will this system benefit co-op members?**

AMI will improve reliability, enhance power quality monitoring and accelerate outage notification, which means quicker service restoration. With many existing meters reaching end of life, it makes sense to improve our meter reading systems.

#### **Is my personal account information secure?**

Yes. The AMI system does not interact with or transmit personal customer information. Also, measures have been put into place to ensure that no personal identification information will be located on our AMI data portal.

### AMI METER INSTALLATION

#### **Who is eligible to receive AMI service?**

We have installed new meters and associated equipment in the testing phase of the new system. After evaluating the results of the tests, new meters will be installed throughout the system over the next several months.

#### **Do you need my permission to install this new meter at my residence?**

The meter and equipment delivering electricity to our customers is owned and maintained by CCEC. Even though we are permitted to access our equipment on our members' property, we strive to be respectful and avoid inconvenience. If you have special concerns, we would ask that you let us know as soon as possible by calling 252.247.3107 or 1.800.682-2217.

#### **Who will install AMI and how will I be able to identify them?**

AMI installation is being performed by CCEC staff and a designated CCEC contractor. All representatives will be driving vehicles marked with "Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative" or "Bellwether Management Solutions." If you are not sure if persons in your area are part of our AMI deployment project, feel free to call us at 252.247.3107 or 1.800.682-2217.

#### **How will I be notified that I will be receiving the new meter?**

As a courtesy, the installer will knock on your door to inform you that your meter is being exchanged and that a brief electric interruption will result. You may need to reset your digital clocks on your electronic devices.

#### **Will I need to be at home or at my business when you install the AMI device?**

In most cases, you will not need to be at your home or business when the meter is exchanged. If no one is present, meter exchange technicians will either leave a door hanger at your premises, indicating that the meter was successfully exchanged, or they will advise you that an appointment is required to access the meter for the exchange. In most cases, business services will not be interrupted during normal business hours (e.g. 8 a.m. -5 p.m.) and we will schedule a convenient time to make the exchange.

**Is there anything I should do before the AMI device is installed at my property?** Possibly. To help make the meter exchange quick and efficient, you should make sure the area around your electric meter(s) is clear to give our technician ready access to the meter. We would greatly appreciate your assistance in removing

any obstructions or barriers, such as overgrown shrubs, from around your meter. In fact, this should be done as soon as possible. We need clear access to your meter at all times, not just for the new meter installation.

**What happens if my meter is not accessible?**

If the meter is located inside of a locked area or an area that we will need your assistance to access, we will leave a door hanger advising you of this issue and request that you contact our office to schedule a convenient time for the change-out.

**I have a generator that starts automatically when the power is off. What will happen during the meter exchange?**

If the generator is installed to automatically transfer the power source, we would expect the generator to come on when the meter is removed. This should activate an automatic transfer switch that will isolate the customer's generator from CCEC's service. The same sensing device that indicated a loss of CCEC service and started the generator should detect that service has been restored, and after a few minutes, turn the generator off.

## **BILLING FOR THE AMI METER**

**Will I have to pay an additional fee for the AMI meter?**

There is no additional charge for the installation and use of the AMI meter service.

**Could the AMI meter be the reason that power bills have recently gone up?**

Not unless your old meter has not been registering 100 percent of your electricity usage. Sometimes mechanical meters slow over time. Generally, the only thing that can make your power bill go up is a change in your usage level (you used more kWh) or a change in the billing structure (price of power).

## **OPERATION OF THE AMI METER**

**Will my new meter be accurate when it is installed?**

Yes. Every AMI meter is checked for accuracy before it leaves the factory. This independent verification assures that CCEC meters are accurate.

**Can you have a third-party test my AMI meter if I believe it is not accurate?**

Yes. CCEC has third parties that will test a meter and provide both us and you the test results. This will be done according to our Service Rules and Regulations.

**Will I still see meter readers in my area occasionally?**

Yes. The use of AMI technology will not completely eliminate the need for traditional meter readers. We may, on occasion, still need to send employees to inspect meters and service other co-op equipment.

**Will my new meter track or monitor individual appliances?**

Your new meter will not identify electrical devices in the home or record when they are operated. The meter only records total energy usage, as does our previous meter. The only difference is that your new meter may be read several times a day.

**Will the new AMI service interfere with my radio, telephone, computer, television, phones, wireless internet access, invisible fence or other equipment?**

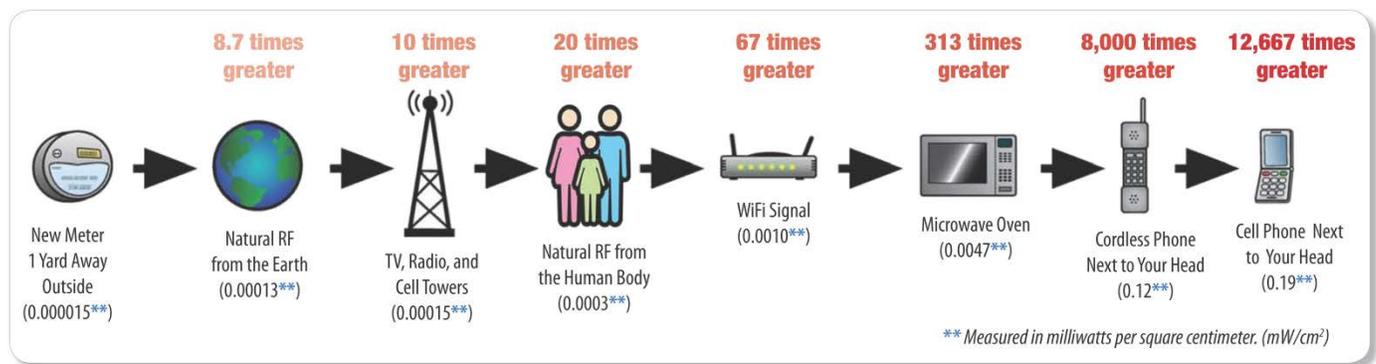
The transmitting device operates in compliance with Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Regulations in a licensed spectrum to avoid interference with other electronic devices. Your meter will be set to transmit data a few times a day, with each RF-signal lasting an average of 2 to 20 milliseconds. It will transmit on a frequency reserved for this purpose and should not interfere with other equipment. The meter does not transmit continuously.

## I have heard these meters put off electromagnetic fields (EMF) or radio waves (RF). Should I be concerned?

Wireless AMI meters result in much smaller levels of radio frequency (RF) exposure than many existing household electronic devices, particularly cell phones and microwave ovens. Research conducted by the FCC, the Electric Power Research Institute, the Utilities Telecom Council and others indicates these meters operate well within the limits considered safe for humans or animals.

The exposure from the new meters is much lower than other common sources for two reasons: **1)** infrequent signal transmission, and **2)** distance. On a daily basis, the cooperative's meters will emit power for *less than one minute a day*.

In addition, these meters are typically placed outdoors, with a wall separating the meter from the living space. This combination of placement and infrequent operation means that you would need to be within one foot of 7,000 advanced meters all communicating at the same time to reach the FCC exposure limit. Members can rest assured our new metering equipment is safe for them and their families.



## Automated Meters in Comparison to Everyday Devices that use RF

(Power density in microwatts per square centimeter)

**Sources:** <https://www.ccst.us/publications/2011/2011smart-final.pdf>

[https://www.smartgrid.gov/sites/default/files/doc/files/RadioFrequency\\_Exposure\\_Levels\\_from\\_Smart\\_Meters\\_Case\\_Study\\_201106.pdf](https://www.smartgrid.gov/sites/default/files/doc/files/RadioFrequency_Exposure_Levels_from_Smart_Meters_Case_Study_201106.pdf)

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