PUBLIC HEALTH AWARENESS about 'SmartMeters'

What's so smart about 'SmartMeters'?

The Clean Energy Act of May 2010 mandates that BC Hydro replace every conventional electric meter with a 'SmartMeter' by 2012.

SmartMeters allow BC Hydro to monitor electrical use in detail, control energy supply to 'Smart' appliances and implement time-of-use pricing. Customers get real-time feedback of energy usage.

Section 17 specifies that installation can be done "without the consent of the owner." There will be no process for public input, since the Act strips the BC Utilities Commission of the power to review the project.

HEALTH WARNING

Electromagnetic Radiation (EMR) can affect your health. The BioInitiative Report (2007) references over 2000 scientific studies showing adverse effects of EMR.

People worldwide have reported reactions to SmartMeter technology, ranging from mild fatigue or a sense of unease to severe and debilitating symptoms.

Children and the chronically ill are the most vulnerable. However, previously healthy people have become electrically sensitive after wireless SmartMeters were installed.

- **Ontario**: One man reported that installation of a SmartMeter provoked his son's seizures. The seizures stopped when he moved to an area where conventional meters were still in use.
- **New York**: A hydro customer can no longer use her cellphone and computer without experiencing symptoms of agitation, inability to concentrate, tinnitus, short-term memory loss, heart palpitations and sleeping problems.

Exposure to radiation from SmartMeters is involuntary and virtually unavoidable.

EMR Impacts the Environment

- **Bees** in India this year stopped producing honey, halved egg production and reduced the hive in response to cell phone EMR. German studies found bees try to escape from EMR in the hive, or plug the entrances and start stinging one another to death. EMR is also found to affect the ability to navigate in **bees** and **migratory birds**.
- **Leaves** wither and die closest to Wi-Fi EMR sources in a recent Dutch study (compare these results to an Ontario photo: "Death by Smart Meter")
- **Birds, butterflies, bats, whales, cows, domestic pets** are among animals affected

A Mayor's Warning

"……the ambient electromagnetic and radio wave fields that will come as a result of having these things at every house running constantly is an unforeseen health risk. For people who are sensitive to electromagnetic radiation, it's going to be a living nightmare"

Mayor Lew Tremaine, Fairfax, California

Exposure is 24/7 + accumulates from-

- Powerful 'peak pulse' wireless emissions from your meter.
- Signals from neighbouring homes which 'repeat' off your meter.
- Signals from neighbourhood hubs.
- Home Area Network transmissions.
- Additional loads of 'dirty electricity' which typically enter the house wiring through the meter and re-radiate throughout the home day and night.

Government standards fail to address the non-thermal health effects of electromagnetic energy, or the cumulative effects of constant exposure from multiple EMR sources.

Symptoms from SmartMeters

Most common:

- difficulty sleeping
- fatigue
- headaches
- nausea
- heart palpitations
- difficulty concentrating
- short-term memory loss
- tinnitus
- dizziness
- irritability

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What's so Smart....?

- **Privacy & Security**: Wireless transmissions of personal data, and information about what kind of appliances you own, when you use them and what you are doing at any moment can be intercepted by market researchers, insurance investigators, saboteurs, would-be burglars, etc.
  InGuardians, a cyber security firm, tested 5 different brands of SmartMeters and found that they could all be easily hacked into.
- **Electromagnetic interference**. SmartMeters can interfere with electronics and appliances, as PG&E of California admitted after numerous complaints.
- **Higher utility bills**: A survey by Toronto Hydro confirms that SmartMeters have increased bills for about 80% of consumers.
- **Waste of our money**: The BC Government is investing $1 billion (and counting) without an appropriate cost-benefit analysis. Approximately 80% of BC's electricity demand is industrial. Independent analysts agree that the savings at the residential level are negligible and not worth the expense.

------- PUBLIC PROTEST -------

The U.S.: • Excessive rate increases led to **lawsuits** in California and Texas.

• California Public Utilities Commission has received more than 2,000 health complaints. As of Sept 2010, 18 cities and 3 counties have demanded a **halt** to the SmartMeter program, citing peer-reviewed studies that suggest possible serious health consequences.

• Hawaii Public Utilities Commission **rejected** SmartMeters

• Maryland's Public Service Commission **rejected** the SmartMeter Program because of "significant financial and technological risks" and "savings that are largely indirect, highly contingent and a long way off."

• New Mexico Gas is **honouring** medical waivers

Australia: Victoria State Energy Minister responded to public advocacy groups and imposed an indefinite moratorium on the time-of-use tariff, since pensioners and low income customers would be especially hard hit by rate increases.

Sweden: People living with severe intolerance to electromagnetic radiation were allowed to opt-out after a disability group raised their concerns to the hydro companies. Suitable mitigation solutions were found on a case-by-case basis.

The Netherlands: SmartMeters are no longer mandatory since they violate the right to privacy, as guaranteed by Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Talk to your neighbours... Safer technology is available. SmartMeters connected by fiber optic or phone lines protect privacy and avoid harmful radiation

Who benefits?

Who pays?

Who cares about public health?

Demand
Citizen & Customer Rights

Contacts

BCUC 604-660-4700
Complaints@bcuc.com

BC Hydro 604-224-9376
SmartMeters@bchydro.com

City council members
www.civicinfo.bc.ca/11.asp

Politicians
→ BC Energy Minister 250-387-5896 EMPR.Minister@gov.bc.ca
→ John Horgan, NDP Energy Critic. 250-391-2801 John.Horgan.MLA@leg.bc.ca

Health Agencies
→ Perry Kendall, Provincial Health Officer 250-952-1330 Perry.Kendall@gov.bc.ca
→ Your local Environmental Health Officer. Service BC: 604-660-2421
→ **Civil Rights** groups.
→ **Environmental** groups.

Other Suggestions

- ❖ **Moratorium** on the installation of 'SmartMeters' until the health, safety & security issues are resolved.
- ❖ **Safer options** for energy conservation.
- ❖ **Safer (wired) options** for meters
- ❖ **Get the media involved**

Sources: BC Government, BC Hydro, Electrical Pollution Solutions, EMFacts, EMF Safety Network, FEB, Microwave News, Ontario Information & Privacy Commissioner, Powerwatch, TURN-The Utility Reform Network, WEEP News, Wikipedia.