



Monday, March 18, 2024

Chair Frentz and committee members,

At Otter Tail Power, we are always looking for ways to make our system more reliable and consumer friendly. Smart meters are one of those advances we are utilizing. Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) is an integrated, fixed network system that enables two-way communication between Otter Tail Power and our customers. We are currently in the process of upgrading our entire meter fleet with AMI meters.

We worked closely with the Public Utilities Commission to develop a process that gives a customer the ability to "opt out". We also worked closely with the Minnesota Department of Commerce to develop a communications plan to let customers know when we would be replacing their meters. To date we've replaced close to 10% of our meters in Minnesota. Communications to customers are mailed 6 weeks out and again 2 weeks out before they get an AMI meter (to date we have had only three customer requests for information on opt out with no signed opt-out forms submitted at this time).

Feedback from our customers about AMI meters has been very positive. If this bill, requiring customers to "opt in", would become law it would cause disruptions in our AMI deployment, driving up costs to customers and delaying the cost savings associated with AMI. Furthermore, this law would delay delivering enhancements to customers that would increase their visibility of their use and allow them to make more informed decisions as consumers. Otter Tail Power already has a process in place that provides timely and open communication with our customers about AMI meters and allows a customer to act and "opt out" if they choose.

Otter Tail uses load control devices (LCDs) that would also meet the definition in the bill. We have roughly 45,000 of these devices installed at customer locations today (~ half in MN) with the purpose of controlling customer owned electrical equipment. These devices are part of our load management program and customers get a reduced rate for giving us control of these devices. We do not obtain a signed authorization form today for installing a new load control device. Customers contact OTP with the request to move to a load control rate and we simply update their account and make it happen by installing the load control device and wire it to the meter.

We appreciate the opportunity to discuss this issue and would welcome a chance to have one of our engineers meet with any or all interested members or staff.

Regards,

Joe Hoppe