

**From:** X

**Sent:** September 9, 2014 10:19 PM

**To:** Gary Holman

**Cc:** Debra Hartung;

**Subject:** [Fires - Safety - Salt Spring Island, BC] Meeting with Gary Holman, NDP MLA - September 08, 2014

Dear Gary,

Thank-you for meeting with (5 of us), yesterday to discuss our many concerns about fires and safety regarding BC Hydro smart meters.

Here are the links to all the reports and documents that we presented to you so that you may circulate to all NDP MLAs to read, discuss, and take action:

**Fires - Listed by Brand:**

- [http://emrabc.ca/?page\\_id=4776](http://emrabc.ca/?page_id=4776) Sensus (Landis+Gyr) - General Electric - Itron

**The truth about Smart Meter Fires and Failures in British Columbia - August 19, 2014:**

- <http://www.stopsmartmetersbc.com/truthaboutfires/>

[Executive Summary - <http://www.stopsmartmetersbc.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/TruthAboutFiresExecutiveSummary.pdf>

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Smart Meter Fire Report - <http://www.stopsmartmetersbc.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/TruthAboutFires-TheReport.pdf>

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BC Office of the Fire Commissioner -

<http://www.stopsmartmetersbc.com/truthaboutfires/truthaboutfiresbcfc/>

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BC Hydro FOI - List of fires related to Smart Meters - <http://www.stopsmartmetersbc.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/BC-Hydro-FOI-Fires-3.pdf>

**Ontario Fire Marshal's report [June 15, 2012] on smart meter fires:**

- [https://web.archive.org/web/20140209072031/http://www.stopsmartmetersbc.ca/html/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Smart\\_Meter\\_Fires.pdf](https://web.archive.org/web/20140209072031/http://www.stopsmartmetersbc.ca/html/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Smart_Meter_Fires.pdf)

**Fire Report for Fire Chiefs and Insurers:**

- <http://www.stopsmartmetersbc.com/fires/a-message-for-fire-fighters-and-insurers/>

**Commentary:**

New Critical Problem with 'Smart' Meters: The Switching-Mode Power Supply (SMPS) - eon3EMF Blog - March 30, 2011:

- <http://eon3emfblog.net/?p=2180>

Wireless Smart Meters and Potential for Electrical Fires - Commentary by Cindy Sage, Sage Associates and James J. Biergiel, EMF Electrical Consultant - July 2010:

- <http://eon3emfblog.net/wp-content/uploads/2010/09/Wireless-Smart-Meters-and-Potential-for-Electrical-Fires.pdf>

### Websites:

Fire/Explosion Hazard - Coalition to Stop Smart Meters BC:

- <http://www.stopsmartmetersbc.com/fires/unusual-number-of-fires-smart-meters-linked/>

Damaged Appliances - EMR Health Alliance of BC:

- [http://emrabc.ca/?page\\_id=3889](http://emrabc.ca/?page_id=3889)

FAQ: Fire and Safety Issues - Stop Smart Meters!

- <http://stopsmartmeters.org/frequently-asked-questions/faq-fire-and-safety-issues/>

Smart Meter Fires and Explosions - EMF Safety Network:

- <http://emfsafetynetwork.org/smart-meters/smart-meter-fires-and-explosions/>

The following is a compilation of reports from the US , Australia and Canada about fires, explosions or burned out appliances due to Smart Meter installations. If you have experienced similar problems, please post your story in the comment section below.

As mentioned at the meeting, a report is in the works by professional Electrical Engineers about flaws in the smart meter design. As soon as this report is available, we will forward it to you. This report will show that statements made by BC Hydro and the Liberal government regarding the safety of smart meters are not correct.

You mentioned statements by Len Garis from:

Revisiting the Safety of Smart Meter Installations in British Columbia by Len Garis - Centre for Public Safety and Criminal Justice Research - August 14, 2014:

- <http://cjr.ufv.ca/revisiting-the-safety-of-smart-meter-installations-in-british-columbia/>

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Assessing the Fire Safety of Smart Meter Installations in British Columbia - Revisiting Residential Structure Fires in BC between July 2010 and June 2014 by Len Garis - Centre for Public Safety and Criminal Justice Research - August 2014:

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<http://www.ufv.ca/media/assets/cjsr/AssessingtheFireSafetyofSmartMeterInstallationsinBC.PDF>

First of all, BC Hydro paid \$15,000 for the first report to be written. I wonder how much was paid for the second report. Secondly, because of the lack of co-ordination between the Fire Commissioner's Office, BC Safety Authority, and Fire Departments plus no specific tracking code for smart meter fires, the information and data that was used to produce the above two reports were incomplete. In addition, the Fire Commissioner (the source for the data used) does not receive reports on **all** fires which makes the statistics the reports were based on far from being credible enough to conclude that smart meters have contributed to the reduction in electrical fires. Depending on when the Fire Commissioner stopped receiving all fire reports, this could account for the reduction - they just aren't being reported.

As it stands right now, BC Hydro, being a utility, has the right to self-regulate with no provincial or federal agency to oversee the safety of the smart meter program. The Canadian Consumer

Protection Agency, CSA, UL, and BC Safety Authority are all hands off which leaves every British Columbian at risk because of the ticking time bomb that Itron smart meters pose (and which also have lithium batteries that explode if over-heated) which have forcibly been installed on most homes and businesses. Even if someone still has an analog on their home, they and their home are at risk of fire spreading from their neighbours which is a very serious scenario due to climate change causing the Gulf Islands to be tinder dry as well as many other parts of B.C.

Canada Consumer Product Safety informed Sharon Noble that smart meters are not consumer products (even though they go on/in our homes), so they have nothing to do with them. However, in the USA, the US Consumer Products Safety Commission (CPSC) is a federal agency that will take complaints on utility smart meters. If you have or had smart meter electrical or fire problems CALL: (800) 638-2772 Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. ET or [submit your complaint by email](#) [- <https://www.saferproducts.gov/CPSRMSPublic/Incidents/ReportIncident.aspx>]. Because BC Hydro (and FortisBC) Itron meters are manufactured and sold by an American company, the US Consumer Products Safety Commission (CPSC) and the American National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) are both interested in any fires caused by Itron meters in British Columbia.

We have physically handed this important information to you to share with all NDP MLAs. It is now your responsibility to read these reports and take action to protect all British Columbians. Saskatchewan bit the bullet and stopped installing smart meters after only 8 fires!

X from Salt Spring

PS Here is an interesting article re installation of smart meters and safety:  
Socket safety products from Brooks Utility Products - Utility Products Magazine - January 06, 2014:  
- <http://www.utilityproducts.com/articles/2014/01/socket-safety-products-from-brooks-utility-products.html>

Below are links to articles and statistics re BC Hydro Opt-outs

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According to BC Hydro, the Opt-outs left are ~ 20,000.

(68,000 - 48,240 = 19,760) & (6,270 opted out + 13,110 didn't return Meter Choice forms + 450 smeters w radio off = 19,830)  
- [http://www.bcuc.com/Documents/Proceedings/2013/DOC\\_38878\\_B-8\\_BCH-EnrolementStatus.pdf](http://www.bcuc.com/Documents/Proceedings/2013/DOC_38878_B-8_BCH-EnrolementStatus.pdf)

Who knows how many Salt Springers stuck to their guns? Quite a few I bet. We had, as of August 12/13, the highest rate of refusals for the province: 18.3% (more than 2,000 of its 12,000 customers have refused the new meters).  
- <http://blogs.vancouversun.com/2013/08/12/gulf-islands-smart-meter/>

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BC Hydro Letter to BC Utilities Commission re Meter Choices Program Enrolment Status - December 16, 2013:

- [http://www.bcuc.com/Documents/Proceedings/2013/DOC\\_38878\\_B-8\\_BCH-EnrolementStatus.pdf](http://www.bcuc.com/Documents/Proceedings/2013/DOC_38878_B-8_BCH-EnrolementStatus.pdf)

Billing Area & Percentage of Refusals

- <http://blogs.vancouversun.com/2013/08/12/gulf-islands-smart-meter/>

Where in B.C. is smart-meter opposition the highest? by Chad Skelton - Vancouver Sun - August 12, 2013:

- <http://blogs.vancouversun.com/2013/08/12/gulf-islands-smart-meter/>

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Gulf Islanders 15 times more likely to oppose BC Hydro smart meters than Vancouverites by Chad Skelton - Vancouver Sun - August 12, 2013:

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<http://www.vancouversun.com/technology/Gulf+Islanders+times+more+likely+oppose+Hydro+smart+meters/8780345/story.html>

I've got a story [-

<http://www.vancouversun.com/technology/Gulf+Islanders+times+more+likely+oppose+Hydro+smart+meters/8780345/story.html>] about how BC Hydro customers on the Gulf Islands are 15 times more likely to refuse a smart meter than those in Vancouver. Accompanying the story was an interactive map and interactive graphic so readers can see how smart-meter refusal in their community compares to the provincial average (3.3%).

### **Share of BC Hydro customers who refused a smart meter**

Search for your community (keyword search)

(graph)

#### **Billing Area**

Gulf Islands (Ganges) - 18.3%

Hazelton - 13.6%

Nakusp - 13.6%

Bella Coola - 13.0%

Revelstoke - 12.8%

Golden - 10.9%

Salmon Arm - 10.5%

Sechelt - 8.8%

Courtenay - 7.7%

Duncan - 7.6%

Bella Bella, Anahim Lake - 7.0%

Port Hardy - 6.9%

Port Alberni - 6.9%

Clearwater - 6.7%

Qualicum - 6.6%

Campbell River - 5.9%

Powell River - 5.8%

Burns Lake - 5.3%

Abbotsford/Mission - 5.0%

Maple Ridge - 3.3%

Surrey/White Rock - 3.3%

Vancouver - 1.2% Richmond/Delta - 1.0%

Burnaby - 0.9%  
Atlin - 0.6% or less  
Fort Nelson - 0.6% or less  
Fort St. John - 0.6% or less  
Houston - 0.6% or less  
Prince Rupert - 0.6% or less  
Stewart - 0.6% or less

Source: BC Hydro. Data is based on billing area, which includes smaller communities surrounding each city. Does not include some parts of the province which receive their electricity from providers other than Hydro.

**Interactive graphic by Chad Skelton** [Click here for more.](#)

- <http://blogs.vancouversun.com/category/staff/news/the-data-trail/>

- <http://public.tableausoftware.com/download/workbooks/SmartMeters?format=html>

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Map below shows the share of BC Hydro customers in each billing area who have refused a smart meter. Click on an icon for more details. Enter your community in the search box to zoom to where you live.

**Share of customers who have refused a smart meter:**

(map)

**Interactive map by Chad Skelton** [Click here for more.](#)

- <http://blogs.vancouversun.com/category/staff/news/the-data-trail/>

The story and graphics were based on data on smart-meter refusals provided to The Sun by BC Hydro. It's worth noting here, I think, that Hydro provided the data voluntarily without forcing us to go through the cumbersome process of making an FOI request. I've had my issues with Hydro in the past, [- <http://blogs.vancouversun.com/2013/02/27/bc-hydro-coughs-up-salary-data-in-new-format/>] but I think agencies deserve credit when they volunteer data instead of forcing media and the public to always file an FOI, a process that can take months.

Fortunately, Hydro's behaviour in this instance seems to be part of a more general trend. In several cases over the past couple of years, I've been pleasantly surprised by agencies providing data voluntarily without an FOI request. [ICBC](#) and [TransLink](#), in particular, have been very good on this score.

If you'd like to see the smart-meter refusal data for yourself, you can see the [original PDF](#) [- <https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B5AELJGIYc4JZkJoTkZhcGY5bU0/edit?pli=1>] Hydro sent me, or the [Excel spreadsheet](#) [- <https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B5AELJGIYc4Ja2tGOVRrSmc1Y1U/edit?pli=1>] I created out of it. The latter includes some additional columns of data I added myself, including a "Total Customers" field (basically just adding up the customers who've taken a smart meter and those who haven't) and a re-calculated share of refusals. Hydro's original data rounded the share of refusals to the nearest half-percentage. I preferred having a more precise figure, so re-calculated the percentages. It's also important to note that the total counts of customers who've taken a smart meter and those who've refused have themselves been rounded by Hydro to the nearest 50 or 100 customers.

