

BC Hydro "Smart" Meters: Why Opt Out?

	Current Analog Meter	"Smart" Meter	The Details:
Cost (to individual)	Cost stays same	Cost increases 30-100% for most customers	There are reports that some can no longer afford the cost of living, and are forced to turn heat off in their homes. Further plans include "time-of-use" billing, which will charge more for using electricity during the day than at night.
Cost (to BC taxpayers)	Cost stays same	\$1 Billion minimum, an unlegislated tax. Further costs over duration of smart grid program.	
Lifespan	50+ years	12-15 years.	Each "smart" meter will also require 'upgrades' in 3-5 years, at a cost to the ratepayer for several hundred million, minimum.
Privacy	No intrusion to privacy	BC Hydro collects your usage data	Illegality: BC Privacy Commissioner Elizabeth Denham, says "BC Hydro is required by law to tell their customers the purpose for collecting personal information for the smart meters project, what legal authority they have to do so and to provide contact information for a BC Hydro employee who can answer any questions that arise regarding collection. Hydro is not currently meeting this requirement."
Appliances	No new appliances needed	New "smart" wireless appliances will eventually be required	"Smart" appliance data collection: Your usage data for each "smart" appliance would eventually be collected, and sold for corporate benefit. In addition, RFID chip technology is planned to further monitor product and appliance usage within the smart grid in your home, if you choose to accept it.
Data transmission	No radiation	Microwave radiation, measured at 70,000+ microwatts/m2 per smart meter. (Apartment buildings have many smart meters clustered together, 1 per unit)	The International Building Biology Guidelines lists a threshold of "extreme concern" of 1,000 microwatts/m2. This means that a single smart meter is 70 times above this limit.
Home safety	CSA or UL approved. No safety issues.	Not CSA or UL approved. "Smart" meters have caused more than 800 fires in homes to date. In addition, many are reported broken appliances and computers due to power surges.	Neither insurance nor the Hydro company are covering damages from fires or power surges, because the devices are not CSA or UL approved. This has led to much public scrutiny.
Health: short term	No possible health issues	Negative health effects are possible. Many people are experiencing irritability, headaches, insomnia, dizziness, nausea, fatigue, heart palpitations, and/or skin problems.	On May 30, 2011, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) classified the type of radiofrequency radiation from the smart meter as a Group 2B carcinogen , in the same category as DDT and lead.
Health: long term	No possible health issues	According to 75% of independent studies, there is a probable link to cancer due to cellular mutation and DNA breakage. Also, aggravation of other diseases, depression.	
Power grid vulnerability	Power grid separate from internet; not vulnerable to hacking	Leading cyber experts are saying the power grid will eventually be hacked, and the entire power grid could easily be taken down. This has already been simulated many times.	Sources: Scientific American, July 2011, "Hacking the Lights Out"; Washington Post, Feb 7, 2012; YouTube search "CNN power generator cyber attack"; former CIA director James Woolsey, etc.
Making Your Choice:	To keep your existing meter, mail letter of non-consent to BC Hydro, asap. (see: citizensforsafetechnology.org) Also, many are placing signs and/or locks on meters.	To choose a "smart" meter, no action is required. (The government will choose this option for you, though they are not liable for any effects, damages or increased cost.)	At least 33 municipalities in BC, representing a constituency of almost 2 million residents, have officially voted to have a moratorium against smart meter installation, until they can be proven safe and necessary. But BC Hydro is still going forward, and will continue to do so, unless the public speaks loudly enough.