

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (GENERAL)

1. What is the Meter Replacement Project?

Chugach's ongoing investment in system improvements is the primary driver of the Meter Replacement Project. Chugach's current meter reading system was installed nearly 20 years ago and is nearing end of life. The project invests in new equipment, including new meters, which will help Chugach operate more efficiently, improve reliability and serve its members better.

2. How do I benefit from this project?

The upgraded system will provide more accurate information about outages. Chugach intends to incorporate data from the meters into a new Outage Management System. Dispatchers in Chugach's power control center will be able to see which meters are energized and which are not, allowing them to better analyze outages and coordinate restoration. The new meters will also enable Chugach to perform several functions remotely, such as reading meters and opening and closing accounts.

3. Will this affect my monthly bill?

No. The amount on a member's monthly bill will continue to reflect the amount of electricity used. Following the swap, the next bill a member receives will show two readings, one from the old meter and one from the new meter.

4. What information does the new meter record?

New residential meters record electrical consumption (kWh) and the date and time. New commercial meters will also record the peak demand. All meters will record the date and time of power outages and power quality information.

5. Does the meter identify what is being used inside my home?

No. The meter cannot determine what type of electric device or appliance is in use inside a home. The meter cannot monitor personal activities or occupancy inside a home. Chugach will know how much electricity is being used, but not what it is used for.

6. What is the difference between the old and the new meter?

Both the old and new meters have an electronic circuit board module installed and use radio frequency to communicate; which is the same communication method used to broadcast television and talk on a cell telephone. A primary difference is the ability of the utility to communicate directly with the new meter. Physically, the old and new meters themselves are very similar in size and appearance. The new meters are a needed upgrade in the ongoing system improvements.

7. Do the new meters cause health concerns?

No. The new meters, as well as the existing meters, use very low power radio frequency waves to transmit your energy usage data to Chugach Electric. Other devices that use RF include baby monitors, cordless phones, televisions remote controls and garage openers, just to name a few. In fact, a person speaking on a cell phone is exposed to 2,500 more RF waves than a person standing three feet from a meter. Based on years of study the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) have adopted Maximum Permissible Exposure (MPE) limits for radio transmitters of all types, including electric meters, which operate significantly below the MPE limit.

8. Does member and account information remain confidential and secure?

Yes. Security is a top priority for Chugach and its members. Chugach takes all necessary steps to ensure the services provided are extremely secure. Usage data coming over the network is encrypted using the latest technology and has no customer identifiable information associated to it. Chugach's privacy policies prohibit releasing any confidential member information to unauthorized parties.

9. Can anyone other than Chugach electronically read the new meter?

No. The meter and associated communication system are equipped with security features to prevent unauthorized access. All the information and data is stored within the meter and requires special technology to access it. However, the new meter will have a digital display so members can read their own meter on-site if they wish.