

TACOMA PUBLIC UTILITIES

Advanced Meter Project

The Tacoma Public Utilities (TPU) Advanced Meter Project will provide you with greater control, choice, and convenience. Starting in mid 2020, TPU will begin upgrades to its electric and water meters with modern digital technology that brings many new customer benefits over time, including monthly billing, remote electric service reconnection, more options to control your costs, improved reliability through faster outage and leak detection, and more flexible payment options in a safe and secure way.

TPU has been a trusted service provider in the region for more than 125 years and will continue to provide you with the reliable, affordable, and environmentally-responsible service you expect by replacing and upgrading aging meters. With technology that is used in more than 75 million households nationwide, the advanced meter project enables a shift to a modern digital utility, making operations more efficient and helping the environment through reduced carbon emissions.

Your benefits over time



Your Control, Choice, and Convenience

Access more usage data anytime to manage your use and costs.



Automated Meter Reading

More accurate, timely bills based on real-time data.



Monthly Billing

Advanced meters will allow a switch to monthly utility bills, which most people prefer.



Enhanced Personal Privacy

No need for regular physical access to read your meter.



Easier Move In, Out, and Reconnection

Remote turn on and off of electric service saves you time.



Expanded Ways to Save

Providing data about your use increases your ability to save money, water, and energy.



Faster Outage and Leak Detection

Locating and fixing issues helps us restore service to you sooner.



Flexible Payment Options

More options over time include prepaid for electric service and custom due dates.



Improved Operational Efficiency

Better information about our systems helps us manage costs.



Reduced Environmental Impact

Fewer vehicle miles traveled for meter reading, basic field services, and outage detection lowers our carbon footprint.

[MyTPU.org/AdvancedMeters](https://www.mytpu.org/AdvancedMeters)



Advanced Meter technology has significantly matured over the past 20 years. Many other utilities and manufacturers have tested the systems and were able to solve problems with the technology years ago when it was new. TPU can now deploy advanced meters with confidence knowing the technology is safe, secure, and cost-effective.

Economic impacts

Cost: It's more expensive to maintain aging meters and continue manual reads than to replace them with advanced meters. Customers will not pay an additional fee for meter installation.

Rates: Costs for advanced meters are already factored into the current rates. The additional cost each year for the next ten years is about 8 cents per month for the average residential power customer, 11 cents per month for the average residential water customer in the City of Tacoma, and 13 cents per month for the average residential water customer outside the City of Tacoma.

Low income customers: Advanced meters will provide many options over time to better manage monthly budgets, including prepay for electric service, custom due dates, and monthly billing.

Utility jobs: TPU is retraining and transitioning meter readers to different roles where possible, adding short-term project staff, and hiring a few new long-term positions.

Health and safety

Radio frequency (RF): Typically, advanced meters only emit RF less than 1 minute per day when they are transmitting data. Cell phones and microwaves emit more RF than advanced meters.

Safety: Advanced meters are rigorously tested and include important integrated features to keep you safe. Electric meters come equipped with a variety of alarms and safety features in the rare event of a malfunction.

Medical equipment: Advanced meters do not interrupt critical care equipment.

Privacy and security

Automated meter reads: Advanced meters don't need manual meter reads, so TPU will no longer need to send someone to your home to read your meter.

Data: No customer-identifying data is stored in the advanced meters or transmitted over the network, and information is encrypted with multiple security layers.

Cybersecurity: TPU has a robust cybersecurity program that meets federal standards.

Opt-Out policy

Meter options: If you do not want an active advanced meter, you have the option to receive an advanced meter with RF communications disabled. Opting out will likely require you to pay a fee for ongoing manual meter reads, which is customary in the industry. Policy details are still in development.