



Tacoma Public Utilities Advanced Metering Opt-Out Summary

January 2021 v1.1

1.0 Summary and Customer Features

Tacoma Public Utilities (TPU) is upgrading its existing legacy meters to standardized communicating meters as part of its Advanced Meter Program.

The purpose of the Advanced Meter Opt-Out Policy is to provide residential customers who do not want a communicating advanced electric meter installed at their residence with an alternative. Unless a customer specifically opts-out, all existing and new Tacoma Power customers will receive a standard communicating advanced electric meter. TPU is not planning to offer an advanced metering opt-out option for water.

Electric Meter Options Table:

The following table presents summary details and features provided by TPU’s standard electric meter and each opt-out meter option.



Customer Features	Standard Meter	Opt-Out Option 1: Existing Legacy Meter	Opt-Out Option 2: Radio Off Meter
Opt-Out One Time Fee	None	None	None
Opt-Out Billing Cycle Fee (monthly recurring fee)	None	\$15	\$15
Availability	Any Time	Before Meter Upgrade Only	After Meter Upgrade
Frequent usage data and expanded ways to save money	Yes	No	No
Easier move in, out, and reconnection	Yes	No	No
Faster outage detection	Yes	No	No
Flexible payment options (including PrePay and selectable bill date)	Yes	No	No
Budget Billing	Yes	Yes	Yes
Monthly billing	Yes	Yes	Yes
Automated meter reading	Yes	No	No
Reduced environmental impact	Yes	No	No

No fees are associated with canceling opt-out (to opt back in to a standard meter).



2.0 Electric Meter Descriptions:

The following three electric meter options are available to Tacoma Public Utilities residential electric customers, including two opt-out options.

2.1 Standard, Communicating Advanced Meter

A. Availability:

This meter is available any time following advanced electric meter installation at the specified residence.

B. Description:

This is the standard electric meter for residential customers and is required to receive advanced customer features and benefits. This meter communicates with Tacoma Public Utilities only when it transmits data, in total typically less than one minute per day. It emits radio frequency (RF) only during transmissions.



Standard Advanced Meter

2.2 Opt-Out Option 1: Existing Legacy Meter

A. Availability:

This option is only available if Tacoma Public Utilities receives the customer's opt-out application prior to advanced electric meter installation at a specified residence.

B. Description:

Under this opt-out option, the existing legacy meter installed at the premise may be temporarily left in place and will be read manually. The legacy meter will be replaced in the future in accordance with routine meter maintenance. At that time, if the meter is still being used for the purpose of opt-out, the opt-out meter will be transitioned to an advanced electric meter with the radio frequency (RF) transmitter turned off (Opt-Out Option 2: Radio Off Meter). In addition, this transition includes a period, typically less than one week, when the meter's RF transmitter will be turned on to synchronize and provision the meter with Tacoma Public Utilities' metering systems.



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Following this synchronization, the meter’s RF transmitter will be turned off (radio off meter). With the RF transmitter turned off, the meter will periodically read “opt out” on its screen.



Legacy Digital Meter



Legacy Electromechanical Meter

2.3 Opt-Out Option 2: Radio Off Meter

A. Availability:

This is the only opt-out option available if a customer’s opt-out application is received by Tacoma Public Utilities after the advanced electric meter installation at a specified residence.

B. Description:

Under this option, the standard communicating advanced meter will have its radio frequency (RF) transmitter turned off (radio off meter) and read manually. The installation of this meter includes a period, typically less than one week, when the RF transmitter will be turned on to synchronize and provision the meter with Tacoma Public Utilities’ metering systems. Following this

synchronization, the meter’s RF transmitter will be turned off (radio off meter). With the RF transmitter turned off, the meter will periodically read “opt out” on its screen.



Radio Off Meter (displaying “opt out” on its screen)

3.0 Opt-Out Options and Timing

- A. Submit a complete opt-out application electronically via the TPU website, in person, or by mail to Tacoma Public Utilities.
 - 1. If an opt-out application is received by TPU prior to advanced electric meter installation at the specified residence, the opt-out may be performed using the existing legacy meter.
 - 2. If an opt-out application is received by TPU after advanced electric meter installation at the specified residence, the opt-out will only be performed using a standard advanced electric meter with the radio frequency (RF) transmitter turned off (radio off meter).



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4.0 Eligibility

Customer Type	Eligible to Opt-Out
Residential Electric : Single Family or Multi-unit of 4 units or less	✓Yes*
Move-in, New Account, New Service	✓Yes*
Residential: Multi-unit > 4 units	No
Commercial & Industrial	No
Net Metering (solar)	No
Temporary Service	No

***Ineligible to opt-out or opt-out is revoked if customer has record of:**

- **Equipment tampering or electric/water diversion**
- **Service disconnection for lack of payment 2 times in a 12 month period**
- **Obstructed meter access for meter reading and/or meter maintenance**
- **Documented threat to utility staff**



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5.0 Customer Opt-Out Request Terms and Conditions:

i. Terms and Conditions:

- a. I represent and warrant that I am the named account holder (or their legal guardian) of the utility account number provided. I further represent and warrant that I am either the legal owner of the premise or a tenant at the premise, or the legal guardian of the owner or tenant, as listed on this application.
- b. By signing this application, I am verifying that I request to opt-out of Tacoma Public Utilities' standard communicating advanced electric meter. By signing this application, I acknowledge that a non-radio frequency (RF) transmitting meter shall be utilized for the purpose of opting-out at the premise listed on this application. Depending on the time this application is received by Tacoma Public Utilities related to the planned advanced meter upgrade at the listed premises, this opt-out meter may either be an existing, non-communicating electric meter (legacy meter) or an advanced electric meter with the radio frequency (RF) transmitter turned off (radio off meter).
- c. By signing this application, I acknowledge that if a legacy meter is being used as an opt-out option, the legacy meter will be replaced in the future with an advanced meter in accordance with routine maintenance. If at the time of replacement, the legacy meter is still being utilized for the purpose of opt-out, the legacy meter will be transitioned to an advanced electric meter with the radio frequency (RF) transmitter turned off (radio off meter). I acknowledge that this transition includes a period, typically less than one week, when the radio frequency (RF) transmitter will be turned on to synchronize and provision the meter with Tacoma Public Utilities' metering systems. Following this synchronization, the meter's radio frequency (RF) transmitter will be turned off (radio off meter).
- d. I understand and have read specific Opt-Out policy details and provisions provided within the Tacoma Public Utilities Customer Services Policies Opt-Out section, including eligibility, fees, steps to opt-out, moves, revocation of opt-out eligibility, and canceling opt-out.
- e. I understand that, in accordance with the Tacoma Public Utilities Customer Services Policy Opt-Out section and the Tacoma Municipal Code, Title 12, my account will be assessed a recurring billing cycle fee of \$15.
- f. I understand that by opting-out I am only eligible for Tacoma Public Utilities' basic rates and I will not be able to receive any other enhanced benefits that the standard communicating advanced electric meter may provide, such as faster outage detection, easier move in, out, and reconnection, flexible payment options related to advanced metering, and frequent usage data.
- g. I understand that if I move to a new location, this opt-out application will not apply and I will need to complete a new opt-out application for the new premise, including payment of any related fees.
- h. I agree that I will maintain clear and direct access to my meter(s) allowing Tacoma Public Utilities to manually read the meter(s) during typical business hours throughout the month.



Exhibit A: Tacoma Public Utilities, Customer Services Policies Section VIII, Opt-Out

VIII. OPT-OUT

8.1 Introduction

- 8.1.1 The purpose of the Advanced Meter Opt-Out Policy is to provide customers who do not want a communicating advanced electric meter installed at their residence an opt-out option as described in this Section VIII. Otherwise, unless a customer specifically opts-out, he or she will receive a standard communicating advanced electric meter.

8.2 Eligibility

- 8.2.1 Customers with the following types of service are eligible to opt-out:

- 8.2.1.1 Residential Service electric customers in dwellings of four units or less (Electric Rates Schedules A-1 and A-2).
- 8.2.1.2 Residential Service electric customers with an accompanying additional separately metered, domestic use Residential Service electric account (e.g. garage or shed), (Electric Rates Schedules A-1 and A-2) may opt-out of advanced meters for both accounts, so long as all of the following criteria are met:
- A. the primary Residential Service account is on the same premise, with the same parcel zoning, as the accompanying Residential Service account,
 - B. the primary Residential Service account is the same place of residence as the accompanying Residential Service account, and
 - C. the primary Residential Service account is under the same business partner as the accompanying Residential Service account.

- 8.2.2 A customer is ineligible to opt-out or the customer's opt-out status can be revoked if he or she has a record of:

- 8.2.2.1 Equipment tampering or electric/water diversion (past or present).
- 8.2.2.2 Service disconnection for lack of payment 2 times in a 12 month period.
- A. The customer's opt-out status may be reinstated if the customer does not have a service disconnection for lack of payment for a minimum of six months, as determined by Tacoma Public Utilities.



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8.2.2.3 Obstructions that prevent meter access for meter reading and/or meter maintenance after Tacoma Public Utilities' reasonable attempt to access the meter, or a lock-out that prevents Tacoma Public Utilities from reading a meter.

- A. The meter location shall not be concealed by materials of any kind and must be readily accessible at all times. If the customer blocks a clear path to the meter, or if the meter is subject to damage because of its location, the customer may be required, at his or her expense, to provide a new and suitable meter location and make the necessary wiring changes (Tacoma Power Customer Service Policy, 13.0.E).
- B. A \$5 service charge will be assessed to accounts that lock-out a reasonable attempt of a meter read (TMC § 12.01.010).
- C. The opt-out status may be reinstated if the customer satisfactorily addresses any obstructed access issue, as determined by Tacoma Public Utilities.

8.2.2.4 A documented threat to Tacoma Public Utilities staff (past or present).

8.2.3 If customer's opt-out status is revoked,

8.2.3.1 Tacoma Public Utilities will automatically remove the customer from opt-out status and the meter will be converted to a standard advanced meter.

8.2.3.2 Tacoma Public Utilities will notify the customer by mail of the revocation.

8.2.4 Customers with the following types of service are ineligible to opt-out:

8.2.4.1 Residential Service in dwellings of more than four units

8.2.4.2 Commercial Service (Electric Rates Schedules B, G, HVG) (unless otherwise specified in this policy)

8.2.4.3 Industrial Service (Electric Rates Schedule CP)

8.2.4.4 Net Metering (solar) Service Types

8.2.4.5 Temporary Service



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- 8.2.4.6 All other types of service not specified as being eligible (Electric Rates Schedules H-1, H-2, H-3, DC, EO, P, TC)

8.3 Fees

- 8.3.1 A recurring billing cycle fee, as specified in Title 12 of the Tacoma Municipal Code, to be effective no sooner than January 1, 2021, will be assessed on the opted-out customer's account beginning the first full billing cycle following an approved opt-out application and the start of opt-out status.
 - 8.3.1.1 The recurring bill cycle fee will continue until the opt-out status ends. At that time, a final recurring billing cycle fee will be charged for the last bill period during which the opt-out status was active.
 - 8.3.1.2 Only one fee will be assessed per customer per bill cycle at a residence, even if the customer has multiple meters being opted-out for the same residential premise (e.g one electric meter on a home and one on a detached garage).
- 8.3.2 Customers eligible for Tacoma Public Utilities' Discount Rate Program will have that program's percentage rate discount applied to opt-out fees.
- 8.3.3 Fees related to opt-out will be evaluated and updated on a periodic basis.

8.4 Steps to Opt-Out:

- 8.4.1 Customers requesting opt-out status related to Tacoma Public Utilities' standard advanced meters shall complete the following opt-out request process:
 - 8.4.1.1 Complete and sign an opt-out application acknowledging associated fees, terms, and conditions, and provide relevant service information. Incomplete applications may delay processing.
 - A. In tenant-landlord relationships, the Tacoma Public Utilities account holder must complete the application. Only the account holder, regardless whether a tenant or landlord, may request and be granted opt-out status.
 - 8.4.1.2 After an application is processed, the customer will receive an approval or denial letter in the mail. Tacoma Public Utilities will do its best to process applications in a timely manner. However, some cases may need additional information before a decision can be made.



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8.5 Moves

- 8.5.1 Upon move out (or account closing), any opt-out meters will be converted to a standard advanced meter.
- 8.5.2 An opt-out status customer moving to a new location will be required to opt-out again (including any related fees). A new opt-out application will need to be submitted and processed for the new service location.

8.6 Steps to Cancel Opt-Out:

- 8.6.1 Customers requesting to cancel their opt-out status (to opt back in to Tacoma Public Utilities' standard meter) should contact Tacoma Public Utilities Customer Service by emailing cservice@cityoftacoma.org, calling 253-502-8600, or visiting Tacoma Public Utilities in person at 3628 South 35th Street, Tacoma, WA 98409.
- 8.6.2 No fees are associated with canceling opt-out status (to opt back in to a standard meter).