



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is AMI?

Advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) is the installation of electronic, multifunction, electric watt hour meters, equipped with communications capabilities, hard-wired or wireless, which allows the remote acquisition of meter data for billing functions, system operational and planning data, and customer service assistance.

What is Project AMI?

NEC is upgrading our current metering system to provide our members with a technology-enhanced method of reading member usage for billing purposes. The new meters offer features that will provide you with a better understanding of your electrical consumption so that you are able to make more informed decisions regarding your usage. The meters provide NEC with important diagnostics that will help increase power quality, thus optimizing the electrical system. Increased diagnostic data improves productivity, by pinpointing outages, while providing a cost control method for operational expenses.

How much is Project AMI going to cost me?

There are no additional costs to our members. The cost of metering services is included in the monthly customer service charge.

Why doesn't NEC continue to use its existing automatic metering system?

NEC has utilized the benefits of remotely gathering meter reading data for over 30 years. As with any technology, the utility industry has experienced a significant improvement in collecting energy consumption data.

What are the enhancements to automatic meter reading?

Current System: With our current remote meter reading system, NEC continues to undergo the unnecessary expense of driving within a short proximity of the meter to collect billable reads. The data transmitted from these meters is limited to strictly an on demand reading used to determine usage from one billing period to the next.

AMI System: AMI creates a truly automatic reading process. Usage data is now transmitted directly to our office using a combination of Radio Frequency (RF) and phone lines.



How is this going to benefit me?

Knowledge: One reading, once a month does not provide a member a clear picture of energy consumed over a billing period. Project AMI provides NEC's members tools for becoming a knowledgeable end-user. Until now, the ability to answer members billing questions in regards to increased usage has required cooperative personnel to install very costly equipment at the member's residence. With AMI, all NEC members, that have an AMI meter installed, will directly benefit from the energy awareness data that is available using NEC's SmartHub® application on your mobile device or through NEC's website.

Outage Management: AMI meters assist NEC with the ability to locate isolated outages at a meter level. Without AMI, NEC is dependent on member contact to locate isolated outage incidents on the system.

Cost Control: Metering advancement allows NEC to reduce vehicle expenses, unnecessary man-hours identifying outages and administration costs associated with metering data and billing. This cost control benefit lowers operational expenses across the board. As a not-for-profit electric cooperative, all NEC members financially benefit.

Accuracy: Transmission of reading data removes human error from the equation, thus increasing the accuracy and efficiency of generating member bills and identifying system fault points.

Consistency: Eliminates the restriction of gathering billing reads during regular business hours. This enhancement allows consistency with statement dates and payment due dates, while permitting uniformity in your billing time-period.

Power Theft: Although power theft is currently kept to a minimum due to procedures that NEC currently has in place, AMI meters offer the ability to identify potential related incidents more effectively and within a shorter time frame, thus saving members from undergoing this unfortunate expense created by dishonest individuals.

Privacy: Members with AMI meters will no longer require NEC staff to visit their property to obtain readings.

Convenience: Scheduling a service connection may be done in a more efficient fashion. The time restraints and drive time of NEC staff manually connecting an existing service is greatly reduced due to the added benefit of remote communication.



When will NEC exchange my meter?

The deployment of Project AMI affects members within NEC's territory through a systematic approach that follows a current internal system of locality. Prior to upgrading the meter, NEC will use our current member information to contact you. If you do not believe that NEC has updated contact information, please call 928-368-5118 and talk to one of our Member Care Specialists so we may update your records.

May I request that my meter be installed sooner?

Unfortunately, we do not have the ability to accommodate member requests for an early installation. NEC is exchanging the meters in the most efficient way possible.

How many visits will it take to install the new meters?

Under normal circumstances it should only take one visit.

Will there be any interruption during the installation?

Electric service interruption is minimal. Although the interruption is brief, you may need to reset the clocks in your home.

What type of information is being transmitted?

Only meter numbers, energy usage, and diagnostic information will be transmitted through encrypted signals. ***Personal data will not be transmitted. So your information will remain private and secure, as it always has.***

Is the metering network secure?

NEC considers privacy and security a top priority. We treat each member's personal information and data as confidential. NEC will only share member data with the member of record or to whom the member of record provides written permission. The Information Technology (IT) security controls NEC utilizes reflect energy industry best practices. They are designed to provide a very high level of assurance that our systems will not be compromised.



How do I know that my meter is measuring accurately?

NEC meters are tested at the manufacturer and then a sample is tested again by NEC before they are installed. Meter accuracy is mandated by the Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC), and NEC submits annual meter test reports in accordance with ACC regulations.

How will my billing be affected by the meter exchange?

There is no charge for upgrading your meter. The first month following the meter exchange, members will receive a bill with two readings: one for the old meter and one for the new meter.

Will more Time-of-Use options become available with the new meters?

Yes. Time-of-Use billing currently depends on the meter keeping track of on and off peak usage. With the new metering system, Time-of-Use schedules potentially are more flexible depending on the Power Supply & ACC. NEC billing representatives have the ability to evaluate actual on-peak and off-peak consumption to determine with certainty if a member will benefit from the cost saving time-of-use rate.

Do NEC AMI Meters control appliances within the customer's home?

The only appliances controlled are those that the member voluntarily opted to have controlled, such as Electric Thermal Storage (ETS) heaters. Control of these appliances can be performed by the meter or by a separate device purchased by the member.

Can I opt out of receiving a new meter?

NEC does not offer an opt-out program.

How do the meters transmit information?

AMI meters communicate energy consumption data to NEC through brief low-level radio frequency (RF) transmission signals. AMI meters use the same FCC-approved frequencies that have been used for many years in devices such as baby monitors, cellular phones, wi-fi networks and medical monitors.

How much RF power is emitted from the meters?

The L & G meters that NEC has selected for Project AMI have a transmitter power output of 0.425 watts of power for approximately 82 seconds a day.



Are there any potential health concerns with the radio frequency (RF) signals?

Several national studies have been done on low-power RF transmissions that AMI uses, but no negative health impacts have been found. The AMI system NEC deploys meets all applicable FCC requirements.

Misinformation regarding AMI meter program

The automated meters used by NEC are not surveillance devices. The technology we employ allows the meter to transmit any usage data via radio frequency in order for us to correctly bill the member and ensure that there is a consistent supply of power to the home. The technology does not allow other data to be transmitted or recorded. The meters do not have the ability to restrict the usage of electricity by the member.