

Smart Meters



Our electricity meters need an upgrade.

We rely on electricity more than ever.

Electricity is an essential service and delivering it from power stations to homes and businesses across Victoria involves some of the State's most important infrastructure.

The meter is a vital link. And while yours may look modern, it is based on technology that is 100 years old.

While the existing meters have served us well, we're using an out-dated mechanical device in a digital age.

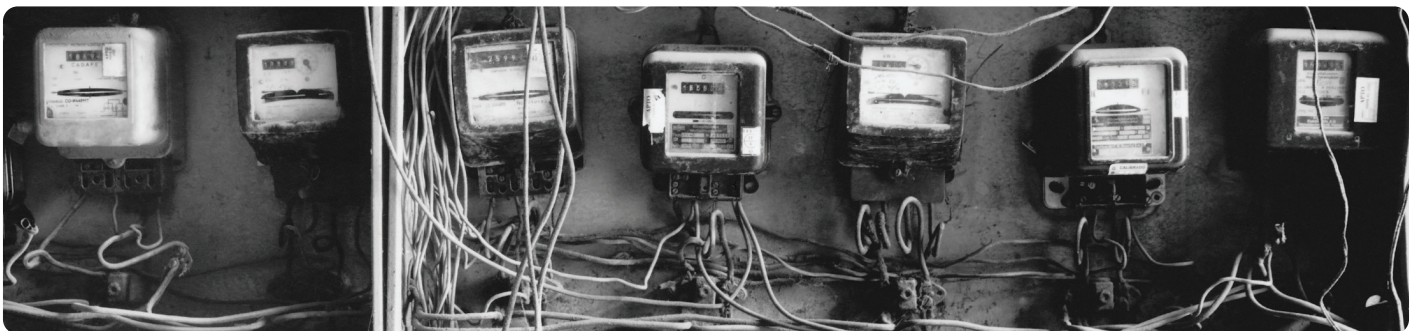
It's like still using telegrams instead of email or using a gramophone instead of an iPod.

Unless we take steps to upgrade our meter infrastructure now, it won't be able to cope with the demands of the future.

That's where Smart Meters come in.

By 2013 Victoria's electricity distribution businesses will have installed 2.5 million Smart Meters in homes and businesses across the state. They'll let you know when they're coming to perform this critical infrastructure upgrade and provide you with more detailed information about the installation and the new meter.

Victoria is leading the nation in providing this upgrade. Similar rollouts are planned in other Australian states and are already occurring in countries around the world including the United States and England.



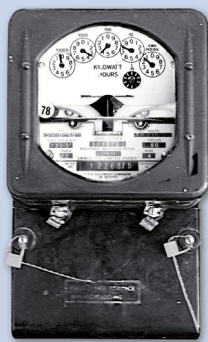
Smart Meters. Smart Move.



What will change with Smart Meters?

After the upgrade Victorians will benefit from a better and more efficient system which will keep the cost of electricity lower than it would have been without the upgrade. This is because Smart Meters can do things the old meters simply can't do, such as be read remotely.

That means no more meter readers or estimated bills and electricity connection fees when you move house will be significantly lower because power companies will be able to do this remotely. Importantly, your electricity distributor will automatically know if your power goes out and in many cases will be able to reconnect you more quickly.



OLD METER



SMART METER

Smart Meters can also help you manage the size of your electricity bill.

You will have access to accurate and more detailed information about your electricity usage from your electricity company, possibly through a web portal or an in-home display. This information will help you use power more efficiently in your home – providing opportunities to save electricity and money, as well as reducing our impact on the environment.

Figuring out how much energy different appliances use and where you might be using a lot of power will be easier. Which means it will be easier for you to reduce your electricity costs.

Over time you'll be able to choose a retail plan, like you can with your phone, which suits the times you use electricity. If you don't like your plan, or it doesn't meet your needs, it'll be faster than ever to switch to another plan or retail supplier.

Smart Meters also give us the flexibility to better manage renewable energy from things like solar panels on our homes.

What will it cost?

Electricity distribution businesses are charging customers an average of less than \$1.50 a week to pay for the upgrade, a price which is fixed and will be reviewed by the Australian Energy Regulator. It's expected this amount will reduce over time. It's a cost that could be offset by using energy more efficiently around your home.

There is a cost involved for such a significant and widespread infrastructure upgrade, but the benefits of a more efficient network and giving you more power to manage the size of your bills, far outweigh the cost.

To find out more go to www.dpi.vic.gov.au/smartmeters or call 136 186. For energy saving tips visit www.resourcesmart.vic.gov.au.

Smart Meters. Smart move.

If you would like to receive this information/publication in an accessible format (such as large print or audio) please call the Customer Service Centre on 136 186, TTY 1800 122 969,

or email customer.service@dpi.vic.gov.au.

Published by the Department of Primary Industries, August 2010.

© The State of Victoria 2010.

This publication is copyright. No part may be reproduced by any process except in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968.

Authorised by the Department of Primary Industries, 1 Spring Street, Melbourne 3000.

ISBN 978-1-74217-712-0 (print)

ISBN 978-1-74217-713-7 (online)

Disclaimer This publication may be of assistance to you but the State of Victoria and its employees do not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your particular purposes and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information in this publication.

For more information about DPI go to www.dpi.vic.gov.au or phone the Customer Service Centre on 136 186.

Smart Meters. Smart Move.

