



## **AMR/AMI Opt-Out Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is AMR/AMI?**

AMR (Automated Metering Reading) is a method of reading meters using radio frequency (RF) as a means of communications between the meters and a mobile or handheld reading device.

AMI (Advanced Metering Infrastructure) is an integrated system of smart meters, various communications networks, and data management systems that enables two-way communication between utilities and customers.

### **Who can opt out of the AMR/AMI program? How do I opt-out?**

The Opt-Out program applies to customers with a Residential or Small General Service rate. Certain eligibility criteria must also be met. In some cases, a customer's Opt-Out request may be declined or discontinued due to impact to other customers or Rochester Public Utilities operations. Opt-Out acceptance may also be declined if customer's account is not current and in good standing.

All customers requesting to opt out of AMR/AMI are required to complete an Opt-Out service agreement form. Upon receipt of a completed form, we will perform a review to determine if the customer meets the eligibility criteria. If a customer has both water and electric services the customer can elect to Opt-Out these meters individually.

### **Are there costs associated with electing to opt out of the AMR/AMI program?**

A one-time, initial setup fee of \$200 per electric meter and \$80 per water meter to cover the cost of changing and reconfiguring the electric and water meters.

In addition to the standard monthly charges for utility services a meter reading charge of \$55 is assessed each month to cover the cost of manual meter reads. The Opt-Out initial charge and the meter read fees are added to your utilities billing statement. If you would like to opt out for multiple services on your account, the initial setup charge and the meter read fee will apply to each additional service. Customer may incur additional expenses if access mitigation is encountered.

### **Why do I have to pay to opt out of the AMR/AMI program?**

Our standard for metering is now AMR/AMI equipment, which has been reviewed and approved by the Rochester Public Utilities Board. We determined that the costs for non-standard service should be paid by those customers who choose the non-standard service. The opt out charges cover the costs of removing and reconfiguring the reading equipment and a monthly site visit to manually collect meter reads from the non-automated utility meters. Customer self-read and reporting is not available.



**Once I opt out, what will change?**

We will visit the premise and exchange the electric meter for a solid state electric meter that has the radio frequency (RF) communication transmitter disabled. The water module will be replaced with a non-automated non-RF type of meter. By rendering the automated meter components inoperable, our personnel must visit the premise once each month to read the meter(s) thus requiring physical access to the meter.

**Are other utility companies offering this option?**

Yes. Many utilities across the country have this option. Our Opt-Out option follows the best practices that have been developed by other utilities.

**Will rates be affected by this program?**

The Opt-Out option does not affect the retail usage rates.

**Why do the electric, natural gas and water meters look the same as they did before the automated equipment was removed?**

The same standard meter types are used to measure consumption, the only difference is the RF transmitting module in each meter has either been removed or disabled.

**Once a customer opts out, will there still be RF frequency in/around their home?**

Yes. In today's hi-tech world, RF is emitted from wireless routers, cell phones, microwaves, baby monitors, TVs, etc. Additionally, any RF being emitted from communication towers or other meters in the area are also in the environment at all times.

**Once a customer opts out, can they opt back into automated meter reading?**

If you opt out, you are responsible for the associated fees incurred. If you opt out of the AMR/AMI program and then change your mind, the fees are not refundable.

Any customer that opts out, but subsequently elects to opt back in, will not incur any charges or fees to have the AMR/AMI equipment placed back in service. Customers may opt back into the AMR/AMI program by calling 507-280-1500.