



SMART METER BASICS

Information for Victorian customers

This fact sheet offers general information about Smart Meters, the Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI) rollout and how Smart Meters may affect Victorian electricity customers.

How Smart Meters work

- Smart Meters record a property's electricity usage every 30 minutes. The reading is transmitted remotely to your electricity distributor, which sends your usage to your electricity retailer. These remote capabilities may not be fully functional until the rollout is complete or for customers in remote areas.
- Smart Meters with remote communications will be able to perform remote energy reconnections and disconnections.
- Smart Meters provide detailed, real-time information about power outages and faults to the distributor.
- In-home displays can help households control their usage.

How do you read a Smart Meter?

Information about how to read a Smart Meter should be provided around the time of the installation. Smart Meters record different information in categories otherwise known as 'registers' (such as date, time and usage). Most Smart Meters will have a sticker on them to explain what each register measures, but you can contact your electricity distributor or visit its website for more information.

Some of the important registers to be aware of are:
date

- time and date
- total usage
- total off-peak usage (if applicable)
- solar power exported to the grid (if applicable).

You can read these registers on the digital display panel (1). The Smart Meter will scroll through the registers automatically, but you can press a scroll button (2) to obtain the register you want to read more quickly.



What is a Smart Meter?

A Smart Meter, also called an advanced meter, is a digital electricity meter that records a property's electricity usage in 30-minute intervals.

Why am I getting a Smart Meter?

The Victorian State Government legislated in 2009 that electricity distributors need to replace analogue meters with digital Smart Meters at every residential and small business property in Victoria. Amendments to the [Electricity Industry Act 2000 \(Vic\)](#) allowed for Orders in Council to be made to mandate the Smart Meter rollout. Customers need to allow safe and unhindered access for the meter exchange to occur.

End of Smart Meter rollout arrangements

The Victorian Government made a regulation about the end of the Smart Meter rollout.

- **Manual Meter Fee (MMF):** is the fee that from 1 April 2015 may be charged to some customers who do not allow a Smart Meter to be installed.



How do you check your bill?

If your bill does not have cumulative readings on it, you can take a reading of the total electricity usage on the day that the meter is scheduled to be read (the date/s shown on your bill). From that, subtract the usage figure from the previous scheduled meter read to work out your current usage. This figure should approximately correspond with the usage figure on your bill.

Need more information about Smart Meters?

For more details about Smart Meters, including information about safety, costs, benefits, and online portals, see the Victorian Government's website at smartmeters.vic.gov.au, or contact your electricity distributor or retailer.

Detailed information including eligibility criteria and exemptions can be found at: <http://ow.ly/ZSfyw>

What EWOV can and can't investigate

Some of the common Smart Meter issues that EWOV can investigate are:

- ✓ billing issues following the installation of a Smart Meter
- ✓ customer service issues during the Smart Meter installation process
- ✓ problems with the meter exchange, such as damage to property/land
- ✓ the applicability of a Smart Meter rebate or Manual Meter Fee.

EWOV can't:

- ✗ investigate the decision to install Smart Meters, because it is a government decision
- ✗ compel a distributor to install a manually-read electricity meter, because a government decision does not allow this
- ✗ investigate the Smart Meter charge, although EWOV can provide information and investigate whether the charge was applied correctly
- ✗ prevent a distributor applying a Manual Meter Fee, although we can investigate if it has been charged according to the Victorian Government's Order In Council.

For more on what EWOV can and can't investigate check out: [Fact Sheet 26: EWOV's role with Smart Meters](#)



Checklist

Don't know where to start? This checklist may help.

The Smart Meter:

- Have a look at the meter registers and familiarise yourself with the information on the display.
- Read the distributor's information about the meter.
- Speak with your distributor if you have any concerns about the installation of the Smart Meter.

Your bill:

- Make sure you compare your bills to the usage recorded on your meter and to bills from the same period last year.
- If you received notice of a meter exchange at your property, write down the meter reading or take a photo of the old meter display. This will help you to work out your usage based on the old and the new meter.
- Speak with your retailer if you have any billing concerns.

Talking to your company:

- Talk to your retailer about your billing concerns.
- Talk to your distributor if you are concerned about the meter.

Contacting EWOV:

- If you can't sort out the problem with your electricity retailer or distributor directly, contact EWOV.
- Have **all your details ready**, including bills and your own notes.