

# SMART ELECTRICITY NETWORKS

## The future of network management

### What are they?

Smart meters replace existing power meters and allow the construction of a smart network to provide “real-time” monitoring of the electricity network.

### What are the costs involved?

Your new meter and its installation are completely FREE. Smart meters are part of a \$24.5 million investment by The Power Company Limited (TPCL) and Electricity Invercargill Limited (EIL) to ensure their networks in Southland and West Otago are future-proofed.



### Why is PowerNet doing this?

Smart meters will allow a better service response and management of the electricity networks by PowerNet.

### Will I be able to see how much power I use?

We are working with electricity retailers so that after the smart meters have been installed customers may have the option to monitor their own power use.

## INSTALLING NOW

Electricity retailers will be contacting their customers to arrange FREE installation of the new technology at your home, farm or business.

To find out more please visit [www.powernet.co.nz/smartmeters](http://www.powernet.co.nz/smartmeters)

# SMART ELECTRICITY NETWORKS

## Questions and Answers

### **Are they really smart meters?**

Your new meter is an advanced meter and through a secure communication system it will be able to be read remotely and provide power consumption data to your retailer. No meter reader will come to your premises. The new meter becomes a smart meter and can also be used to detect any supply quality and connection issues with the power network in your area.

### **Are they safe?**

The principal advisor to the Ministry of Health, the Crown Research Institute, states they anticipate no adverse health effects from smart meters. Typically the exposures to you from a smart meter are only a few per cent of the public limit recommended in New Zealand and prescribed by the international standards. Exposures are low for three main reasons:

- the low power of the smart meter's transmitter.
- there is a rapid decrease in signal strength with increasing distance from the smart meter.
- they transmit periodically and for short periods. Typically, a smart meter will only be transmitting in total for a few minutes per day.

### **What will happen to the data from my meter?**

The power consumption data from the meter is passed onto your retailer in order to prepare your electricity account. PowerNet, on behalf of TPCL and EIL take data privacy very seriously. The storage and use of your meter data will continue to comply with New Zealand's privacy legislation and guidelines.

### **Why are my meters being changed?**

Electricity meters need to be re-certified or replaced at regular intervals to ensure they remain accurate. Many meters in New Zealand are now due for review. It will take time to replace the meters in the Southland and West Otago areas and we expect the installation process to be completed in 2018.

### **How will I know when my meter is going to be changed?**

Your retailer will contact you, either by letter or email explaining the process before the meter installers arrival. If needed they will arrange a time for replacement to suit you.

### **Do I need to be there when it happens?**

No, you do not need to be there when your meter is changed unless the meter installer requires access to an internal meter board.

### **How long will the power be turned off for?**

A typical residential installation will take 45 minutes and the power may need to be turned off for about five minutes. This can vary from site to site. For customers where continuity of supply is important, arrangements will be made to meet those requirements.

### **What happens if the new meter will not fit where the current meter is or if there is a problem with my meter board?**

If the new meter will not fit on your current meter board or there is any issue with your old board, your meter may not be changed on the day and you will be contacted to discuss your options.

### **What will happen to my power account?**

Smart meters allow retailers to invoice their customers on the actual power consumption. Previously these charges were based on estimate consumption, so some adjustments in charges may occur after the new meter has been installed.

### **Where can I get more information?**

Visit [www.powernet.co.nz/smartmeters](http://www.powernet.co.nz/smartmeters) or contact PowerNet on 03 211 1899.