



SAWNEE EMC

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**ADVANCED METERING
INFRASTRUCTURE
(AMI)**

Revised March 2012





1. Q. What is AMI?

A. AMI stands for Advanced Metering Infrastructure. This refers to systems that measure, collect and analyze energy usage, and interact with advanced devices such as electric meters through various communication media either on-demand or on a pre-defined schedule. This proven technology enables many utilities, including Sawnee EMC (SEMC), to communicate with electric meters remotely and integrate new cost saving activities such as reading electric meters remotely, automatic outage detection and allowing customers to have access to detailed energy usage data and graphs.

2. Q. How does the AMI technology work?

A. As a customer uses electricity, an electronic module located inside the meter records the energy usage and periodically transmits the usage data and other information through a FCC licensed radio communication network comprised of towers, antennas and other equipment... back to our office in Cumming, GA to be integrated into our computer systems.

3. Q. Which accounts have an AMI meter?

A. As of March 2012, almost every one of Sawnee's 150,000 plus meters, both commercial and residential, have been switched out to an AMI meter.

4. Q. How will this system benefit me, the customer?

A. AMI should virtually eliminate estimated meter readings, provide tangible benefits and aid in outage notification which means quicker service restoration. You will also have the ability to view and utilize your detailed energy usage data and other valuable information. This should assist all customers in evaluating and managing their monthly, daily and even hourly electric energy usage.

5. Q. Will the AMI service interfere with my radio, telephone, computer, television, phones, wireless internet access, invisible fence or other equipment?

A. No. The transmitting device operates in compliance with FCC regulations in a licensed spectrum to avoid interference with other electronic devices. The AMI system generally only operates for short periods of time each day (e.g. typically once every 4 hours) at a low power frequency reserved for this purpose and should not interfere with other equipment. The meter's radio frequency (RF) signal is not operated continuously.

6. Q. Will I still see meter readers in my area occasionally?

A. Yes. The use of AMI technology will not completely eliminate the need for traditional meter readers. We feel that we may, on occasion, still send employees to inspect the meter and service other SEMC equipment.

7. Q. Is my personal account information secure?

A. Yes. Only meter readings and specific meter data are transmitted over a secure gateway to our office in Cumming, GA. The AMI system does not transmit personal information. Also, measures have been put into place to ensure that no personal identification information will be located at our AMI data portal.





8. Q. I have heard these meters put off electromagnetic fields (EMF) or radio frequencies (RF)... should I be concerned about that?

A. Industry Experts Say No. But we also performed our own test using a third-party engineering firm. The results showed the EMF levels to be extremely low. The readings were less than 0.06% of the maximum levels recommended by IEEE Standards C95.1 and C95.6. Even when tested at close proximity when the meters were transmitting data, the levels were still less than 12.84 % of that required by IEEE Standard 95.1. With respect to concerns of health risks associated with electromagnetic fields, we are aware of no federal or State of Georgia standards regarding exposure levels. There is no evidence to show that AMI meters are harmful to you.

9. Q. How does the EMF output compare to other electronics?

Measurement of Common Household Appliances		
Item	Approximate Distance	mW/m ²
Computer Monitor	1 foot	0.115
Computer	1 foot	0.303
Space Heater	1 foot	895
Cell Phone	1 foot	34.47
AMI Meter	3 feet	0.003

10. Q. Could the AMI meter be the reason that power bills have recently gone up?

A. No. Not unless your old meter was "slow" and was not registering 100% of your electricity usage. Sometimes mechanical meters do slow down over time; but that is not common. Generally, the two (2) factors that can affect your power bill is your kWh usage level increases or a change in the billing structure (price of power). The usage level registered by the meter is very seldom incorrect.

11. Q. Can you have a third-party test my AMI meter if I believe that it is not accurate?

A. Yes. The meter can be tested and the results will be provided to you and SEMC; this will be done free of charge.

12. Q. Can I "opt-out" of Sawnee's AMI meter program and if so, what can I expect?

A. Yes. If you so desire, your existing AMI meter can be switched out to a "non AMI" meter. This meter exchange will be performed free of charge. However, going forward, there will be a \$15 manual meter reading fee assessed on your bill each month to recover the cost of this service.

