

Smart Meters FAQs

Why is my electricity meter being replaced?

If you live in Denmark or Walpole, your meter is being replaced with a smart meter as the latest initiative to be rolled out as part of the Green Town Project in Denmark and Walpole. You are one of 2000 residents who will trial the new smart meters.

If you live in the East Metropolitan area, your meter is being replaced with a smart meter as part of the Perth Solar City project. Perth Solar City is part of the Australian Government's Solar Cities program. This initiative is designed to help households better manage their energy use, make cleaner, greener choices and save money.

You are one of 8700 residents who will trial the new smart meters for the duration of the Perth Solar City project (until 2013), at that time Western Power will evaluate the trial and make decisions on the roll out of these meters in the rest of the network.

All smart meter recipients - The new smart meter will come at no extra cost to you and your family (a smart meter will also have no impact on your electricity bill).

The meter will provide two-way communication between your electricity meter and Western Power enabling a number of improved services, including automated reading of your meter.

Future benefits include the ability to install an in-home display (IHD) as part of time of use (TOU) tariffs to help you better manage your electricity consumption.

When these offerings become available, more information will be provided to you so you can decide if you would like to participate (i.e. TOU and IHD).

What is a smart meter?

A smart meter is a more sophisticated electricity meter that records the electricity usage in the home in half hour intervals as well as the total consumption. It is capable of two-way communication and automatically sends this information daily to Western Power. Meter readers will no longer need to come to your home to read your meter.

A smart meter is the base on which sophisticated technology can be added (i.e. TOU tariffs. Air-conditioning trials, and IHD).

What are the benefits of smart meters?

Immediate benefits of your smart meter will include:

- Improved accuracy of meter readings
- Early detection of power quality issues
- Improved monitoring of power outages to assist maintenance crews in reducing restoration times

(N.B These services will only be fully functional when the communications network supporting the smart meters is fully operational – approximately end July)

- Improved security and safety at your premises because meter readers will not need to enter your premises.

Future benefits including the ability to install an in-home display IHD (in conjunction with TOU tariffs) to help you better manage your electricity consumption.



Provides the ability to take part (voluntarily) in further energy saving trials (for example, an air-conditioning trial to reduce peak electricity consumption).

Will my smart meter support PVs and Solar Panels?

Yes. In fact if you install a PV system as part of the Perth Solar City or Green Town project, your Smart Meter will be able to provide you with even more information than is currently possible with other meters. You will be able to see not only how much power you are drawing from the grid, but how much power is being generated from your PV system, and how much power is being put back into the grid.

Later down the track (when TOU tariffs are available) if you choose to participate in a TOU tariff program (to be run by Synergy) you will be able to see how much money you are saving or making at different times of the day.

How much is this going to cost me?

There will be no cost to you for the meter and its installation as this is part of a trial of smart meters.

My new meter doesn't line up with my meter box viewing window

Because you now have a smart meter, Western Power will not need access to your meter box to read your meter as this will be done automatically.

If your meter needs to be accessed for other purposes, this will be done in the same manner as previously.

Why was I chosen to have a smart meter?

If you live in Denmark or Walpole - Smart meters are the latest initiative to be rolled out as part of the Green Town Project in Denmark and Walpole. The Green Town Project is a series of environmentally friendly energy initiatives developed by Western Power and the Denmark/Walpole communities to reduce peak electricity consumption during winter between 5:30pm and 7:30pm.

If you live in the East Metropolitan area - Western Power sought responses from various local authorities that might be interested in becoming part of the Perth Solar City initiative. Your local authority or shire council responded and as a result a number of properties within a concentrated area were chosen.

Can I choose not to have a smart meter or be part of the trial?

No. You can't choose not to have a smart meter because the technology involved requires Western Power to have all homes within a particular area using smart meters so that the communications will work.

If you choose not to take up any of the other Perth Solar City or Green Town initiatives, your smart meter will behave the same as your existing meter.

How can I find out information about my smart meter?

Please visit the Western Power website: www.westernpower.com.au/yourmeter or alternatively we can send you out a fact sheet with further information.

Will the smart meter tell me how much my power is costing?



The smart meter will tell you how much power you have used, but for the cost you will need to contact your retailer.

There will be an opportunity later on in the year to participate in TOU tariffs where more pricing information will be available via your smart meter and a corresponding IHD.

Can I get my smart meter installed in a different location to the current meter?

When your smart meter is installed, it will be installed in the same position as your current meter.

If you would like to have your smart meter moved to a different location following installation, you will need to contact a Registered Electrical Contractor who can advise of the costs involved in relocating your meter.

How will I know if my meter's been replaced with a smart meter?

Before the smart meter installation occurs, a qualified meter installer appointed by Western Power will knock on your door to inform you that the installation is about to take place. There is no need for you to be present if your meter can be easily accessed.

After installation, the meter installer will leave some information at your premises about the meter and what to do if you require further information.

Will my electricity supply be interrupted during the meter installation?

Yes. A short power interruption will be needed. This will be between 30 and 60 minutes. You will need to reset any electrical devices that incorporate a digital clock.

Do I need to be at home when the meter is installed?

No, providing the meter installer can gain access to your premises.

If you need to be present, please contact the meter installer's call centre to arrange for a suitable time for your meter to be exchanged.

My existing meter had dials, how do I read my smart meter?

Please visit the Western Power website: www.westernpower.com.au/yourmeter or alternatively we can send you out a fact sheet with further information.

How will this smart meter affect me?

There will be no impact to your home as a result of installing a new smart meter. You can, if you choose, take part in further trials (including TOU tariffs, Air-conditioning trial, IHD etc.) when they become available.

You would not be able to participate in these projects if you do not have a smart meter.