

5+ Years of Shenanigans with Duke Energy and their AMI "Smart" Meters

On January 24, 2017, WCPO Cincinnati reporter, John Matarese produced a story about Ohio and Kentucky customers who had contacted him about astronomical utility bills. ***"Why Your Duke Bill's So High Despite Warm Month"*** <http://www.wcpo.com/money/consumer/dont-waste-your-money/why-your-duke-bills-so-high-despite-warm-month>

He posted a link for this story on his Facebook page. ***There were over 500 comments posted and over 700 shares.*** Many customers stated that Duke employees were rude to them when they questioned the accuracy of their bills. They were accused of leaving their Christmas lights on all the time. Many of these customers didn't display Christmas lights. <https://www.facebook.com/JohnMatareseMoney>

In April similar complaints were reported in Terre Haute, IN and for the same time period. In this case, however, Duke Energy took full responsibility and then some: http://www.tribstar.com/news/local_news/early-was-perfect-storm-for-duke-energy/article_8c4a0f85-e04b-5ebc-b81f-aaeceb0f702e.html

"For the first time in company history, the electric utility mobilized a customer response team, armed with computers that could instantly research customer billing and address customer complaints. The company housed employees a week at time in Terre Haute for two straight weeks, to address customer concerns."

Wha????!!!

Another interesting quote from this article: ***"Everett Greene Jr., Duke Energy's director of meter reading, said the AMI meters are produced by Itron in South Carolina, which have been used in several states without accuracy issues."***

And yet – not only have there been complaints reported in Ohio and Kentucky. There have also been complaints reported in North Carolina and Florida:

USNews also reported about the recent situation in Indiana. They included that ***"Hundreds of Charlotte, North Carolina-based Duke's customers complained about unusually high home heating bills for December and January."*** <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/indiana/articles/2017-04-20/duke-energy-reports-errors-weather-led-to-bill-complaints>

In 2014, there were also customer complaints reported in Tampa and Orlando about unusual spikes in bills:

Tampa, November 2014: "One-month spike in electric bill angers Duke Energy customer"<http://www.tampabay.com/news/business/energy/one-month-spike-in-electric-bill-angers-duke-energy-customer/2206226>

Orlando, August 2014: "Did your Duke Energy bill go up recently? Then read this story."
<http://www.orlandoweekly.com/Blogs/archives/2014/08/25/did-your-duke-energy-bill-go-up-recently-then-read-this-story>

Of course, measurement errors aren't isolated to Duke Energy AMI "smart" meters. These have been reported all over the country and throughout the world for many years.

This eventually led to a recent Dutch study which revealed that the 9 of the most commonly installed “smart” meters had measurement errors between 30% and 582%.
<https://www.utwente.nl/en/news/!/2017/3/313543/electronic-energy-meters-false-readings-almost-six-times-higher-than-actual-energy-consumption>

Even if you aren’t experiencing unusually high bills, there have been other complaints reported in all 6 states where Duke has installed these AMI “smart” meters. John Matarese of WCPO has produced 3 other stories about concerns and issues in Southwest Ohio, Northern Kentucky, and Southeast Indiana.

2012: Health Concerns "Don't Want Smart Meter - Power Shut Off"
<http://www.wcpo.com/money/consumer/dont-waste-your-money/dont-want-smart-meter-power-shut-off>

2013: Appliances Malfunctioning and Breaking: "Smart Meter Makes Touch Lamp Go Crazy":
<http://www.wcpo.com/money/consumer/dont-waste-your-money/smart-meter-makes-touch-lamps-go-crazy>

2016: The Right to “Opt Out” and “Smart” Meter Fires: "Duke Energy to allow Smart Meter Opting Out": <http://www.wcpo.com/money/consumer/dont-waste-your-money/duke-energy-to-allow-smart-meter-opting-out>

Pew Trusts also released an article in February 2016 which included an interview with an Ohio Duke Energy customer who claimed that these AMI meters caused serious health problems for him. “Amid Health, Privacy Fears, States Are Letting People Reject 'Smart Meters'”
<http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2016/02/05/amid-health-privacy-fears-states-are-letting-people-reject-smart-meters?>

The Ohio Duke Energy "opt out" program went into effect on September 2016.
<http://dis.puc.state.oh.us/CaseRecord.aspx?Caseno=14-1160&link=PDC> There are fees associated with this that are still being fought. Some customers have reported they are still having difficulty getting Duke to comply with the tariff and replace their meters even though they are willing to pay the fees.

Ohio is the only state that has a Duke Energy “opt-out” even though customers in the other 5 states have tried and/or are in the process of trying to get one. Here are some highlights:

Activists in North Carolina requested public records in regard to their **PSC Case File Docket No. E-100, SUB 141 with Duke Energy and some very unsavory things were uncovered:**
<http://www.raleighes.info/Support/Regulatory Update Actions files/DHHSpublicrecordsletter.pdf>

Also from North Carolina:

<http://www.newsobserver.com/news/business/article93551722.html>

<http://smartmeterharm.org/2016/08/04/north-carolina-experts-support-public-objection-to-duke-energy-smart-meters/n-carolina-duke-sm-carpenter-et-al-letter-8-2-16/>

Last year, in Kentucky, all "smart" meter complaints from every utility company were lumped into **Case File 2012-000428. It was decided that utility companies could decide whether or not to offer an "opt-out" program. And so far, there has been no Kentucky utility offering an "opt out".**

Also from Kentucky:

http://psc.ky.gov/agencies/psc/press/042016/0413_r01.pdf,

<http://wkms.org/post/ky-utility-companies-can-choose-between-advanced-or-smart-meters-monitor-usage#stream/0>,

<http://www.nkytribune.com/2016/04/kentucky-public-service-commission-allows-utilities-flexibility-in-how-to-deploy-smart-grid-technology/>

In communities where people have fought opt-out fees, the fees have been substantially reduced and/or eliminated. <http://www.stopsmartmetersbc.com/metersgrid/smart-meter-opt-out-options-and-fees/>

If all of this isn't enough to convince you that none of these "smart" meters work right, perhaps this free 30 minute video will. <https://takebackyourpower.net/smart-meter-fires-2016-video/>

Duke Energy has installed wireless "smart" meters in Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Florida, North Carolina, and South Carolina. ***If you are an unhappy Duke customer, you are definitely not alone.***

For more information visit <http://www.raleighes.info/>