How do I read my new smart meter?

Here is an example of a new smart meter. The old clock dials have been replaced with an easy-to-read digital display. The meter has three modes: test, total kilowatt-hour (kWh) consumption and peak demand. The display changes modes every five seconds.

The usage mode shows you how many kWh you’ve consumed since the meter was installed. In this case, it’s a total of 2,749 kWh. This number can be used to calculate total monthly electricity consumption.

The large number on your meter measures and digitally displays your continuous energy usage in kWh (A) when “kWh” appears to the left of the number (B). This is how many total kWh you have consumed—not unlike a car’s odometer showing how many total miles you have driven. The “kWh” indicates the meter is actively reading kWh usage.

The dashes (C) replace the large rotating disk that was in a similar location on your old meter. They advance constantly from left to right and are visible as long as power is being used.

The 240 (D) indicates the service voltage the meter is reading. This example is a 240 volt service. Depending on your service, a different number might be visible, including 120.

Your smart meter also measures and displays your peak energy demand for the month. It is indicated by the large P and D characters (E). The peak demand represents the highest 15 minutes of energy use since your last 30 day billing period. This figure is reset to zero after your meter is read each month.

Idaho Power’s new smart meters empower customers to monitor and manage their energy usage. They provide you with access to detailed energy usage information that enables you to make changes for wise energy use, potentially resulting in lower bills.

This worksheet is designed to help you understand how your kWh electricity usage is determined and to show you how to read your new smart meter. We’ve also provided some basics about how the meter works and how to calculate your kWh usage.

Once you receive your new meter, it’s important to learn how it works so you can measure your energy usage and potentially save money!
How do I calculate my usage using my new smart meter?

To compute your monthly usage you will need two things:

• Your most recent bill
• The total consumption number from your smart meter

From there, calculating your energy usage is pretty easy. First, find the “Current” number under “Meter Readings” at the top of your bill (F). Subtract this number from the total kilowatt-hour consumption reading on your meter. The difference is your current kWh usage.

Use this number to compare your current usage to previous usage. You can do this by going to www.idahopower.com and signing up as an Account Manager. You’ll also get access to detailed energy usage information that enables you to make changes for wise energy use, potentially resulting in lower bills.

Watt: The basic unit used to measure the amount of energy required to power an electrical device.

Kilowatt (kW): One kilowatt equals 1,000 watts.

Kilowatt-hour (kWh): The basic unit of electric energy equal to one kilowatt of power supplied to or taken from an electric circuit steadily for one hour.

What’s improved with my new smart meter?

Benefits of smart meters include:

• They are digital, secure and easier to read.
• Energy usage data collected remotely eliminates mis-reads and estimated electricity bills.
• In the near future, meter readers no longer will need access to customers’ property every month. If you don’t see a meter reader visiting your property it doesn’t mean Idaho Power is estimating your electricity use—we’re reading it remotely through your new smart meter!
• Reduced company vehicles and fuel consumption result in environmental benefits and cost savings.
• Power outages may be restored faster with greater meter communication capabilities.

Maximize the features of your smart meter by signing up to be an Account Manager at www.idahopower.com.

Just click on “Manage My Account” in the center box. Sign up is quick, easy and will enable you to access detailed information about your energy usage.

Definitions

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