



Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel

Your Residential Utility Consumer Advocate

CONSUMERS' FACT SHEET

Utility questions, concerns or complaints?

CALL TOLL FREE:

1-877-PICKOCC

(1-877-742-5622)

or (614) 466-8574

Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel

10 West Broad Street
Suite 1800, Columbus, OH
43215-3485

EMAIL:

occ@occ.state.oh.us

WEBSITE:

www.pickocc.org

OHIO'S PROGRESS TO THE SMART GRID



Aging electric infrastructure across the nation and the aim to provide electricity at its actual costs has prompted several utilities to take steps to upgrade their systems so electricity can travel from power plants to customers more reliably and economically. Ohio's investor-owned utilities are no different and have started making improvements that will transition their electric systems into smart grids.

The smart grid is not a single upgrade, but a series of improvements that overhauls an electric utility's distribution and transmission systems with 21st century infrastructure, metering and communications technologies. For more information about the smart grid, see *An Introduction to Smart Grid*, a publication from the Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel.

Generally, utilities in Ohio have been upgrading their systems on the customer side with the installation of smart meters. Because these meters are able to record electricity in 15-minute intervals,

customers can voluntarily take advantage of dynamic and time-of-use pricing options, this allows customers to have more control over their energy use and save money on their monthly bills. For more information on dynamic and time-of-use pricing, see the OCC's fact sheet, *Smart Grid: Dynamic and time-of-use pricing*.

Technological upgrades also will be made to local and regional power lines and utility information systems to make the delivery of electricity more efficient and reliable. These upgrades also will allow better integration of renewable energy and traditional energy sources.



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The Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel (OCC), the residential utility consumer advocate, represents the interests of 4.5 million households in proceedings before state and federal regulators and in the courts.

The state agency also educates consumers about electric, natural gas, telephone and water issues and resolves complaints from individuals.

To receive utility information, brochures, schedule a presentation or file a utility complaint, residential consumers may call 1-877-PICKOCC (1-877-742-5622) toll free in Ohio or visit the OCC website at www.pickocc.org.



The Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel is an equal opportunity employer and provider of services.

Utility Progress

Each electric utility in Ohio has progressed with smart grid upgrades at different rates. The following is the most up-to-date smart grid information available:

American Electric Power

Since 2009, AEP has installed 134,000 smart meters. Of these, 110,000 meters are part of a \$150 million smart grid demonstration project, of which half is funded by the federal government. The project focuses on a wide demographic in northeast Central Ohio. Two new pricing options are available and another dynamic pricing rate has been proposed. These programs give participating customers the opportunity to save money.

Duke Energy Ohio

Since 2008, Duke has installed 139,000 smart meters in its Ohio territory. Duke plans to install smart meters in its entire service territory, including 700,000 smart meters in Ohio. Duke was awarded a \$200 million federal grant for its smart grid projects in Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana. Currently, Duke offers its smart-metering customers the choice of two time-of-use rates and two dynamic pricing options.

FirstEnergy

FirstEnergy has received approval to introduce a smart grid pilot program in 2011 for 5,000 customers in its Cleveland Electric Illuminating territory. Once it identifies the customers to participate in



the program it will install smart meters. FirstEnergy anticipates developing dynamic price offerings for customers in the pilot program in 2012. In the future, FirstEnergy may install an additional 39,000 smart meters. The utility was a recipient of a \$57 million federal grant to implement smart grid technology.

Dayton Power & Light

The Dayton-based electricity provider was the only investor-owned company in Ohio that did not receive a federal grant. It submitted a smart grid plan to the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio but later voluntarily withdrew it after costs became too high.