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Smart Meter Consumers Anger Grows Over Higher Utility Bills

5. Smart Meter Consumers Anger Grows Over Higher Utility Bills And Problems with Accuracy and Unacceptable Customer Response Standards & Practices

Why are consumers reporting dramatically higher utility bills after smart meters are installed?

Higher than normal utility bills and overbilling due “inaccurate” smart meters have lead to lawsuits, including two class-action lawsuits in Bakersfield, CA, and Texas.

As you read the news reports and complaints below, you'll be alarmed to learn that even though consumers are shifting their energy use, reducing energy consumption and making their homes more energy efficient, their utility bills have suddenly doubled or tripled. You'll be saddened to hear the tragic stories of families who can't meet these new higher bills and must choose between either feeding their kids or paying the utility bills, or are resorting to ice-age living, turning off the heat and resorting to candles. You'll also be angry to learn how the current billing, customer service and field accuracy testing standards and practices are inadequate and failing consumers. They are grossly unacceptable, and affecting consumers' quality of life. Our families and seniors are already stressed and burdened trying to survive and manage in today's hard-pressed economic times.



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- [August 31, 2010: City Council Meeting - Interim Regulations Approved](#)
- [July 26, 2010: Planning Board Meeting - Interim Regulations Approved](#)
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- [Dec. 8, 2009 Study Session & City Hall Meetings](#)
- [Nov. 16 Planning Board and Nov. 17 City Hall Meetings](#)
- [November 12, 2009 Public Meeting](#)

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This recent New York Times articles includes a consumer story about an average fixed-income family that has reported extremely higher bills after the wireless smart meter was installed, and their complaint story echoes those being reported by consumers around the world reporting billing and accuracy problems from their smart meters.

Sgt. John Robertson 2nd, an Army mechanic at nearby Fort Hood, is fuming about the so-called smart electric meter his local utility has installed on the side of his tidy, 1,800-square-foot home. Like thousands of consumers with the new meters around the country, Sergeant Robertson suspects the device is not as smart as advertised.

In his case, he says it is inaccurately measuring his family's power use and driving up his bills — some months by as much as 50 percent, to as high as \$320 — since it was installed in December. This, he said, is despite his efforts to cut back on energy use.

“I’ve done two tours in Iraq, and when I come home I’m getting ripped off by my electric meter,” said Sergeant Robertson, who with his wife, Kim, is raising four children on a tight budget.

...In Maryland earlier this year, state regulators, aware of the discontent around the country, temporarily blocked a utility’s smart-meter proposal, citing inadequate planning and the potential cost to consumers.

In California, Michael Kelly, a lawyer handling a class-action suit against the state’s dominant utility, Pacific Gas and Electric, over billing disputes, said the problems probably had less to do with faulty devices and more to do with a hasty rollout. Old billing systems were merged with the new smart-meter technology, he said, too frequently resulting in erroneous charges.

“We’re just saying we want an evaluation done and that we want anyone who was overcharged to get

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their money back,” Mr. Kelly said.

...On Wednesday, with Mr. Berent as their lawyer, the Robertsons filed a civil court petition seeking information on faulty devices in their service area. The filing is a precursor to a suit against the device’s manufacturer, Landis+Gyr.

A Landis+Gyr spokesman said the company would not comment on a matter related to litigation.

Chris Schein, a spokesman for Oncor, the company that installed the Robertsons’ smart meter, said a prolonged and unusual cold snap last winter, when the new meters were being introduced, had caused residents to use more power than normal. That, Mr. Schein said, contributed to what some consumers might have perceived as problems with the new meters.

...The Robertsons are not satisfied by the official explanations.

They noted that their old meter measured 829 kilowatt-hours of electricity use in for their August-September billing cycle last year. For the comparable period this year, they say, the smart meter counted a more than threefold increase, to 2,772 kilowatt-hours — despite the Robertson’s efforts to reduce their energy use by cutting back on air-conditioning and switching to energy-efficient fluorescent light bulbs.

“If they would tell me something that made sense, I’d be fine with it,” Mrs. Robertson said. “But I haven’t heard anything from anyone that makes any sense.”

Source: New York Times: “‘Smart’ Meters Draw Complaints of Inaccuracy,” November 12, 2010:
<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/13/business/13meter.html>

California: Early Consumer

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Complaints, Lawsuit, and Accuracy Test



In California, wireless smart meters have spurred consumer complaints reporting excessively higher bills:

Kelly Shaughnessy had never paid more than \$230 for electricity at her Bakersfield home last year. Then she got a SmartMeter.

Designed to track electricity and gas use with precision, SmartMeters relay their data to the utility via wireless, without the need of a meter reader.

After Pacific Gas and Electric Co. installed one of the devices at her house this past spring, Shaughnessy's monthly bills started to climb. In August, her bill hit \$458. Throttling back the air conditioning didn't help.

"I kept the AC at 85 degrees, to the point I had sweat running down my nose while I was inside my house," said Shaughnessy, 44, who teaches

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junior high school. "Bottom line is, my bills went through the roof."

Source: San Francisco Chronicle: "Customers say new PG&E meters not always smart," October 18, 2009: <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2009/10/18/BUJ1A658S.DTL&feed=rss.new>

In California, reporters and columnists began reporting consumers complaints about billing and accuracy problems as early as 2008, despite their efforts to reduce energy usage and make their house more energy efficient.

posted by thetruthhurts on Mar 26, 2008 at 03:27 PM

My house has had 2 bills over \$600 in the roughly 8 months since they installed the new meter, we are extremely happy if our bill is in the neighborhood of \$200-\$300. We live in a 1400 sf. house in the Oleander area. It has been completely redone with new AC, new windows, new insulation, new roof, and new gas powered heater. This was all done before the new meter, and we don't have a bunch of electronics running up the bill. We also don't use the air conditioner or heater very much, 69 in the winter and 83 in the summer. The new meters are a complete scam, how can my house have bills as high as we do when my boss has a house off Stockdale Hwy. that is over 3500 sf. and his bill is constantly half of ours...it doesn't make any sense. We have been in contact with PG&E (a complete joke), they sent out a technician out to see if our new meter was not reading properly. The technician didn't ever know what he was doing, he had to restart his test at least 5 times and at the end said it seems to be working fine. After he said that he also informed us that he was new to these meters and there is nothing that can be done. I am completely frustrated...what is the consumer to do? Not

pay your bill and live without gas and electricity?

posted by ImJustSayin on Mar 26, 2008 at 03:59 PM

I live in the Stockdale Area in a 2400 sf home. I also have an office that runs during the day behind my home. We use heat when we need heat, and air when we need air. We also have a pool. It is not unusual for me to do laundry during the day. I have always had a PG&E bill that runs about \$400.00 per month. During the summer, the hottest time of the year my bill has gotten up to \$800.00. In walks the smart meter. My bill has been consistantly between \$800.00 and \$900.00 every month. What is going to happen this summer?

I'm just sayin.....we've all been taken.....I'm just sayin

posted by mgian1218 on Aug 31, 2009 at 07:49 AM

Just another smart meter horror story to add to the list: In the 1st month after installation of PG&E's new Smart Meter, my bill soared to 10 times it's normal amount. I disputed, but they are holding firm - and before the matter has even been resolved, I received the following month bill - which takes my bill to 14 times it's normal amount. I had to argue for 2 weeks before I could even get someone to schedule an appointment to look at my meter. Not that I trust PG&E to do the inspection, but what choice do I have at the moment. I am going to check in to the options listed in "No Holds Barred". Great information. Thanks!

posted by RoundMan on Sep 1, 2009 at 01:22 PM

This NEW METER method shows them that you're using power at what they call peak periods between 2pm and 7pm and they raise (double and triple?) the price for these prime times, all under the excuse of "conservation" and the need to teach you to use your

appliances at different hours (which won't help you at all if you work). Those hours are the busiest (cooking dinner and relaxing after work) and the hottest part of the day. Here in Bakersfield those temperatures are around 104 deg. to 117 deg. during the summer months. How can families shut down during those times and wait till 7pm to cook and eat and do chores? PG&E claims to have had brownouts and blackouts because we use so much power during these "peak" times so it's necessary to force you to pay more to learn new behavior.. Really? I would ask why PG&E doesn't upgrade their systems to accommodate the rising population instead of feeding us their tripe about "environmental issues"? ...This is just a way to make more money by simply changing me from a flat rate to a METERED RATE SYSTEM. This is just wrong and will hurt many people.

posted by KillAWatt on Mar 4, 2010 at 12:29 AM

I too have felt the sting of the PG&E Smart Meter (which SHOULD be spelled with a dollar sign). We actually moved out of our house before last summer to upgrade EVERYTHING to make it more energy efficient. We installed double paned windows, insulation, energy efficient kitchen appliances, brand new furnace with programmable thermostat set at 64, and even had our ducts cleaned. Things were going great with our usual small increase in bill and usage as it got a little colder.

When our bill DOUBLED from under \$200 to over \$400 between Nov and Dec, I was shocked! I'd never seen bills that high even back when we had NO insulation etc... I attributed it to more usage during the holidays and figured it would go back to normal in Jan when we went back to work and the house would be sitting quiet all day as usual. But in Jan, our bill continued to escalate even higher - even though we weren't

home except in the evenings! I thought "Maybe someone's stealing energy from our wires!" so I walked around to check the meter and discovered our digital little friend had been installed. I contacted PG&E and they said that it had been installed in the last week of Nov (exactly marking the starting point of our drastic increase in alleged usage!) They claim there's nothing wrong with the Smart meter (OF COURSE NOT! There'd only be something wrong with it if it were UNDER charging people).

So I thought it was higher because of something related to peak hours. I struggled to find what the peak hours were from the PG&E website (if they made that info too easy to find, people might actually save money!).

So I contacted PG&E again only to learn that we were not being charged peak hours, but still being charged a flat rate, but that our increase in energy usage had put us into a higher Tier level where we're getting charged a higher \$ rate per kWh and Therm.

I complained to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) only to learn from PG&E that the CPUC was the ones who mandated that PG&E install these Smart Meters to upgrade the Grid. Apparently, a 3rd party is currently investigating the validity of the meters, which I'm sure will be found to be accurate. However, I don't believe that a 3rd party is investigating the billing practices of PG&E. You'd think some of these California politicians who themselves have to pay electric bills at their homes would notice and complain! Why don't they wake up and smell the gas!

Meanwhile, PG&E is making huge profits while its customers are confused and not sure why their bills are skyrocketing. Everyone I talk to with the new meters says their bills went up, but seem too lazy to do anything about it. Come summer with the air conditioners, I think everyone will really take

notice.

I'm very concerned about our environment and want to do my part to conserve energy and save on my bill as well, but no matter what I do to keep usage down, it doesn't seem to be reflected in my bill. It's like I'm pressing the brakes and the car is only speeding up faster! It doesn't make sense. Are we to just accept when they say "There's nothing wrong with the Smart meter"? Maybe we should all call and tell them we think something's wrong because we think we used MORE energy than the meter says and we're getting undercharged. I bet they'd be right out to check out the meter.

SOURCE: for the above customer complaints, read "PG&E smart meter follow up" from the "No Holds Barred" blog by columnist Lois Henry, on-line at: <http://people.bakersfield.com/home/Blog/noholdsbarred/23789>

In Bakersfield, a class-action lawsuit was filed:

Pete Flores, of Bakersfield, claims in the suit filed last week in Kern County Superior Court that ever since PG&E installed a smart meter at his home, he's been charged for more electricity than he has used. Right now Flores – who says his average bill as jumped from about \$200 a month to about \$500 to \$600 a month since he got a smart meter – is the only named plaintiff.

But his attorney, Michael Louis Kelly of the El Segundo, Calif.-based law firm Kirtland & Packard, is seeking class action status for the lawsuit to include every PG&E customer who has a smart meter and thinks they've been overcharged, saying the utility needs to prove that those two-way communicating meters aren't the cause

Source: Green Tech Media: "PG&E Sued Over Smart Meters, Slows Down Bakersfield Deployment," November 11, 2009: <http://www.greentechmedia.com/articles/read/pge>

[-sued-over-smart-meters-slows-down-bakersfield-deployment/](#)

Meanwhile, further south, SDG&E began swapping out 33,000 problem-causing smart meters that were installed in 2009 and 2008 with newer models:

Escondido meters failed and will be replaced in May

On May 21st, 2010 michael says:

For those SDG&E customers in Escondido, it is likely your smart meters will be replaced. SDG&E reported today that it has identified a potential issue for certain meters in its first generation meter deployment that were installed last year in Escondido. These meters contained an earlier version of software. Over the past week, during a remote, wireless upgrade of the meters, about 4,100 of them developed problems, with approximately 30 of those triggering a remote disconnect switch causing a power outage. In some cases, the meters simply stopped recording usage data altogether. SDG&E believes the problem was isolated to about 4,100 meters; however it will be replacing all 30,000 starting tomorrow with the first priority being the 4,100. It will complete replacement of the 4,100 in the next two days and then will be replacing the other meters in the upcoming weeks.

A similar version of problem meters also was installed in Tierrasanta during its 2008 pilot. It will also replace approximately 3,000 Tierrasanta meters ahead of schedule over the next few weeks.

SDG&E currently has approximately 900,000 smart meters installed in its territory (of 2.3 million total) both electric and gas. This planned smart meter replacement in Escondido and Tierrasanta affects only the electric meters.

Customers affected will only be billed for the

energy use recorded by the meter. So for those customers whose meters are replaced, their bills may be lower than they would have otherwise been. Customers with questions should call SDG&E at 800-411-7343.

Source: Utility Consumer's Action Network (UCAN) on-line forum,

http://www.ucan.org/forum/forums/energy/sdg_e_disputes/billing_di-24974

In this TV consumer news report, a group of college students were trying to figure out why their wireless smart meter was reporting such high energy usage and gave them such a high bill of \$400.

"When we were gone for the week, we turned off all the circuit breakers, and so we were expecting to see a pretty low baseline in energy usage for that week," Izumi Hinkson recalled.

They created a chart using information supplied by PG&E. It shows spikes in energy usage when no one was home even with the circuit breaker turned off.

The co-eds took their complaints to PG&E and their landlady. PG&E told them they were using more energy than they thought.

"When we would communicate with PG&E, they had no real reason to explain why it was so high," said Parisi-Amon.

So the students used a TED 5000 unit to compare actual usage against their wireless smart meter and found that the smart meter was wrong. PG&E, which at first denied the wireless smart meter was the source of the problem, finally sent out installers to check on the meter.

The comparison seemed to confirm their suspicions. A blue line on their chart represents the energy readings from the TED for the last six weeks. A red line represents the energy readings

covering the same time period, but measured by the SmartMeter. Those energy readings are nearly 2.5 times greater than those measured by the TED.

"It doesn't necessarily prove either of these methods is correct, but it does raise the question about whether or not the SmartMeter readings are accurate and valid," Hinkson said.

7 On Your Side contacted PG&E and it sent out three technicians to investigate. They blamed the problem on an installation error. It seems the students' meter got mixed up with their neighbors. PG&E says the students were paying their neighbors bill and vice versa.

PG&E issued a refund of \$1,600 to the students.

"PG&E has so far admitted that 23,000 SmartMeters have been installed incorrectly."

Watch and read the report, KGO-TV ABC, San Francisco, 7 On Your Side: "Experiment raises questions about SmartMeters," May 7, 2010, http://abclocal.go.com/kgo/story?section=news/7_on_your_side&id=7424533

A local CBS TV news report put that figure higher: PG&E, in May 2010, admitted errors in more than 50,000 meters.

The utility company says there were installation errors in about 23,000 units, another 11,000 had data storage problems, and 17,000 had communication issues. Many customers were either over or under billed.

Source: CBS 47.com, "PG&E Admits Problems with Smart Meters," May 11, 2010:

<http://www.cbs47.tv/news/local/story/PG-E-Admits-Problems-with-Smart-Meters/IA-XqsKuREWCBulgRzd5pw.csp?rss=153>

The Utility Consumers' Action Network (UCAN), a consumer group for utility ratepayers, has a forum for

members to file complaints about their smart meters and excessive billing. They have a long list of nightmare and horror stories, including bills that are three times higher than usual, terrible customer service and response, consumers who can't afford these higher bills, other cutting back on usage but not seeing lower bills, and a grandma saying she's not using the heater so her grandbabies are cold. Here are just a few from February 2010 through mid-September 2010, just before the California Public Utilities Commission issued the results from its "independent" report studying the accuracy of the meters, which concluded that they're accurate:

my bill tripled

On September 22nd, 2010 Anonymous (not verified) says:

we had a smart meter installed on 8/5, just recieved the bill for the billing cycle of 8/12 thru 9/10. my bill is over \$800!! triple than the month before! i called pg&e and they told me first that it was due to the weather. I informed the lady that the weather was much cooler this summer, and she went thru all the dates and temps with me and which dates we had spikes in energy. I than asked the lady to look at the weather for the same billing cycle last summer, and on average each day last summer was over 10 dagrees hotter!! I asked her how my bill could be this much higher than last years bill and she didn't really have an awnser. I asked about having someone come out and check the meter and check our usage, and she told me pg&e hasn't done that service in years. I would be happy to send in bills for help, where do i send them and how do i get help with this? there is no way we can afford 800! I want to join in any suit or fight against this outrage

PG&E Usage Increase

*On September 13th, 2010 dmc (not verified) says:
How is it possible that my PG&E electric usage went up 600% from last year for the*

month of August? Thanks to those of you who have written in. I plan to follow some of the same procedures you did. This situation is just wrong!

want to avoid smart meter installation

On August 27th, 2010 Anonymous (not verified) says:

I am worried about smart meter rate increases. How do I opt out of this meter installation.

reply

Opt out of Smart meters

On September 2nd, 2010 ucansue (UCAN consumer group staff member):

Yes, SDG&E is getting an increase for the smart meter installation, although it will turn into a rate credit in a few years as the savings from the installation materialize. SDG&E customers don't have a legal option to decline the smart meters. Customers don't own the meters and thus have no control over what kind of meter will be used. The only legal option you have is to disconnect from SDG&E and produce your own power.

My Bill is 3X higher since the smart meter was installed

On May 25th, 2010 Anonymous (not verified) says:

I'm so glad to find this page. I have called and complained about this issue several times and get NOWHERE with SDG&E. We had a smart meter installed and instantly our bill went from approx \$150.00 per month to \$400.00 per month. We were even cutting back on usage and still receiving astronomical bills. We have a small place and don't have A/C. It doesn't make sense! I asked SDG&E to come out and investigate and they refused. Instead they sent pamphlets on how to conserve energy. We wash in cold water, don't use A/C or heaters. There was a segment on KUSI

Turko Files last weekend but, they didn't come to any resolve.

Smart Meter

On May 27th, 2010 JQ (not verified) says:

My Smart meter was installed for just two weeks on my last bill and my billing tripled that month. They are telling me that the prior meter was just slow or my consumption is up. My consumption is down and I was even out of town for a week of that billing. If this rings true for next month my average bill will go from \$65 a month to \$350 a month for a 800 square foot apartment where we are gone all day and most of the time on the weekends. It just seems like these smart meters were put on place to gouge us on the billing. SDG&E keeps telling me these are the most accurate meters possible. No way is my average billing for 3 years going to triple and cost more than a car payment. We can't afford it!

reply

Re: Smart Meter

On June 1st, 2010 ucan josh says:

If you are an SDG&E customer, fill out our complaint form and sign up for our Meter Watch project. Data like yours will help us keep SDG&E accountable.

SDG&E outrageous bills

On March 21st, 2010 Anonymous (not verified) says:

I have lived in my home for over 25 years. I have a propane stove, heater and water heater. I have never EVER had a bill over \$250 and that is with a jacuzzi on during winter months! Since the new "smart meter" has been installed my bills have been almost \$600 a month! I cannot afford to keep doing this! I do not even use the heater and my grandbabies are COLD! This is ridiculous! Someone please tell me what I can do????!!

Usage Spike Since Smart meter installed

On April 5th, 2010 Dana Troutman (not verified) says:

We recently had our smart meter installed and the very first bill was 2.5x time our normal bill and usage, our second bill is now 3x higher. Granted there can be some variables but this is ridiculous it was the highest electric bill I have received since moving into my house almost 12 yrs ago. That when we had turned off our gas heating and had reduced our usage. Our neighbors had there's installed a month before us and there usage jumped almost 2x also.

What is our recourse. SDG&E just said these are newer meters and more accurate than the old ones. I find that line hard to believe since I doubt they would go several years with inaccurate meters install cutting their profits in half or to a thirds of what it should be.

Please let me know who I can go to for some recourse?

Are there any class actions in process?

New Meter and outrageous bill

On February 27th, 2010 Ramona (not verified) says:

My bill for December and January was \$66 and \$72 and that is what it runs normally throughout the year with the exception of the summer months when we are running the airconditioner and then it is \$150 tto \$250. A new smart meter was install on presidents day February 12 and the bill I got on Wednesday was \$499.18, today 2/27/2010 I got another bill and it is is \$542.18. It says the meter was read 2/11/2010 and again 2/17/2010. I called and was told that this is for electric service that was not properly billed from past months. I just do not understand how this is possible. Anyone have any ideas?

smart meter error

On February 26th, 2010 jlo (not verified) says:

I want to thank those of you who posted suggestions regarding these new "smart" meters. I too have had increased usage amounts, I'd say around 15%. I have been keeping a log of all our electric usage. I also purchased a P3 "kill-watt meter." It works great. I can see the discrepancy in readings right away. I am now going to turn breakers off and try and isolate the main appliance, my refrigerator, and compare the readings exactly...this should prove it beyond any doubt.

You can also do this statistically by looking at your historical data that is provided by SDGE. Compare your previous usage to what it is now with the new meter (you will need a few months of data to compare them).

I have contacted SDGE regarding this and they will be contacting me (they won't do an enegy audit, but they should review their meter errors).

Someone asked about a class action lawsuit. I am not going to wait. If I am not satisfied with their response I will sue them in small claims. The data should be evidence enough, however the court may require some "professional" witness as to the discrepancies. We shall see.

Does anyone know if these smart meters can be controlled remotely? I'm wondering if they can adjust the meter remotely without having to make a home visit.

jlo

I hate the Smart Meter

On February 18th, 2010 Yvette (not verified) says:

I just got my bill after the "Smart Meter" was installed. My bill was +550% for electricity.

My average bill was \$80 before the meter and this new bill was \$320. When I called SDG&E they gave me the run around and defended

their new system saying it must have been something I did. I feel like they are thieves right now and I am forced to either pay or go without. This is so wrong.

Source: For these consumer complaints above, and more, visit the Utility Consumers' Action Network on-line Forum for "SDG&E billing disputes or complaints about SDG&E smart meters," found on-line at:

http://www.ucan.org/forum/forums/energy/sdg_e_disputes/billing_disput

With mounting complaints, State Senator Dean Florez and consumers called for an investigation, and the CPUC contracted the Structure Group for \$1.4 million to “independently” evaluate the accuracy of wireless smart meters. Structure's report was issued on September 2, 2010, and found the smart meters performing accurately. However, as consumer advocates and new reporters point out, Structure has ties to PG&E and the utility and energy industry, and is a proponent of the Smart Grid, casting their report as “independent” evaluators into question.

- *The PUC in California has now hired the Structure Group to conduct an independent investigation into SmartMeters. The PUC says side-by-side tests will be part of that investigation. The Utility Reform Network (TURN) is now calling for citizen oversight of that investigation.*

"TURN is very concerned about the Structure Group because of the fact that they have been a consultant to PG&E from 2002 to 2008," says TURN spokesman Mark Toney. "What that means, is they have a vested interest making sure that the SmartMeters are exonerated."

Source: KGO-TV: “Texas utilities admit billing errors with SmartMeters,” April 14, 2010:

http://abclocal.go.com/kgo/story?section=news/7_on_your_side&id=7386817

- *The consulting firm hired to investigate Pacific Gas and Electric Co.'s SmartMeter system performed work for the utility as recently as last year, and at least two of the Houston-based firm's executives are former managers within PG&E's parent company.*

...Structure's website indicates that it has worked with more than 120 utilities and energy companies in the United States and Europe. In one such arrangement discussed on the website, the firm was hired by an Oklahoma utility to help build support for its rollout of "smart grid" technology, which involves smart meters.

Alex Lago, a principal at Structure who joined the firm in 2001, at one point worked in management at PG&E Energy Services, which until 2000 was a unit within the utility's parent company, PG&E Corp. Lago declined to comment Wednesday.

Debby Young, vice president of sales for Structure's gas practice, used to work as director of northeast trading at PG&E Energy Trading Corp., which is a part of PG&E Corp. She, too, declined to comment Wednesday.

Source: Bakersfield.com: "Firm hired to study SmartMeters has had business ties to PG&E, March 31, 2010:

<http://www.bakersfield.com/news/local/x2143248587/Firm-hired-to-study-SmartMeters-has-had-business-ties-to-PG-E>

- *The smart meters aren't completely cleared by Structure's report. Structure notes that its investigation was limited in scope and was not "an exhaustive review of all Smart Meter system deployment documentations, configurations, and meter installations."*

Source: Smart Planet: "California smart meters work fine — it's the utility that needs work,"

September 3, 2010:

<http://www.smartplanet.com/technology/blog/thinking-tech/california-smart-meters-work-fine-but-the-utility-needs-work/5114/?tag=content;coll>

- For the complete Structure Report, you can find it on-line on its website:
<http://www.thestructuregroup.com/structure-announces-findings-of-pge-smart-meter-assessment>
- Here's CPUC's news report on the Structure Report:
<http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/PUC/energy/Demand+Response/solicit.htm>

Texas: Similar Problems, Stories and Actions

A similar story unfolded in Texas. Consumer billing and accuracy complaints erupted following the installation of the wireless smart meters on homes:

Company officials say complaints are up 17 percent, and the utility recently held several public meetings in Killeen to calm angry customers.

Some Dallas residents who already have "smart" meters monitoring their power echo claims of higher electric bills. They believe the new meters are to blame, and they're fighting back.

...The utility says it has checked repeatedly and claims it found fewer than ten problem meters out of tens of thousands installed.

"By and large, both the old electro-mechanical and the new smart meters are highly accurate," said Oncor spokeswoman Catherine Cuellar. "It's not that peoples' meters causing their high bills; it's low temperatures that are causing the high bills."

...Still, folks like Michele Colbert are unconvinced. The bills at her father's empty condo more than doubled after the digital meters were installed.

"The smart meters were installed and the bill went up... and there's no one living there!" she said. "I'm very frustrated and I'm very angry."

In an effort to ease customer concerns, Oncor brought employees to an Oak Cliff recreation center Sunday to discuss their bills.

Some of the electric users aren't convinced; they're ready to launch a campaign of sorts, going door-to-door to raise awareness and garner support — hoping that they can get enough residents with the same problem to convince Oncor that its "smart" meters aren't so smart.

Source: WFAA-TV Dallas/Ft Worth: "'Smart' meters under fire as electric bills soar," February 21, 2010:

<http://www.wfaa.com/news/consumer/meters-84921522.html>

With more shared complaints, consumers begin to organize:

...for Lisa Smith and Jennifer Stanfield, electricity is a sore subject.

"Yeah, yeah a little bit," Smith chuckled.

What isn't funny is their December electric bill: more than \$1,000.

"To pay for these bills, I'm cutting out any kind of social life I have," Stanfield said. "Not eating out; not going out and meeting friends after work."

Even with new energy efficient windows and a thermostat set at 56 degrees, their January bill still topped \$800. High bills, the two said, didn't happen until Oncor replaced their mechanical meter with a digital one.

"We've got people with their electricity being cut off -- being bullied -- and that's not right," said Ree Wattner, who organized a group of dozens of

neighbors. They've already met twice trying to find a remedy to the high bills they suspect the smart meters caused.

Wattner even started a Web site for her Smart Utility Reform Citizens group and said she is preparing a petition to the PUC.

But Oncor said it has found fewer than 10 of its 760,000 advanced meters with problems after random tests.

...state records show the Texas Public Utility Commission refused to do a cost-benefit study two years ago -- even after cities and others asked for it.

Plus, CenterPoint Energy, Oncor's counterpart in Houston, just removed 3,002 smart meters because software failures prevented them from being read remotely, according to records the utility filed with the PUC.

Source: WFAA-TV Dallas/Ft. Worth: "Smart meter moratorium sought by Texas senator," March 3, 2010, <http://www.wfaa.com/home/Smart-Meter-moratorium-requested-by-Texas-senator-86298422.html>

A few days later, consumer anger grows, and calls for action and a moratorium pour in; Oncor is now admitting to problems with reading the new meters.

Dozens of people are furious at sky-high power bills and are convinced the new smart meters are to blame.

"I don't mind paying my bill, but I'm not paying for something I'm not using," said one customer in Grand Prairie on Saturday.

Oncor representatives sat through a tongue lashing at a town hall meeting, where angry customers, pleaded for help with their high bills.

"It's either food, medicine or my electric - there's no

way," said Trina Hall.

Nearly all say their bills went up after Oncor replaced the old mechanical meters on their homes with new digital smart meters.

Susan Major has always been careful to save electricity but almost immediately after her new meter went up, so did her bills.

"There's something wrong, either my meter was installed wrong, read wrong, something, and nobody will own up," she said.

Oncor still blames the cold winter for most of the high bills.

But the company now admits its workers misread at least 7,000 new meters when they were installed and overcharged customers.

"What you have is essentially a typo, we're catching those, both with the customers and through our own internal process," said Chris Schein from Oncor.

The utility insists the meters work.

Still, anger is growing, as is suspicion.

Grand Prairie Rep. Kirk England (D) is joining other lawmakers, calling for Oncor to stop installing millions of the new meters across North Texas until an outside agency can test their accuracy.

"I think there's a problem and I think it's more than just weather," he said.

Source: WFAA-TV Dallas/Ft Worth, "Oncor faces mounting anger over high bills," March 6, 2010, <http://www.wfaa.com/news/consumer/Oncor-faces-mounting-customer-fury-over-high-bills-86728777.html>

Consumers begin to protest and picket:

Opponents of Oncor's new smart meters took their frustration to the utility's doorstep Thursday afternoon.

Almost a dozen people picketed in front of the Oncor's downtown headquarters chanting, "I'm so mad, I see red!"

Smart Utility Reform Citizens, a grass roots group of frustrated electric customers, organized the protest.

The organization has questioned the accuracy of new electronic meters after hundreds of people complained about unexpectedly high electric bills when Oncor replaced their mechanical meters.

Source: WFAA-TV Dallas/Ft Worth, "Smart meter skeptics picket outside Oncor," March 18, 2010:
<http://www.wfaa.com/news/consumer/Smart-meter-skeptics-picket-outside-Oncor-88468037.html>

Complaints prompt a class-action lawsuit:

"Skyrocketing electricity bills are crushing innocent Texas consumers as a result of Oncor's installation of 'smart' meters," the suit proclaims.

The plaintiffs, Robert and Jennifer Cordts and their lawyer, Jason Berent of Berent & Wilson LP, make a laundry list of accusations in the lawsuit. The suit alleges that Oncor is purposely rolling out smart meters in low-income areas first and that smart meters are a ploy for utilities to "line their pockets" in a deregulated market.

The Cordts found their bills skyrocketed from \$400 to \$700 a month to \$1,800 after a smart meter was installed. In three months they racked up nearly \$5,000 in electricity bills.

...The lawsuit in Texas is the second lawsuit against smart meters; the other suit is pending against Pacific Gas & Electric in California. The

legal actions highlight the chasm between implementing the building blocks of a smart grid and consumer awareness.

“While there may be certain potential benefits to ‘smart’ meters,” the lawsuit notes, “Oncor is not advertising that customers with ‘smart’ meters will ultimately be charged different rates depending on when energy is consumed.”

Time-of-use pricing will be a cornerstone of a fully functional smart grid, yet in this lawsuit, it is painted as a cash grab by utilities.

While TOU pricing is not at the heart of this lawsuit, the mention of peak pricing as an evil ploy to cheat honest customers illustrates how much work needs to be done to engage consumers before smart meter rollouts begin. Currently, TOU pricing is voluntary in Texas. Additionally, while Oncor delivers the electricity, it does not produce it, and consumers can choose their electric provider, each of whom set different rates.

...the lawsuit is a serious blow to Oncor, which doesn’t seem to be able to contain customer anger. Their side-by-side testing of old and new meters has been rejected as a sham and angry consumers are still questioning the software that collects data from the smart meters.

At this time, Oncor does not have any plans to slow or stop the installation of smart meters. “We have not found any evidence that would lead us to believe there is a problem,” said Schein.

Source: GreenTechGrid, "Oncor Sued for Fraud Over Smart Meters; Fleeced! Bamboozled! Plaintiffs claim [smart meters ain't so smart,]" March 30, 201, <http://www.greentechmedia.com/articles/read/oncor-sued-for-fraud-over-smart-meters/>

A month later, the utilities admit there was a problem:

Two major utilities in Texas have confirmed that some customers received inaccurate and

sometimes inflated bills after turning to SmartMeters to measure their energy usage. PG&E is under fire for its program to install SmartMeters in Northern California. 7 On Your Side has been following the debate since last year.

...More than five million SmartMeters will be installed in Texas by the year 2012. It is the second-largest rollout in the country -- second only to California's. In both states, hundreds of consumers have filed formal complaints about SmartMeters with their public utilities commissions...

... "It's a software glitch," says Floyd LeBlanc with Centerpoint. "We found the software glitch and corrected it."

Centerpoint blames a communication error in the software for sending the meter readings for 5,200 customers back to the utility incorrectly; 3,500 of those were overbilled. Another Texas utility has also acknowledged problems. Oncor says it underbilled 2,000 consumers when the communication software it used failed to sync up with the device.

Source: KGO-TV: "Texas utilities admit billing errors with SmartMeters," April 14, 2010:

http://abclocal.go.com/kgo/story?section=news/7_on_your_side&id=7386817

The Texas Public Utility Commission also contracts an "independent" team to study the accuracy of its smart meters. Navigant did the investigation and found the smart meters to be accurate. Navigant is also a proponent of the Smart Grid and has ties to the energy industry.

The Texas Tribune: "Report Finds 99.96% of Texas Smart Meters Accurate," July 30, 2010:

<http://www.texastribune.org/texas-energy/energy/report-finds-9996-of-texas-smart-meters-accurate/>

Navigant Consulting website, Energy Industry:

<http://www.navigantconsulting.com/industries/energy/>

Navigant Consulting press release on recent acquisition and illustrating its close ties with the energy industry and promoting it, Jan 11, 2010:

http://www.navigantconsulting.com/thomson/phoenix.zhtml?c=62241&p=irol-newsArticle_Print&ID=1373444&highlight=

Public Utilities Fortnightly, "What Happened in Texas: Evaluating smart meters and public backlash," December 2010, is an article offering Navigant's take on the problems with the wireless smart meter roll-out in Texas:

http://www.fortnightly.com/exclusive.cfm?o_id=498

Update: Despite Accuracy Tests, Billing & Accuracy Horror Stories Continue

Central Coast KION-TV Fox News did a 13-week side-by-side comparison test of a wireless smart meter and your old analog type.

The wireless smart meter recorded more energy usage than the analog one (which was calibrated before the test):

Here are the results: Week 13 Difference: 2.9 kilowatt hours

Week 13 Additional Cost: 85 cents

Total for 3 Month Test: 37 kilowatt hour difference

Additional Cost: \$10.76

As one viewer commented:

\$10.76 more for PG&E WIRELESS smart meters in 3 months = \$43.04 more per year.

PG&E has about 10 million customers.

That computes to \$430,400,000 (over \$430 million extra for PG&E each year).

Source: KION-TV PG&E Smart Meter Side By Side Test Final Results, February 11, updated February 18, 2011,

<http://www.kionrightnow.com/Global/story.asp?S=14016659>

Drawing further doubt into the accuracy of wireless smart meters -- despite the "independent" studies that Structure and Navigant did to report that smart meter technology is accurate, complaints from residents and small business owners have not subsided. Reports about higher than usual bills and other horrendous nightmare stories, coupled with reports of very poor customer service and response. Go to the Utility Consumers' Action Network's SDG&G Billing Complaints Page to read them. Here are some excerpts:

PG&E Bakersfield Ca

On February 13th, 2011 Your PG&E Bill (not verified) says:

We just discovered that PG&E totals our usage daily and not monthly. We could not figure out how our bill could be so high! So, after a lot of breaking down and getting the exact cost of the tiers and how much we used, we figured it out! The PG&E employee finally admitted it when we made him realize our figures were right! He did not want to admit it but he finally did and even though he claims we are not charged anymore, we actually are! We asked if Bakersfield customers were notified and he claims that a notice was sent out but not sure when. We asked for a copy and he was unable to find it. Before Smart Meters, our usage was totaled monthly. How many out there knew this and if so, when were you notified of the changes? The employee said it is a way of paying back the bonds PG&E borrowed. He said only a selected

territories are being charged this way! We are not happy about this!

SCE's OVERCHARGES GAS vs. ELEC...

On January 19th, 2011 CAMPBELLS (not verified) says:

Yes, my bill jumped up \$250.00 in one month since this new meter was installed. We have an additional guest house on our property and it is an empty home. The billing for that empty house, not being used, generated a bill of \$44.00 (prior billings were \$5.00 max). We are now in dispute with SCE due to them overcharging us and having us in their records as using gas appliances. I've disputed my bill so many years and never realized why charges were so high. Let people know that all electric homes vs. gas/electric homes are allowed different kw usages.

We are an all electric home and have been since final inspection on 08-10-1999. The only way we discovered this is by comparing the two house billings from SCE. Our guest home (all electric) has a 700+ allowance for kw... where our main home (also all electric) has a 325 allowance for kw. SO. CAL. ELECTRIC just "assumed" we had gas appliances. SCE owes us from 1999 due to charging us incorrectly. They came out yesterday, 01-18-11 and verified that we are and have been all electric since day one. Now, the fight begins to be reimbursed.

SMART METER SHOWS 85% DAILY CONSUMPTION INCREASE!

On January 8th, 2011 Gene (not verified) says:

The smart meter installed on my house shows 85% increase of consumption of electric power per day compared to the previous year, provided that there are no new devices and appliances utilized in my house since the previous year. My bill for an approximately 2000 sq. ft house is \$483 for December; it was

usually \$150-\$200 before the smart meter was installed. I own the house for more than a decade; it is absolutely out of question for me to pay half thousand dollars per month for electric power consumption. I am going to contact SDG&E, however, based on the previous comments, I have little hope that I will get an adequate response from them. I am wondering what my options should be in such a situation.

It Is Worse Than You Think

On February 1st, 2011 scarlettred says:

I received my first bill today since the insallation of the "Smart Meter." This bill has increased 300% from the last month which was also much too high. You get nowhere by calling SCE. I would have to be running an arcade in my house to have a 300% increase. It is beyond ridiculous. I was so upset my son found this website and asked me to read it through. As I read about the radiation information my heart about jumped out of my chest. I raise Persian kittens here at my home. I keep the kittens and their moms in the house and when they are 6 weeks old and weaned I have a special area built in the garage for them to play and amuse themselves. This area is directly on the inside wall of the garage where the meter is placed on the outside wall of the garage. In over 40 years of breeding I have never lost a kitten or puppy when they are 6 weeks old. They usually pass away in the first few days if there is a problem. To my horror I found 2 kittens unconscious several days after I put them in the play area. They died that day. These were roly-poly healthy little babies who never had a sick moment in their short lives. I have been sick with sadness since this happened. And worse I could find no explanation to what went wrong. I have another outdoor kennel area that sits 5 feet from the outside wall where the meter is

located. I keep my expecting mothers in that area until a week or so before they are due to deliver. Suddenly about a week ago I noticed these cats were vomiting up their food and looking as if they did not feel so well. Having read about these meters I was stunned to realize that there is no coincidence here. This stinking "Smart Meter" has killed 2 of my precious kittens and may well have caused permanent damage to my female cats...I called and demanded that the meter be removed at once and they said it isn't going to happen. So, without a resident's consent they can install a new meter that could be harmful to animals and possibly humans? Have you seen the protective head gear the technicians who install these meters wear? What is going on here? How can a public utility company have this kind of power and control? And why have so many people found their bills to be so high? Why can I not demand they remove this meter? What has to happen to expose this attempt to rob innocent people who are already struggling to make ends meet. My income is less than \$800 each month and I am expected to pay a \$470 Edison bill! It isn't going to happen. first of all it is impossible for me to have that high of a bill. I have been here 7 years and all those prior bills prove that this is beyond reasonable. That is one issue. The loss of my pets lives and health is another. I plan to file a complaint with anyone who will take it and send this information to the newspapers and TV stations. People need to know what the risks here are. And don't bother listening to what Edison tells you. It is all lies! I think that this is cause for a class action lawsuit. Is there anyone out there who agrees. I would like to hear from you and soon.

Scarlettred

***SDG&E Smart Meter Installed -- Gas Bill
TRIPLED!!!!***

*On October 29th, 2010 Walter (not verified) says:
SDG&E installed a gas Smart Meter last month (September 2010) and the gas usage reported on the October statement is TRIPLE what was used in the same period last year. These devices have flaws and SDG&E knows it. It's a complete rip-off!!!*

SmartMeter Scam

*On October 16th, 2010 Erik (not verified) says:
I have owned and operated a small graphic design and sign shop for over 15 years (at the same location) here in San Diego. My meter reads were always accurate and trended the same each year. Slightly lower in fall and spring, and very moderate in summer and winter. It has been very normal and predictable for many years now. I do not have central AC at my business, nor do I have central heat. The shop area is equipped with many energy saving items, including lighting and equipment with all the latest protection. The computers are off each night and the business is operated 5 days per week. Since July, when the "SmartMeter" was installed, I have seen a 600% increase in my monthly billing! I have contacted SDG&E to only hear that it is normal to see an increase after the new, more accurate meters are installed. I explained my position and am awaiting a field review within 5 days. I don't feel the consumer has a leg to stand on, and I am furious at the blatant, direct squeeze that the power company is forcing on home owners as well as small business. My power bill was always low, and I have been very conscious about conserving power at my small business. I feel quite disheartened for all my efforts, only to have SDG&E come up with artificial numbers that can not be verified by anyone but them and their new "SmartMeter". This needs to be brought out in the media before SDG&E has a stronghold on every business*

and home owner in San Diego.

How Convenient for SDG&E

On September 24th, 2010 Anonymous (not verified) says:

Records show, Southern California is experiencing the coolest summer sine 1933. Also, last I heard, SDG&E was on the the hook for the Witch Creek and Guejito fire to the tune of \$900M. How convenient to install Smart Meters and what a great sell. Publicly reporting for months that in no way would the new meters effect rates. Today, I was personally assured of this by Renee, a representative for SDG&E, who also informed me her smart meter was installed 5 months ago and she's seen no change in her bill. I WANT TO WORK FOR SDG&E.

Since Jan. 2010, my electrical usage has been between 190 kWh and 460 kWh. The smart meter was installed installed 8/9/10.

Interestingly, billing period 8/16/10 - 9/16/10, shows my usage shot to 866 kWh. During this period, nothing changed in my household other than: I was out of town for 5 days, on Aug. 27 I turned my spa off at the breaker (it remains shut off), and lastly, a portable AC unit used during the months of June and July has been unused since mid-July.

I am a hard working, law abiding, tax paying, native San Diegan. The state of affairs in the City of San Diego, doubled with the state of affairs in California, tripled by the state of affairs of our country, spells greed, deceit and robbery. I'm sick of paying the way for so many greedy, wealthy people while every day, having recently been unemployed, I desperately try to make ends meet.

It's candles, cold showers and clothes lines for me. I can hardly wait to get back to work and pay my fair share, and then some.

Source: For these consumer complaints above, and more, visit the Utility Consumers' Action Network

on-line Forum for "SDG&E billing disputes or complaints about SDG&E smart meters," found on-line at:

http://www.ucan.org/forum/forums/energy/sdg_e_disputes/billing_disputes

While PG&E mainly services utility consumers in northern California, in the south and central regions of California, the two major utilities installing wireless smart meters are Southern California Edison and SDG&E. Their smart meters, too, have prompted billing and accuracy complaints from their ratepayers.

Palm Springs resident Robert Nickels said winter electric bills for his well-insulated, 950-square-foot home averaged about \$38 a month for years.

After getting his new smart meter, his first bill spiked from \$32 to \$85, he said.

"I'm angry," Nickels said. "They need to do a little research why these bills are so much higher when we're not using any more electricity."

...Robert Hayden, another Palm Springs resident, ended up paying more than \$1,700 to replace a microwave-convection oven that burned out right after a workman installed a smart meter without first turning off the main power switch.

The replacement cost was so high, he said, because the oven was built into his kitchen, limiting his choices for a new one.

"I was under the assumption they were going to shut off the main because it doesn't make any sense not to," he said. "All they did was pull the old meter off and plug in this new smart meter."

...David Ashuckian, deputy director of the Division of Ratepayer Advocates at the California Public Utilities Commission, said that accurate meters don't necessarily mean accurate bills, pointing to billing software problems Pacific Gas & Electric had when it introduced smart meters in Northern California. "We are reviewing that to determine if there is additional work needed to get to the

bottom line of the billing issues," he said. "The kind of reports we had seen indicate to us there has to be something going on."

More to the point, he said, the benefits of the meters are unevenly distributed and loaded in the utilities' favor, from operational savings reaped from the elimination of meter readers to the new pricing structures.

"Sixty to 65 percent of the benefits are on the utilities' side," Ashuckian said. "That leaves 35 to 40 percent that needs to come from ratepayer behavior changes, or the meters will never be cost effective."

When Paul LaPlante of Palm Desert complained about a 30 percent jump in his bills after his new meter was installed, Edison sent out service representatives twice to test the device.

"It's operating correctly," LaPlante said. "They walked the whole house and checked appliances for (a reason for) the increase, and unfortunately there isn't any."

"I don't feel it's really resolved," he said. "I don't have something I can put my hands on. I don't want to be stuck for the rest of my desert life with utility bills 30 to 40 percent more than they have been."

Source: My Desert Sun: "Some residents smart from higher electric bills; Customers nationwide say new digital meters problematic," January 28, 2011, <http://www.mydesert.com/article/20110128/NEWS01/101280318/1006/new-residents-smart-from-higher-electric-bills>

Underestimating Consumer Discontent and Continuing to Make It Worse

GIGAOM in May 2010 published a story about PG&E' 700-page report that summarized several mis-steps with

consumers that PG&E took in deploying its smart meters in California:

While specific tech problems can easily be dealt with, the greater issue is a lack of customer outreach and an inability of utilities to adequately explain the benefits of smart meters to customers. PG&E's contact center received its first customer complaint related to a meter exchange all the way back in June of 2007 (Page 150 of the report)...

The utility was moving so fast that it didn't seem to see the looming consumer backlash and PR problem. On October 8, 2009 (Page 553) PG&E first notes: "Negative smart meter press increased in recent weeks. Customer perception of the smart meter program becomes negative increasing potential customer complaints." In the months after this first mention, PG&E continues to refer to the issue as a negative press issue and tackles the problem by proposing townhall meetings, public education awareness campaigns and establishing more call centers. Clearly those methods didn't work as well as expected, given it took them until May 2010, to finally issue a convincing public apology.

The article concludes that PG&E had learned its lessons and included a quote from a PG&E administrator::

As of this week, I think PG&E finally understood the error of their ways. As Helen Burt, senior vice president and Chief Customer Officer, PG&E, said in a press conference this week when she released the report, "This is not about statistics. . . I don't believe we did a good job of seeing the world through the lens of the customer."

GIGAOM, "PG&E's Smart Meter Report: A Case Study of Infrastructure Over Customer," May. 12, 2010, <http://gigaom.com/cleantech/pges-smart-meter-report-a-case-study-of-infrastructure-over-customer/>

As mentioned, that was in May 2010. "Seeing the world through the lens of the customer" regretfully for PG&E took the form of the head of its smart meter program infiltrating and spying on the communications of a private on-line smart meter opposition group so he could find out what the next anti-smart-meter strategies and actions would be. Then he was caught doing that. And ultimately resigned.

Read San Francisco Bay Guardian: "PG&E exec fails as a spy," November 10, 2010:

<http://www.sfbg.com/politics/2010/11/10/pge-exec-fails-spy>

But even his resignation hasn't blunted or stopped the growing resident distrust and discontent with the utility, especially as it continues to insult and intimidate its ratepayers. Read how 78-year-old Gloria Darlene Linch of Red Bluff, CA, was threatened with disconnection when she told the installer that she didn't want a smart meter on her home. She wrote this letter to the editor:

When I told him my objections and that I was writing a letter to the editor of our local newspaper to vent my frustrations his expression suddenly changed and he looked very concerned. He told me to be careful about causing any problems for PG&E. He confessed that he had already been threatened by people and refused entry on properties. I told him that I could not help the actions of others but I felt it was wrong for PG&E to force the people to accept the SmartMeter without a choice and I felt compelled to continue my protest. He warned me that PG&E would retaliate by removing the old meter and leave me without any power whatsoever.

I am 78 years of age, and I took that warning as a threat. What else could it be? That warning told me just what sort of authority I was going to have to face. But even more to the point, since when does big business dictate to the citizens of California they must accept a product or survive without electricity? That is totally against our constitution

of civil rights, and I do not remember voting for SmartMeters. So I am taking the only option left to me, that being the power of the pen.

I am sending this letter to all my elected officials. I believe I should have been offered a choice, whether to remain on the old system should I not want the new SmartMeter. Who knows I too may have decided to have a SmartMeter once I heard positive things from customers who were really pleased with the performance of this new technology, but until then, I want the choice of staying on the old system without the threat of retaliation.

Source: Daily News: "Gloria Darlene Linch, Red Bluff: SmartMeters," Special to the Daily News, http://www.redbluffdailynews.com/opinion/ci_17393811

Also: Stop Smart Meters, "PG&E Threatens Elderly Lady with Power Shut-off in Red Bluff," February 16, 2011, <http://stopsmartmeters.wordpress.com/2011/02/16/pg-e-threatens-old-lady-with-power-shut-off-in-red-bluff/>

FOR ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE:

Go to our Discussion #14 Item - Actions You Can Take & Other Helpful Organizations and Websites: <https://sites.google.com/site/nocelltowerinourneighborhood/home/wireless-smart-meter-concerns/actions-you-can-take-other-helpful-organizations-and-websites>

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DISCUSSION OF MAIN CONCERNS: Read these and helpful information about the wireless smart meter issue -- click each of the discussion items below.

- [1. First and Foremost: Are Wireless Meters Mandatory?](#)**

- 2. [Smart Meters Unite Consumers, Citizens and Residents from Opposite Backgrounds and Political Affiliations](#)**
- 3. [Actions Being Taken: What Are Consumers Doing To Protect Their Civil Liberties and Affirm Their Rights to Refuse or Opt Out?](#)**
- 4. [Going Deep: Understanding the Big Picture and Real Costs and Concerns, Helpful News Reports and Consumer Advocacy Reports and Analysis](#)**
- 5. [Smart Meter Consumers Anger Grows Over Higher Utility Bills](#)**
- 6. [Privacy and Security Concerns Still Unresolved](#)**
- 7. [Health Concerns Grow: Consumers Are Getting Sick From Wireless Smart Meters](#)**
- 8. [Consumers Report Public Safety Hazards and Interference Problems](#)**
- 9. [Cities and States Outside of California Pull Back](#)**
- 10. [Resident Campaigns In Other States](#)**
- 11. [Options](#)**
- 12. [Lessons Learned: What's Happened in Australia](#)**
- 13. [Lessons Learned: Major Problems for Canada](#)**
- 14. [Actions You Can Take & Other Helpful Organizations and Websites](#)**
- 15. [City and County Documents including Agendas, Minutes, Video Meeting links, Staff Reports, Proposed and Approved Ordinances, Resolutions, Correspondence, etc.](#)**

[16. Wireless Smart Meter Background Information for Burbank/Glendale](#)

Or: [Return to Wireless Smart Meter Concerns home page](#)

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