

Century II: Meter Modernization Frequently Asked Questions



Why is KUB changing to advanced meters?

KUB is committed to providing safe, reliable, affordable utility services to our customers, and advanced meters offer many benefits for both customers and KUB. Advanced meters provide more accurate measuring of utility usage, allow KUB to respond to outages quicker and reduce the need to read meters on the customer's property. They also reduce field technician visits, lowering cost and keeping vehicles off the road.

To meet the needs of current and future customers, KUB is installing advanced meters across its system through the Century II grid modernization program. Century II is KUB's long-range program to improve and maintain our utility systems for our current and future customers. Technology continues to evolve and, in the same way that smart phones are replacing flip phones, manufacturers are replacing mechanical analog meters with digital meters. The dial meters we are used to seeing simply won't be available in the future.

Over 65 million advanced meters have been installed nationwide, and more than 43% of Americans already have advanced meters installed, most by utilities providing a single utility service. After completing a successful pilot program in the Fort Sanders area in 2014 and years of research and planning, KUB will expand the program to install new advanced meters systemwide through a four-year project to replace 400,000 electric, water, and natural gas meters starting summer 2016.

What is an advanced meter?

An advanced meter is capable of two-way communications between the meter and KUB. Advanced meters not only provide billing information, they also send automatic notifications to KUB about power outages and restoration, as well as issues of high or low voltage. That allows KUB to respond more quickly to trouble and provide better service, and customers gain up-to-date information on their usage.

Will the advanced meter cost me anything?

No. There is no fee for a new advanced meter, just as there is no fee for your current meter. The funding is provided through KUB's ongoing Century II infrastructure improvement program.

What if I don't want an advanced meter?

Residential customers can ask to opt out of the advanced meter installation, but they will not be able to take advantage of the outage notification or other benefits of the new meters. KUB will still replace the old meters with new digital meters as part of its overall meter upgrade program, but they will not include the communications technology of the advanced meters.

Century II: Meter Modernization FAQs

Are advanced meters accurate?

Yes. KUB meters undergo rigorous testing to ensure that they provide accurate data for billing. Standardized tests are used to measure accuracy during various load and weather conditions; the tests are industry accepted and approved by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI).

Additionally, KUB tests a percentage of all meters received from its vendor prior to installing them at a customer's home or business, and monitors meter accuracy after installation by conducting routine testing.

What is the difference in an advanced meter and a digital meter?

An advanced meter has a communication device in the meter. This meter does not require a meter reader to come onto property every month to read the meter. It also provides automatic notification of outages, so customers no longer have to contact KUB to report a problem.

A digital meter looks much like the advanced meter, but does not include a communication device. This meter does still require a meter reader to read the usage each month, and customers must still contact KUB to report outages.

Will an advanced meter give KUB control over how and when I use energy?

No. Actually, you control your usage, not KUB. Advanced metering actually gives you more control over your bill by providing more detailed information on your usage, allowing you to review your usage habits and see where improvements can be made.

Is my personal information kept private and secure?

Yes. Advanced meters transmit customer usage data over a private, dedicated network, and data is identified by the meter number, not the customer's name and address. Usage data is stored on secure servers and is used by KUB only for billing purposes and system management. KUB refined its security protocols during the pilot project, and that system was reviewed by federal authorities to ensure that data is safe.

Can I purchase and install or remove my own meter?

No, it is illegal and unsafe to do so. KUB owns and maintains the metering equipment. This includes electric and gas meters used for measurement and billing, and other equipment such as transformers on the ground or on a pole. Removing or tampering with the property creates a safety issue, which may result in termination of service. If done improperly it can result in serious injury or death. Licensed electricians must contact utilities when work requires a meter to be removed, reset, or the power cut or reconnected at a customer premise.

Do advanced meters pose a health risk?

No. Wireless advanced meters emit radio frequency transmissions comparable to those emitted by cordless home telephones or Wi-Fi. Wireless technology is prevalent in our everyday lives. Everything from cell phones, wireless Internet routers, baby monitors, and garage door openers use radio frequency to operate.



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Century II: Meter Modernization FAQs

[Will the communications system interfere with equipment in my home or business?](#)

No. The advanced meter will not interfere with any wireless devices in the home. These devices will be placed outside of your home or business. The meter frequency is similar to a cell phone.

[What is KUB's policy for meter installation? How can I be sure it's a KUB employee or contractor at my home?](#)

All KUB employees and approved contractors carry a photo identification badge that should be visible and available for inspection on request. If you need to confirm that a KUB crew is working in your area, please call the main KUB number, 524-2911. As a courtesy, the technician performing the meter exchange will knock on your door prior to installation. KUB contractors' vehicles will also be marked with a KUB decal.

[Will meter readers lose their jobs as a result of these new advanced meters?](#)

KUB currently contracts with an outside company to read meters, so no KUB employees are affected. And since the Meter Modernization project is expected to take about four years, we will still be using contract meter readers for some time to come. Ultimately, we won't need that service anymore, but meter reading companies across the country recognize this and are managing the transition from manual meter reading to automated metering by taking on new kinds of work, including installation of new meters at utilities who are changing over.

[Are advanced meters potentially flammable?](#)

Advanced meters do not cause fires as they cannot combust or ignite. If there were to be an issue with the electrical connection to the building, the meters are equipped with alarms that will trigger and notify KUB for response.

KUB has been very deliberate in the research and development prior to the launch of the meter modernization project. The provider selected through this process is Sensus, a leading clean technology solutions company offering advanced meters. Sensus has refined its advanced meters through extensive testing before developing the current meter model which KUB will use. KUB is installing the Sensus iConA™ Generation 4 meter, a model that has gone through rigorous testing and continues to meet and exceed industry safety standards. KUB's employees and contractors are also specially trained to install and perform maintenance on advanced meters.

[How much is this meter replacement project costing KUB? Is there a hidden cost for customers?](#)

The four-year Century II meter modernization project that will replace 400,000 electric, water, and natural gas meters throughout KUB's system will cost \$54 million. The project reflects KUB's investment in improving and maintaining our utility infrastructure throughout the entire service area. Meters are just another element of that infrastructure, just like pipes, wires and poles.

The funding for this project was approved by KUB's Board of Commissioners in May 2015 and is already a part of KUB's long term investments. KUB will not charge customers any additional fees related to the advanced meter exchange.



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