

# Where Does Your Electricity Go?

I've been approached by a number of folks who would like us to look into installing pre-pay metering. What I have found is what they really want is the ability to monitor their electricity use on a real-time basis, using the in-house display unit that comes with a pre-pay meter system.

We have looked into a couple of devices that will allow consumers to track their electricity use on a real-time basis and have good results to report.

**The Energy Detective (TED):** TED is a great little electronic device that has two parts. A small radio transmitter is installed in the main breaker box by clamping it to the two legs of the electric service. It transmits a signal to a receiver inside the house that you program with your electric cost per kilowatt-hour. You can see instantaneously how much electric load is on and what it is costing you by the hour. You also can see how much you have spent in the last hour or day or month.

When I had one of these in my home a few weeks ago, I was following my husband around, turning off lights! I discovered the fluorescent lights in my kitchen totaled 400 watts. If they were on 12 hours a day, they would account for 144 kWh a month! Nowadays, if I am not in my kitchen cooking, those lights are off. The downside to this unit is that a qualified electrician needs to install the transmitter in your breaker panel.

**Power Cost Monitor (PCM):** This is a device I have not yet laid my hands on, but I have some test models arriving soon. The PCM also has two parts. The transmitter is attached to the meter outside the house. It goes around the outside of the meter and simply reads the same information the meter receives from your electricity use. It does not require any technical training to install, and homeowners can do it themselves.

Like TED, the PCM receives real-time information from the transmitter and displays the actual load and energy cost information, based upon the electric rates you input yourself into the unit.

With either of these devices, you can take control of your electric consumption and make the changes necessary to reduce your personal energy use and, importantly, to reduce your contribution to greenhouse gases.

Once we conclude our internal testing program, we intend to make one or both of these devices available to our members at a small cost. We hope to find some financial assistance from the State of Alaska or another major funding partner to make this affordable for all of our residential members. In any case, we will try to get a program going before this winter, so you can keep an eye on your electric bill during those cold, dark months.

Until next time,



Meera Kohler  
President & CEO



Meera Kohler, President & CEO

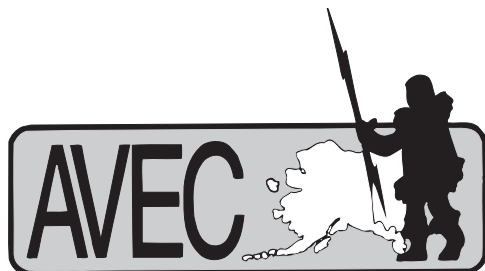
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