

Public Utility Commission of Texas

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Smart meters superior to traditional ones **Independent study ordered by PUC provides details**

A detailed four-month study by an independent consultant hired by the Public Utility Commission (PUC) shows that smart meters installed in competitive areas of the Texas electric market are much more accurate than the ones they replace. The report also identifies ways for utilities to further improve the transition to smart meters.

“This extraordinary and comprehensive study clearly shows the superiority of smart meters compared to traditional, electromechanical meters,” said PUC Chairman Barry Smitherman.

The report by Navigant Consulting (PI), LLC reveals an accuracy rate of 99.96% (5,625 accurate versus two inaccurate). By comparison, an evaluation of test results from traditional meters showed an accuracy rate of only 96 percent.

“Customers I visit with are very interested in smart meters, and this report provides a lot of reassurance about their accuracy,” said Commissioner Donna Nelson.

The research involved the independent testing of more than 5,600 smart meters plus a review of historical test results for nearly 1.1 million smart meters and more than 86,000 traditional (electromechanical) meters. Navigant also identified issues that the transmission and distribution utilities can improve to ensure more accuracy in data communications.

After Navigant’s study was delivered, it was noted during an open meeting of the Commission that customers will not have to pay any costs associated with the report.

Transmission and distribution utilities still are required to file monthly status reports on their deployment of smart meters.

The full report is available on the PUC Website at http://www.puc.state.tx.us/electric/reports/ams/PUC-Final-Report_073010.pdf It includes a summary in pages 9-26.

As of July 1, 2010, 1,574,774 smart meters have been installed in regions of Texas covered by retail electric competition. Upon completion, approximately 6.5 million customers in these regions will have smart meters.

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