

Advanced Metering Infrastructure Participation Policy

ISSUE

The City of Saskatoon (City) has successfully completed the deployment of AMI meters for properties within its utility service area. During deployment, a small number (84) of utility customers have refused the adoption of an AMI meter for various reasons. An Opt-out Policy is necessary to provide the City with a standardized method of handling utility service customers who refuse an AMI meter.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Standing Policy Committee on Environment, Utilities and Corporate Services recommend to City Council that Appendix 1 be adopted as the City of Saskatoon Advanced Metering Infrastructure Participation Policy;
2. That the City Clerk's Office be requested to introduce City Council Policy No. CXX; and
3. That the City Solicitor's Office be requested to amend Bylaw No. 2685, The Electric Light and Power Bylaw, 1940 and Bylaw No. 7567, the Waterworks Bylaw, 1996 as outlined in this report.

BACKGROUND

City Council, at its Regular Business Meeting held on May 31, 2021, considered the following item and resolved:

[9.1.1. Advanced Metering Infrastructure Customer Participation Policy \[File No. CK. 261-0 X 261-3\]](#)

- “1. That Option A, AMI Program Non-Participation Option with City Meter Reads, be approved to allow customers to opt-out of the AMI program. This includes confirmation that once a customer has been added to the AMI Program with a smart meter, opting out of the program will not be allowed;
2. That a new Advanced Metering Infrastructure Participation Administrative Policy, as outlined in this report, be prepared; and
 3. That the Administration pursue cost recovery for the customers that choose to opt out of the AMI program.”

Since that time, Saskatoon Light & Power and Saskatoon Water have finalized the deployment of AMI meters to all customers within their respective service areas. With deployment complete, Administration is now in a position to equitably pursue the required cost recovery.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

Current Status

Currently, customers are not charged a fee should they choose to opt-out of having an AMI meter. Administration has contacted customers to give them an opportunity to address any questions and/or concerns they may have with AMI, which in many cases caused customers to elect to receive an AMI meter; however, there are still approximately 84 customers who will continue to opt-out for a variety of reasons. This represents approximately .09% of the City's total utility customer base.

In addition, there are approximately 1,000 customer accounts who were unresponsive to AMI communications. These communications included phone calls, letters, and signage posted throughout their respective neighborhoods. As per the policy, these accounts will be deemed as opt-out unless further communication from the customer is received, although it should be noted that once the policy is approved/enacted, the Administration will attempt to contact these customers one final time via a letter. This letter outlines the details of the policy as well as providing customers with a final 30-day window to opt-in to an AMI meter and avoid the fees.

City Council's decision to allow customers to opt-out, provided the financial costs is covered by customers choosing to opt-out, requires amendments to both Bylaw No. 2685, The Electric Light and Power Bylaw, 1940 and Bylaw No. 7567, The Waterworks Bylaw, 1996. These amendments will outline the fees necessary to allow for continued utility service provision. The fees are outlined below:

- One-time meter swap for an electric meter - \$205.
- One-time meter swap for a water meter - \$240.
- Manual meter reading fee - \$25 per month.

The meter swap fees are necessary as both Saskatoon Water and Saskatoon Light & Power must purchase new meters that do not have the communication capabilities of an AMI meter. These new meters will also require installation at the property. Customers who use both utility services will be required to pay both fees as each utility requires its own meter.

The manual meter reading fee is required to manually obtain reads for these properties monthly and does match the current fee in both bylaws for customers who request a manual read. This \$25 fee will apply monthly, regardless of if the customers use one, or both, utility services.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Once implemented, the AMI Participation Policy will ensure that customers who have opted into the AMI program are no longer subsidizing those who have not.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no additional implications or considerations.

COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

Customers who are opting out of an AMI meter will be sent written notification of this policy as well as details on when the associated fees will commence.

NEXT STEPS

Once approved, the AMI Participation Policy will be fully implemented and the associated fees will begin to be assessed to ensure full cost recovery.

APPENDICES

1. Advanced Metering Infrastructure Participation Policy

REPORT APPROVAL

Written by: Mike Voth, Director of Corporate Revenue
Reviewed by: Russ Munro, Director of Saskatoon Water
Trevor Bell, Director of Saskatoon Light & Power
Christine Bogad, Deputy city Solicitor
Angela Gardiner, General Manager, Utilities & Environment
Approved by: Clae Hack, Chief Financial Officer

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