

Maine Utilities Commission Opens Smart Meter Investigation



The Maine Public Utilities Commission has voted unanimously to open an investigation of two 10-person complaints each requesting a Commission investigation of aspects of [Central Maine Power](#)

(CMP)'s smart meter initiative (Docket Numbers 2010-345, and 2010-389). The investigation will determine if the alleged position of CMP (of providing no opt-out option in the smart meter program installation) is "unreasonable, insufficient or unjustly discriminatory" in the context of the existing Commission Order (February 2010). With that Order, the Commission approved implementation of a smart grid program including smart meter installation and existing legislative policy.

The three Commissioners agreed that the investigation will examine the possibility of local opt-outs to the program already being implemented and installed by CMP; the possible effect of such an opt-out on the original federal Department of Energy grant that helped fund approximately half the cost of the program; the availability of hard-wire alternatives from CMP; and cost implications for any alternatives to the current program. The investigation will seek to discover what alternatives are available that are technically feasible, and yet not adverse to overall smart grid implementation goals, nor cost prohibitive.

CMP's Automated Metering Infrastructure (AMI) program, a smart grid technology, was originally approved by the Commission in February 2010 (Docket Number 2007-215) to improve customer service, enhance storm restoration efforts, reduce utility operational costs, save ratepayer and utility costs, and ultimately provide customers with necessary tools to use electricity more efficiently

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