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Sent: 8/18/2011 7:18:08 AM  
To: 'pac@cpuc.ca.gov' (pac@cpuc.ca.gov)  
Cc:  
Bcc:  
Subject: Fw: The Ledger - No Plans for Lakeland Electric's Smart Meter Opt Out  
FYI

**From:** News Flash  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 18, 2011 07:03 AM  
**Subject:** The Ledger - No Plans for Lakeland Electric's Smart Meter Opt Out

Lakeland city officials in Florida have no plans for an opt-out program of smart meters for Lakeland Electric customers. The city expects to have residential and business installations of all 120,000 utility customers by December 2012. PG&E was not mentioned.

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## **No Plans for Lakeland Electric's Smart Meter Opt Out**

By John Chambliss

The Ledger (Lakeland, Fla.), August 17, 2011

City officials said they have no plans to adopt an opt-out program for Lakeland Electric customers worried about the safety of having smart meters at their homes.

City Manager Doug Thomas said it would be too costly and time consuming to provide an option for utility customers to opt out of having smart meters.

"Although we had a conversation (about an opt-out program) there is no recommendation from staff," Thomas said.

Thomas said it would be difficult for meter readers to travel through the city to a few homes of residents who chose to opt out of the program.

The smart grid meters are new devices that allow customers to monitor their own electrical usage.

Customers can go online to see how much energy they use on a daily basis.

Thomas' statements came during a presentation on Monday about the safety of smart meters by Randy Dotson, project manager for Lakeland Electric's Smart Grid initiative.

Recently, smart meters have been met with opposition from residents concerned about radiation.

Earlier this month, the president and treasurer of a North Lakeland neighborhood association wrote to Lakeland Electric General Manager Jim Stanfield about their concerns.

So far, about 33,000 meters have been installed in Lakeland Electric's service area. The city expects to have smart meters at the homes and businesses of all 120,000 utility customers by December 2012.

The meters have drawn controversy in other areas, and some places have adopted some form of opt-out option.

Several Lakeland residents who were at Monday's utility meeting voiced concerns about the smart meters.

One resident said she has been sick since a meter was installed at her house.

"Since there isn't going to be an opt out could it (the meter) be moved?" the resident asked. "My home isn't comfortable anymore since it's been attached."

Dotson directed the woman to Lakeland Electric officials for help with the meters. Dotson said there are minimal health concerns associated with smart meters.

"We've done our homework on exposure to smart meters," Dotson said. "Exposure to smart meters is way down on the list."

He went through a slide presentation that compared radio frequency of smart meters to other devices, such as microwaves and cell phones. He said radio frequencies from smart meters are much weaker than other appliances in the house.

He said the Federal Communications Commission concluded that no scientific evidence establishes a causal link between smart meters and any illnesses.

He said residents have little exposure to the meters because they are outside a home or business. The meters send a signal away from the home.

However, a study released earlier this year by the environmental consulting firm Sage Associates claims violations of federal emissions standards at a variety of distances from the meters and argues that the devices are more dangerous when grouped together and when coupled with other wireless technologies, according to The New York Times.

"Indiscriminate exposure to environmentally ubiquitous pulsed RF from the rollout of millions of new RF (radio frequency) sources (smart meters) will mean far greater general population exposures, and potential health consequences," the study says.

The Lakeland meters were approved by city commissioners in a 4-3 vote in 2010.

Putting smart meters with every Lakeland Electric customer is expected to cost \$35 million.

Lakeland received \$13 million from stimulus funds for the project with the remaining \$22 million coming from utility bonds.