

To Whom It May Concern:

In response to the PUC request for input about automated meters. As I understand it, the concern is about readers entering the customer's property. First, remote reading will not end the need for utilities to enter the customer's property for many reasons. Damaged meters, malfunctioning meters, energy theft, meter tests, turning power on and off, will still require access to the property.

If entering the customer's property is a problem, I suggest the PUC go to these locations and show the customer how the meter can be located off the property to a location satisfactory to both parties. That can be done in most cases.

As I remember, the first estimate given by the PUC was 72 million to complete the job, with a savings of 2 million dollars a year. Not considering interest to be paid, computer problems or bid underestimates, it would take 35 years to pay out this system. My understanding is that most systems don't last more than 5 to 10 years. Sounds like a sure thing that will raise the rates. It doesn't seem to me that this is likely to hold my costs down.

I believe the PUC's job is to protect utilities from over charging customers. Idaho power has one of the lowest rates in the nation. My fear is that if the PUC begins to micro-manage the utility companies, we will be moving toward government ran utilities. God forbid.

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