

ASSEMBLY, No. 4914

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

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Sponsored by:

Assemblyman RONALD S. DANCER

District 12 (Burlington, Middlesex, Monmouth and Ocean)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblymen Simonsen, McClellan and Scharfenberger

SYNOPSIS

Requires electric public utilities to obtain written consent and provide written disclosure prior to installing smart meters.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 1/25/2021)

1 AN ACT concerning the installation of smart meters and
2 supplementing Title 48 of the Revised Statutes.

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4 BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
5 of New Jersey:

6
7 1. a. An electric public utility shall not install an advanced or
8 smart energy meter unless the electric public utility has obtained the
9 customer's written consent, as determined by the board, and has
10 provided the customer with a written disclosure detailing the type of
11 data that will be transmitted from a customer's advanced or smart
12 energy meter to the electric public utility, how the data will be used,
13 and any potential disclosure of the data to a third-party.

14 b. As used in this section:

15 "Advanced or smart energy meter" means an electrical meter that
16 identifies a customer's electric power consumption in greater detail
17 than a conventional meter in order to provide a customer with real-
18 time usage information and pricing data on at least an hourly basis,
19 to record and store hourly usage data, to report the status of the
20 electric power supply to an electric public utility for the customer's
21 premises, and to turn the electric power to the customer's premises
22 on or off through remote disconnection or connection of service.

23 "Board" and "electric public utility" shall have the same
24 meaning as prescribed for those terms under section 3 of P.L.1999,
25 c.23 (C.48:3-51).

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27 2. This act shall take effect on the 90th day after the date of
28 enactment.

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STATEMENT

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33 This bill prohibits an electric public utility (utility) from
34 installing a smart meter unless the utility obtains the customer's
35 written consent and provides the customer with a written disclosure
36 detailing the type of data that will be transmitted from the
37 customer's smart meter to the utility, how the data will be used, and
38 any potential disclosure of the data to a third-party.

39 Under the bill, a smart meter means an electrical meter that
40 identifies a customer's electric power consumption in greater detail
41 than a conventional meter. A smart meter provides a customer with
42 real-time usage information and pricing data on at least an hourly
43 basis, records, and stores hourly usage data, reports the status of the
44 electric power supply for a customer's premises to a utility, and
45 turns electric power to a customer's premises on or off through
46 remote disconnection or connection of service.

47 Across the country, utilities are installing smart meter
48 technology. This technology has raised privacy concerns because

1 the information gathered from smart meters includes unencrypted
2 data that can reveal when a homeowner is away from their
3 residence for long periods of time. The information gathered from
4 smart meters can also decipher what type of activities a customer is
5 engaged in, such as watching television, using a computer, or how
6 long someone spends cooking.

7 In response to privacy concerns, Oklahoma has enacted
8 legislation concerning smart meters and customer privacy which
9 limits the sharing of smart meter data. In addition, the Vermont
10 affiliate of the American Civil Liberties Union has proposed certain
11 guidelines regarding smart meters, including requiring law
12 enforcement to obtain a warrant prior to accessing smart meter data.

13 The purpose of this bill is for customers to be informed of the
14 privacy issues that may arise from smart meter technology. Since
15 the use of smart meters raises a number of privacy concerns,
16 electric utilities should inform customers of privacy issues prior to
17 installing a smart meter.