

Remember, write your *own* letter. Use this letter as a resource.

The Smart Meter Opt Out should include:

1. A no fee opt out provision.
2. An analog meter option.
3. A moratorium on installing additional meters until an opt out is in place.

1. A NO FEE OPT OUT:

Wireless technology is still new enough that we don't know everything. Clearly, more research is needed. In the meantime, however, there are enough reputable studies suggesting that a more cautious approach is warranted to justify a no fee opt out. I've briefly noted three such studies below, but there are many others. Daniel Hirsch, Professor of Nuclear Policy at the University of California–Santa Cruz, calculated that the whole-body cumulative radiation exposure from wireless meters is 100–150 times more than cell phone exposure. For his full report, click [here](#).

May 2011: The World Health Organization (WHO) identified cell phones as a **class 2B possible carcinogen**, based on the findings of the The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC). The IARC, a working group of 30 of the world's top scientists, representing 14 countries, spent seven days studying the mechanics of wireless technology, reviewing all of the existing research, and examining all other relevant data. This review led to the class 2B possible carcinogen rating for cell phones. http://www.iarc.fr/en/media-centre/iarcnews/2011/Intr_Monog102.pdf

May 2012: Yale School of Medicine Researchers determined that exposure to cell phones during pregnancy affects the brain development of offspring, potentially leading to hyperactivity. “Taylor said that further research is needed in humans to better understand the mechanisms behind these findings and to establish safe exposure limits during pregnancy. Nevertheless, he said, limiting exposure of the fetus seems warranted.” <http://news.yale.edu/2012/03/15/cell-phone-use-pregnancy-may-cause-behavioral-disorders-offspring>

December 2010: A Danish study found a higher incidence of hyperactivity and behavior problems in children whose mothers used cell phones extensively during pregnancy. The study is ongoing: The behavior of the children will be evaluated again in a few years to see if the problem behaviors are still present and significant. <http://www.webmd.com/baby/news/20101206/cell-phone-use-in-pregnancy-risks-for-child>

These, and other studies, suggest that a “cautionary” approach to exposing everyone, especially young children, to even more wireless technology is warranted.

Having concerns, then, about the possible health risks of smart meters is both justifiable and reasonable. There should be no fee to opt out.

(Actually, there is enough evidence of possible health risks that DTE should be offering incentives for customers to opt in to smart meters, not forcing us all to accept them unless we opt out.)

The fact that many people have reported health problems (with amazingly similar symptoms) that began immediately after their smart meters were installed is another indication that it is wise to proceed with caution.

The opt out proposal DTE has finally presented is one of the most expensive in our country. It is insulting. Their proposal makes no allowances for the numerous people who are sensitive to RF, nor for people who have low incomes. Even a \$5 monthly fee would be a hardship for some families, and people who cannot tolerate RF will have enough problems dealing with smart meters everywhere; they should not have to pay more for their energy.

A monthly reading is not even necessary. DTE would only need to send someone to read the meter once or twice a year. In between actual readings, customers could either take and send their own meter readings to DTE; or they could pay an estimated amount. Rule 460.115 states that meters must be read only once a year.

2. ANALOG OPTION

There should be an analog option for anyone who wants one. The existing analog meters are in good working order, they are cheaper, they use no energy to operate, and they are the safest option.

DTE says it does not have a supplier, and customers have to get a new digital meter. DTE does not have a supplier because it doesn't want one. Analog meters are still available, and DTE can replace the smart meter of a customer who wants to opt out with an analog meter taken from the home or business of someone who doesn't want to opt out. Analog meters are widely available.

3. NO MORE SMART METER INSTALLATIONS UNTIL AN OPT OUT IS IN PLACE

In March 2012, a spokesperson for DTE announced that there would be an opt out. For months after that, however, **DTE still refused to allow customers to opt out.** When customers called to say they didn't want a smart meter, they were told they had no choice; there was no opt out in place yet. All the while, DTE continued to install as many smart meters as possible, in many cases, even when customers had tried to indicate they didn't want one. DTE is continuing to install on a daily basis, making it impossible for many people to avoid having a smart meter installed on their home. One woman I know had immediate and severe reactions to smart meter installation—dizziness, cognitive dysfunction, ringing in her ears, head pressure—and her two-year-old daughter got the first nosebleed of her life within hours of installation. All of these effects have been associated with smart meter installation around the country.

Now that DTE has finally announced its proposed opt out, it is one of the most expensive in our country. DTE has bullied customers and stalled long enough. There should be no further smart meter installations until a reasonable opt out has been agreed upon and is officially in place.

Businesses should be allowed to opt out.

Wireless technology is still new enough that we don't know everything. Clearly, more research is needed. However, there are enough reputable studies suggesting that a more cautious approach is warranted to justify a no fee opt out. Please insist upon it.

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