



TO: Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Matt Hubbard, Power Engineer, Tacoma Public Utilities
Jackie Flowers, Utilities Director, Tacoma Public Utilities
COPY: City Council and City Clerk
SUBJECT: Request for Ordinance to Adopt Revisions to TMC Title 12 in Support of the Advanced Metering Project and Compliance with the 2020 National Electric Code / First Reading August 25, 2020
DATE: July 31, 2020

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:

Tacoma Public Utilities requests an ordinance to adopt proposed revisions to the Tacoma Municipal Code, Title 12-Utilities. These revisions are essential for implementation of the Advanced Metering Infrastructure Project, provide clarity around demand meter billing for applicable electric meters, clarify physical disconnects related to unauthorized water usage, and include updates to TMC Chapter 12.06A for compliance with the 2020 edition of the National Electric Code.

BACKGROUND:

Tacoma Public Utilities (TPU) plans to deploy Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) across its entire water and electric service territories, replacing or upgrading all non-communicating power and water meters with advanced two-way communicating technology. Advanced metering is a foundational element of Tacoma Public Utilities' Utility Modernization Strategy and will deliver customers new key benefits over time related to their power and water usage. Advanced metering technology will capture interval data, enable two-way communications, include remote capabilities, and provide advanced outage/issue detection, and verification. Advanced metering will modernize utility operations and be a cornerstone to deliver customers improved services and benefits.

As a transformative initiative, the Advanced Metering Project has and continues to require a significant effort across TPU to implement the new processes, applications, technologies, and integrations needed to fully enable the functions and features of the solution. As part of this initiative, TPU has reviewed existing utility policies, procedures, and practices for essential changes required to implement advanced metering or to make other essential updates as needed.

Proposed revisions to the Tacoma Municipal Code, Title 12-Utilities (attached, with explanatory comments) include removing four references in TMC Chapter 12.06 to a demand meter being reset monthly. This reflects the more accurate metering capabilities of advanced metering, which uses more granular interval data for billing calculations. In addition, numerous revisions within TMC Chapter 12.06A are proposed to update references and bring the code into compliance with the 2020 National Electric Code. Lastly, the proposed revision to 12.10.110 B adds specificity that unauthorized water use is describing a physically disconnected service. This proposed addition is required to account for the future state of advanced metering when a water meter may be virtually disconnected; turned off for billing purposes but left physically on in the field.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ CUSTOMER RESEARCH:

The Advanced Metering Project will provide new benefits to residential and commercial utility customers. Before commencing on the project, market research was conducted across all customer groups and showed strong interest in new, modernized benefits, such as a web portal to view granular daily/hourly usage data, alert notifications, PrePay, and monthly billing. In addition, TPU continues ongoing community outreach with Tacoma's Neighborhood Council Meetings, Black Collective, Neighborhood Block Groups, Community Organizations (such as the Sunrise Rotary Club), Franchise Cities, Pierce County, and the Joint Municipal Action Committee.

ALTERNATIVES:

The alternative to this recommendation would be to **make no code changes**. Impacts of this alternative are that:

- Select sections of TMC Title 12 – Utilities would not reflect the updated operational state of TPU following implementation of advanced meters
- TMC 12.06A would not be in compliance with the 2020 National Electric Code

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:

As the Advanced Meter program progresses, TPU will review necessary policy/code changes to ensure consistency between the TMC and TPU's new operational state. Recommended code revisions will be brought forward as needed.

TMC Chapter 12.06A, Electrical Code, will be compared to future editions of the National Electric Code and revisions will be recommended as needed.

STAFF/SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:

TPU recommends adoption of the proposed revisions to the Tacoma Municipal Code Title 12 – Utilities. It is recommended that the proposed revisions be effective 9/1/2020, or as soon as reasonably feasible after adoption. These revisions include:

- Removing four references in TMC Chapter 12.06 to a demand meter being reset monthly. This reflects the more accurate metering capabilities of advanced metering, which uses more granular interval data for billing calculations.
- Numerous revisions within TMC Chapter 12.06A to update references and bring the code into compliance with the 2020 National Electric Code.
- Revise 12.10.110 B to add specificity that unauthorized water use is describing a physically disconnected service. This proposed addition is required to account for the future state of advanced metering when a water meter may be virtually disconnected; turned off for billing purposes but left physically on in the field.



FISCAL IMPACT:

None.

What Funding is being used to support the expense?

N/A

Are the expenditures and revenues planned and budgeted in this biennium's current budget?

N/A

Are there financial costs or other impacts of not implementing the legislation?

YES

Other impacts if not implemented:

- Select sections of TMC Title 12 – Utilities would not reflect the updated operational state of TPU following the implementation of advanced meters
- TMC 12.06A would not be in compliance with the 2020 National Electric Code

Will the legislation have an ongoing/recurring fiscal impact?

No

Will the legislation change the City's FTE/personnel counts?

No

ATTACHMENTS:

Proposed Tacoma Municipal Code Revisions and Explanatory Comments