



FIRE CHIEFS' ASSOCIATION OF BC
#9 – 715 Barrera Road
Kelowna, BC V1W 3C9
Phone: 250-862-2388
Email: fcabc@shaw.ca

May 23, 2012

FortisBC Inc
Suite 100, 1975 Springfield Road
Kelowna, BC V1Y 7V7

Dear Sirs:

As President of the Fire Chiefs' Association of British Columbia, I am writing to lend my support to FortisBC's application for the Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) or Smart Meter installation project.

Once fully operational Smart meters and the supporting infrastructure this system will allow the power supply to a home or business to be disconnected remotely during a fire. While waiting for a power line crew to arrive and disconnect at the utility pole, the utility can remotely de-energize at the meter, allowing for interim access inside the premises.

When installing the new meters, the utility will be checking and repairing faulty meter bases, which is a unique opportunity to identify and address meter base and related wiring issues, thus removing potential fire hazards that would have otherwise gone undetected.

Theft of electricity is occurring in increasingly dangerous ways. Tampering with the wires and other infrastructure on the grid creates a major safety risk to the general public, to us as first responders, and to the utility's employees. For example, in Surrey, approximately 50% of marijuana growing operations inspected by the fire department involved diversion of electricity from a utility's distribution lines.

Smart meter technology will make it much more difficult to steal electricity and will substantially reduce current levels of theft. Combined with other technology on the grid, the new meters will help to measure the flow of electricity throughout the grid and track it like a store's inventory system. This information will help the utility identify electricity theft that is occurring directly from the power lines more accurately and address it more quickly.

In addition, the new meters have a tamper detection feature that automatically notifies the utility if they have been removed from the wall or otherwise manipulated.

Power surges do occur and are a known fire hazard. The old electromechanical meters used only grounding for surge protection, while digital meters can protect up to a 385 volt surge. Smart meters can protect up to 575 volts providing further protection for the customer. In rare situations of a high power surge, the meter will stop the surge from travelling into a building.

Yours truly,



Len W. Garis,
Fire Chief, City of Surrey,
President, FCABC

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Kelowna BC V1W 1G5
Phone 250-862-2288
Email: [redacted]

May 22 2012

FortisBC
Suite 100, 115 Sandfield Road
Kelowna BC V1Y 1V7

Dear Sirs

As President of the Fire Chiefs Association of British Columbia I am writing to you in support of FortisBC's initiative for the Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) or Smart Meter installation project.

Once fully operational I am sure that the supporting infrastructure that you will allow the power supply to a home or business to be disconnected remotely during a fire. While waiting for a power line crew to arrive and disconnect at the utility pole, the utility can remotely de-energize the meter, allowing for initial access inside the premises.

When installing the new meter, the utility will be checking and testing fully meter cases, which is a unique opportunity to identify and address meter case and related wiring issues that removing meter for the reasons that would have otherwise gone unnoticed.

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