

Docket No. U-180525 - Vol. I

**Rulemaking Re Existing Consumer Protection and Meter
Rules**

February 21, 2019



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BEFORE THE WASHINGTON
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

RULEMAKING TO MODIFY EXISTING CONSUMER PROTECTION
AND METER RULES TO INCLUDE ADVANCED
METERING INFRASTRUCTURE

DOCKET NO. U-180525
PUBLIC COMMENT HEARING, VOLUME I
Pages 1-16

CHAIRMAN DANNER, COMMISSIONER RENDAHL AND
JAY BALASBAS

February 21, 2019
6:00 p.m.

Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
1300 South Evergreen Park Drive Southwest
Olympia, Washington 98504

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A P P E A R A N C E S

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1 OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON; FEBRUARY 21, 2019

2 6:00 P.M.

3 --oOo--

4 P R O C E E D I N G S

5
6 CHAIR DANNER: All right. Good evening.

7 Today is February 21st, 2019, and this is a meeting of
8 the Utilities and Transportation Commission. And we're
9 here tonight to take public comment in a rulemaking
10 regarding advanced metering infrastructure for natural
11 gas and electric utilities, and this is Docket U-180525.

12 My name is Dave Danner. I'm Chair of the
13 Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission, and
14 I'm joined by my colleagues, Commissioner Ann Rendahl
15 and Commissioner Jay Balasbas.

16 Smart electric meters are electronic devices
17 that track and record the use of electricity in
18 customers' homes. The electric utility companies and
19 other utilities have been replacing analog meters that
20 are read manually each month with new digital smart
21 meters. In general, these smart meters automatically
22 capture information about electricity and natural gas
23 consumption and then transmitted back to the companies.

24 In a previous docket, the Commission issued
25 a policy statement regarding advanced metering

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1 infrastructure, specifically on the issue of whether a
2 customer could opt out of having an advanced meter. We
3 have approved opt-out tariffs for most utilities.

4 We're not revisiting that issue in the
5 current docket or in our meeting tonight. Rather
6 tonight we're looking for public feedback on the issues
7 related to data privacy, remote disconnection, customer
8 billing, prepaid services, customer deposits, and meter
9 management.

10 We've already received many written comments
11 from utilities, utility customers, public interest
12 groups, trade groups, and individual citizens. We'll be
13 reviewing those comments as well as comments received
14 tonight in our deliberations. We will also be holding a
15 workshop on these issues on March 13th at the Commission
16 offices here. It's our intention to review the comments
17 that we have received and that we will receive,
18 incorporate changes to the draft rule as we deem
19 appropriate, and it's our intent to complete our
20 rulemaking in the coming months.

21 I want to thank everyone who has come out
22 tonight to share your thoughts with us. I know that
23 many people have come a long distance and that all of
24 you are taking time out of your busy schedules, and I
25 very much appreciate it.

1 Before we begin, I would like to point out
2 that Public Counsel is in the room tonight. Public
3 Counsel is an office in the Attorney General's Office
4 that represents the interests of ratepayers in
5 proceedings before the Commission. So if any of you
6 have questions about the proceeding, I encourage you to
7 talk to them. They have actually done a fact sheet on
8 this proceeding, and it's at the table tonight for your
9 benefit.

10 All right. So without further ado, I would
11 like to -- I see we have a number of people who are --
12 have signed in but not wishing to speak, but let's --
13 let's go ahead -- unless there's any comments from my
14 colleagues, just get into it.

15 All right. Ken Morris, are you here? Come
16 forward.

17 MR. MORRIS: Yeah.

18 CHAIR DANNER: Yeah, have a seat. There's a
19 microphone there.

20 MR. MORRIS: Okay. I would like to not
21 speak if that's okay. I wrote "maybe" on there and
22 so --

23 CHAIR DANNER: You did say maybe, okay.

24 MR. MORRIS: Yes, I did. And would there be
25 opportunity later to speak or you do the public comments

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1 first or...

2 CHAIR DANNER: We have actually received
3 three comments, so your time to speak -- or decide to
4 may be very soon.

5 MR. MORRIS: Okay. Well, I won't comment at
6 this time.

7 COMMISSIONER RENDAHL: We've received a
8 number of written comments. I have an entire binder
9 filled with written comments, so it's not that we
10 haven't received comments yet in this docket just to
11 clarify, so...

12 CHAIR DANNER: All right. So, Teri Sahm,
13 would you come forward, please?

14 MS. SAHM: Can you hear me?

15 CHAIR DANNER: No. Is the light on? And
16 you can move that towards you.

17 MS. SAHM: Oh, I can. Perfect. How about
18 now?

19 CHAIR DANNER: That's great.

20 MS. SAHM: Okay. Very good. Good evening,
21 everyone. My name is Teri Sahm. I represent the
22 Washington Jural Assembly, and we are a group of people,
23 living men and women, standing on the soil, and we are
24 working to bring American common law back to our nation
25 state. And so we represent all of the people in

1 Washington State and share our concerns and wanted to
2 make an additional statement this evening with regard to
3 our concern of the safety of the smart meters. And I
4 know that you had a list of specific questions that you
5 presented, but we feel that we have addressed those
6 questions in our previous submission, so wanted to go on
7 the record this evening saying that we did answer the
8 questions that were presented this time around in our
9 previous entry.

10 But we also wanted to revisit the issue of
11 safety of smart meters in general and echo the fact that
12 there are hundreds of scientists around the world who
13 are sounding the alarm of the dangers of smart meters.
14 And so I wanted to go on the record with that statement
15 and encourage you to look very closely at the data that
16 we have presented.

17 We submitted over about 1400 pages of
18 research and resources and information for you. Some of
19 the research comes from our own University of
20 Washington, Dr. Henry Lai, and it's spelled L-a-i. I
21 may be pronouncing it incorrectly. But he and his
22 bio-initiative organization have valuable, extremely
23 valuable information that has been studied now for
24 decades, and I would encourage you to take a very close
25 look at that.

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1 In addition, we just had a professor from
2 Washington -- or excuse me, WSU who came out speaking
3 out against the idea of 5G and smart meters as well.
4 And so I would encourage you to look at that.

5 What is of concern here is that this
6 technology is dangerous to all living things. It is
7 dangerous to all of us people here in the room, it is
8 dangerous particularly to children, it is dangerous to
9 our living plants, it is dangerous to the birds, the
10 bees, the bugs, the sea life. It's dangerous to all
11 living creatures. And we are considering life at the
12 expense of a faster mobile phone or a faster download?
13 I think we need to consider these priorities very
14 carefully.

15 And so I just wanted to, again, make the
16 statement to please look at the safety of this. We have
17 requested that this rollout be halted until the safety
18 can be accurately assessed. Do you have any questions
19 for me?

20 CHAIR DANNER: Are there any questions for
21 Ms. Sahm?

22 Okay. I do have a question about the WSU
23 professor; do you recall his name?

24 MS. SAHM: I have it back here.

25 CHAIR DANNER: And it's in the comments that

1 you submitted?

2 MS. SAHM: Yeah -- no.

3 CHAIR DANNER: It's not.

4 MS. SAHM: He just came out I believe it was
5 yesterday or the day before. And I can leave a copy of
6 the article with you.

7 CHAIR DANNER: Yeah, or just his name would
8 be sufficient.

9 MS. SAHM: Yeah, sorry, didn't bring it with
10 me.

11 CHAIR DANNER: No, that's all right. I'd be
12 interested to see, especially if you have it handy.

13 MS. SAHM: I do.

14 CHAIR DANNER: That would be great.

15 So the word "jural," could you explain that
16 word to me? That is new to me.

17 MS. SAHM: Jural?

18 CHAIR DANNER: Yes.

19 MS. SAHM: Jural assemblies? If we go back
20 to our founding fathers, in the beginning of the
21 creation of our wonderful country here, they had what
22 were called jural assemblies of people that got together
23 in their cities and counties and their nation states.
24 And the jural assemblies were based on common law
25 government.

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1 Common law government is where the people
2 take responsibility for their government. And typically
3 the flow of government, the way that it's supposed to
4 work, the way that it really does work but we've been
5 told otherwise, is that people hold the most power. And
6 you then go to your city or your -- to your city and
7 that would be the next level of power, your county would
8 be the next level of power, your nation state would be
9 the next level of power. Each nation state is a
10 sovereign nation unto itself.

11 And so the jural assemblies are people that
12 gather to self-govern and self-govern their city, their
13 county, and their nation state.

14 CHAIR DANNER: All right. Thank you very
15 much.

16 MS. SAHM: My pleasure.

17 CHAIR DANNER: Are there other questions for
18 Ms. Sahn?

19 All right. Thank you very much. I
20 appreciate your comments, and your written comments
21 are -- are with us, so we will make sure that those are
22 part of our deliberations.

23 MS. SAHM: Thank you so much.

24 CHAIR DANNER: Appreciate you coming out
25 tonight.

1 MR. MORRIS: Mr. Chairman?

2 CHAIR DANNER: Yes?

3 MR. MORRIS: I would like to speak --

4 CHAIR DANNER: Yeah, of course.

5 MR. MORRIS: -- if I may.

6 CHAIR DANNER: All right. Mr. Morris?

7 MR. MORRIS: Thank you. Thank you,

8 Mr. Chairman and members of the board. My name is Ken

9 Morris. I'm the chairman of the -- of the Olympia Tea

10 Party also known as Informed Citizen Network. And I

11 have an antidote to share with you that might help in --

12 just for a matter of perspective.

13 Part of my background is that I am a private

14 pilot, and part of the training of a private pilot is to

15 understand the navigational equipment available to all

16 pilots for that matter. One of these is called a VOR.

17 It's a very high frequency omnidirectional beacon, and

18 it's used for navigation. It's being displaced by

19 things like GPS and such.

20 But it's a high frequency emitter and -- and

21 it's actually two waves. And I won't go into the

22 technicality of it, but one film that I remembered from

23 the pilot training was that these are very high energy

24 sorts of things, not unlike cell towers, et cetera. And

25 birds will fly close -- flying close enough will

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1 actually fall out of the air dead.

2 Now, obviously we're talking about perhaps
3 different equipment but very similar in many, many
4 respects. So the -- I believe that the public is
5 being -- is concerned with the proliferation of a lot of
6 high frequency types of devices in the neighborhoods.

7 As a practical matter, my concern as -- as a
8 homeowner is whether or not I have a smart meter. I
9 will be addressing that with my utility company, but I
10 would like to know, is there a process or could there be
11 a process incorporated into the regulations or however
12 this -- whatever you call it. I'm not that familiar
13 with your terminology, but how the Commission's
14 authority to require that if my neighbor's smart meter
15 is radiating me with radiation over the limit deemed
16 safe, there needs -- my feeling is there needs to be a
17 process which can address that and in some fashion
18 reduce that so that I'm not adversely health-affected by
19 that.

20 So I will just leave my antidote and my
21 request that you consider that, and thank you very much
22 for your time. And if you have any questions.

23 CHAIR DANNER: All right. Thank you very
24 much.

25 Are there any questions for Mr. Morris?

1 All right. Thank you. So yeah, we
2 appreciate your comments.

3 MR. MORRIS: Okay. Thank you, sir.

4 CHAIR DANNER: Appreciate that.

5 All right. I'm gonna try my best here with
6 the handwriting, Matthew Haynard? Did I get that
7 correct?

8 MR. HAYWARD: Hayward.

9 CHAIR DANNER: Hayward, okay.

10 MR. HAYWARD: I'm just going to listen.

11 CHAIR DANNER: You're just going to listen,
12 okay. Very good.

13 And that is all I have on the sign-up sheet.
14 I see some other people have come in. Is there anyone
15 else looking to speak to us tonight?

16 Okay. So that is the end of our sign-in
17 sheet. We are going to -- oh, let me ask, is there
18 anybody on the bridge line who is wishing to speak to
19 these rules? Anybody on the phone?

20 All right. So -- so with that, we will
21 close the hearing for tonight. Again, we're going to
22 have a workshop on March 13th. I believe it starts at
23 9:30 in the morning, and we will go more into depth on
24 many of these issues. And, again, we are going to
25 proceed and deliberate and determine how we want to

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1 address any changes as appropriate in the draft order.

2 So unless there's anything more to come
3 before the Commission tonight, I am prepared to adjourn
4 the meeting, and I have just done so. All right. Thank
5 you.

6 (Break was taken from 6:16 p.m.
7 until 6:24 p.m.)

8 CHAIR DANNER: All right. So I think
9 because we do -- you know, we had this before just
10 recently where we had 6 o'clock and we adjourned early
11 and we had a number of people show up after. And so we
12 just want to make sure that people have an opportunity,
13 if they're on the freeway and for some reason they can't
14 get down here in time. Although, somebody came from
15 Fall City and they had no problem getting here so...

16 MS. SAHM: Took a long time.

17 CHAIR DANNER: I'm not saying that, I'm just
18 saying you made it on time.

19 All right. We will just chill for a little
20 bit. So -- yeah, is there somebody on the bridge line
21 who wishes to share their comments tonight? Okay.

22 (Break was taken from 6:25 p.m.
23 until 6:36 p.m.)

24 CHAIR DANNER: Okay. Folks, I think we are
25 going to call it for the evening. So thank you all for

1 coming. I do appreciate it.

2 (Adjourned at 6:36 p.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF WASHINGTON
COUNTY OF THURSTON

I, Tayler Garlinghouse, a Certified Shorthand Reporter in and for the State of Washington do hereby certify that the foregoing transcript is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge, skill and ability.



Tayler Garlinghouse

Tayler Garlinghouse, CCR 3358