



BRAINERD PUBLIC UTILITIES

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Opt-Out Meter Reading Fee

BPU_POL_2021-01

Latest Revision/Effective Date: July 28, 2026

Original Adoption Date: January 26, 2021

I. Purpose

To establish guidelines, responsibilities, and associated fees for Brainerd Public Utilities (BPU) customers who formally choose to opt out of the installation of Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) electric and/or water meters at their residential properties.

II. Scope

This policy applies to all BPU residential customers requesting an exemption from AMI meter deployment, as well as the utility personnel responsible for billing, account estimation, and physical meter inspection.

III. Definitions

AMI (Advanced Metering Infrastructure): An integrated system of smart meters, communications networks, and data management systems that enables two-way communication between utilities and customers.

Opt-Out: A formal request by a utility customer to bypass the standard installation of wireless or smart digital utility meters, keeping or replacing them with a non-communicating alternative.

Estimated Consumption: An approximate calculation of utility usage applied to a billing cycle when actual, verified meter readings are unavailable.

IV. Policy Statement

When a Brainerd Public Utilities (BPU) customer requests to opt-out from having an AMI electric and/or water meter installed at their residence, the customer is required to read their meters each month and submit the readings to BPU for billing purposes. If the readings are not received by the billing date, the electric and/or water consumption(s) will be estimated.

It is necessary that BPU physically read the customer's meters in June and December of each year. The customer will be charged a reading fee as set by the approved fee schedule on their utility bill for each of these months.

BPU requires utility meters to always be accessible to BPU personnel. BPU has the right to access a customer's residence or business at reasonable times, whether it is for the reading, inspection, repairing and/or replacing an electric and/or water meter, or for some other purpose reasonably necessary for the proper management of the utility service.

V. Procedures

1. **Monthly Customer Reporting:** Customers must personally record metrics from their electric and/or water meters each month. Readings must be submitted directly to BPU prior to the designated monthly billing date.
2. **Billing Penalties for Non-Reporting:** If the customer's self-readings are not received by the billing date, the electric and/or water consumption(s) will automatically be estimated for that cycle.
3. **Mandatory Bi-Annual Utility Readings:** BPU service staff must physically read the opt-out customer's meters twice per year. These mandatory physical checks occur strictly in June and December.
4. **Fee Assessment:** A meter reading fee will be automatically charged to the customer's utility bill in accordance to BPU schedule of fees during the months of June and December to cover the cost of manual processing.

VI. Roles and Responsibilities

1. **The Customer:** Accountable for submitting monthly meter data on time, paying the bi-annual service fee, and maintaining clear, uninhibited access to all utility equipment on their property.
2. **BPU Field Personnel:** Responsible for conducting physical reads, routine inspections, maintenance, and equipment replacements at reasonable hours.
3. **BPU Billing Department:** Accountable for applying accurate usage data, projecting consumption estimates when data is missing and assessing the applicable fee in June and December.

VII. Compliance and References

None.

VIII. Associated Forms and Attachments

None.

IX. Review and Update Schedule

This policy shall be reviewed as necessary, to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations, alignment with utility billing and collection practices, and continued protection of the financial interests of Brainerd Public Utilities and its customers.

Revised: July 28, 2026

X. Approval and Authority

The Brainerd Public Utilities Commission has the authority to approve, amend, and repeal this policy. Upon approval by the Commission, the policy shall be implemented, administered, and enforced by the Finance Manager or their designee.