



NETWORK

ELECTRICAL CONTRACTOR Frequently Asked Questions

NOVEMBER 2017

Why is the industry moving to digital meters?

Apart from our isolated diesel powered systems in remote and regional Queensland, the Ergon Energy Network is part of the National Electricity Market. The Power of Choice reforms are a new set of rules being brought in by the National Energy Regulator. These rules make the installation of Type 4 digital (interval) meters mandatory when a new or replacement meter is needed. This change is coming into effect on 1 December 2017.

What is a Type 4 meter / Digital meter?

Retailers are using the term 'Type 4 digital (interval) meter' to describe a meter that records power use in 30 minute intervals, has a digital display and has a remote communications device which allows for remote meter reads in a 3G/4G network area. These are also known as Type 4 digital meters with communications.

What does the move to digital meters mean for our customers?

1. The introduction of this new digital metering technology, is intended to give customers more control in managing their electricity:
 - Power use data is captured data every 30 minutes, giving families more visibility over their electricity consumption
 - Monthly billing allows for better budget management
 - Customers are likely to be able to view their electricity usage online on a daily, monthly or yearly basis and, in time, project their final bills and set alerts to better manage their power use.

Who will customers have to contact about meter installations, replacements and upgrades?

From 1 December, customers will deal solely with their chosen Retailer for all requests in relation to the installation, update or maintenance of metering services.

Customers may see more electricity industry provides (e.g. meter providers) on site to conduct work at their premises when they submit a request, to their retailer, to install, update or maintain their electricity supply (e.g. Distribution Network field crew (Ergon Energy Network), Meter Providers and Electrical Contractors).

Questions that customers may ask:

1. What is a Type 4 Meter / Digital Meter?

- Type 4 digital (interval) meters (also known as Interval Meters, Advanced Meters Comms Enabled Meters and/or Type 4 Meters) capture half hourly electricity consumption readings and can be read remotely.
- Type 4 digital meters is the term used by us in reference to new meters being installed by retailers.

2. Can I opt out of a new Type 4 digital meter?

- A customer can refuse to have a Type 4 digital meter, in which case, the new digital meter will still be installed, but the communications capability is not installed. This meter is known as a Type 4A. Type 4A meters are not recommended as many of the customer benefits of having a digital meter are lost.

3. How much will the new meters cost and will customers be charged?

- Yes there will be a charge for a new meter. Retailers are currently finalising pricing for digital meters – for more information please contact your respective Retailer.

4. Will it take longer to have my electricity connected?

- Retailers will co-ordinate requests for all new connections, replacement meters and service upgrades so that they can reduce the likelihood of electricity supply work taking longer.

5. Are digital meters a health concern?

- No. The RF EMR emissions from digital meters are regulated by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA). ACMA's regulatory arrangements require wireless devices, including digital meters, to comply with the exposure limits in the ARPANSA RF Standard. For more information visit the ACMA website.

The introduction of Power of Choice Reforms will result in a number of key market changes and will lead to more benefits for our customers. The table below highlights some of the changes you can expect:

EXISTING TYPE 6 METERS	TYPE 4 DIGITAL METERS (WITH COMMS)
Current Type 6 basic meters are read manually on a quarterly basis.	Type 4 digital (interval) meters with communications can be read remotely and capture data every 30 minutes.
Electricity bills are currently synced to three monthly meter reads.	Monthly billing options can provide more manageable bills.
All Type 6 basic meters currently require manual reads at the customer premises.	Type 4 digital meters can be read remotely with meter data uploaded by 3G / 4G every 24 hours.
Tariff changes currently require a site visit.	Fast tariff changes with remote capability to switch tariffs are possible with the new Type 4 digital (interval) meters

EXISTING TYPE 6 METERS**TYPE 4 DIGITAL METERS (WITH COMMS)**

Distribution network teams must attend site to de-energise or re-energise a premises.

Disconnects can now be undertaken remotely (no truck roll for de-energisations), making it faster and easier. Remote reconnections are currently not allowed under legislation, but these will be possible if this legislation changes in the future.

Retailers will be able to remotely carry out vacant property reads at a customer's request.

Connection and Metering

What does churn a meter mean?

Meter Churn refers to when a Type 6 Basic meter is replaced by a new Type 4 Digital Meter.

What is the difference in responsibility of the Distributor (Ergon Energy) and the Metering Provider (MP)?

It is anticipated the Distributor will attend site first to complete the supply service component and connect to the Meter Isolation Link. The Metering Provider will follow within 10 business days to install the metering. Where the Metering Provider has engaged Ergon to perform the metering component, Ergon will complete metering works at the same time as the supply works.

When are customers expected to change from Type 6 meters to Type 4 meters?

Where the customer's existing Type 6 meter is at the end of its life, fails, or cannot perform the required functions it will be replaced with a Digital Meter (Type 4). Alternatively, a Retailer may run meter replacement campaigns requesting customers to change.

Will there be additional time added to when the new connection is completed now there is a Metering Provider involved in the process?

The Distributor will continue to connect supply within the same timeframe with the Metering Provider to attend shortly after to complete the metering work. The Metering Provider will attend within 10 business days of supply work being completed. Where the Metering Provider has engaged Ergon to perform the metering component, Ergon will complete the metering works at the same time as the supply works.

Will all Type 4 meters be read remotely?

Yes, unless a Type 4A meter has been installed. Type 4A meters will be installed where a customer has opted out of Type 4 or the location does not have wireless communications available.

Is there a difference between the size of the current Type 6 meters and the new Type 4 meters?

Yes, there is a difference in the size of the currently Type 6 meters and the new Type 4 meters. The new Type 4 meters are slightly bigger in size.

Sizes and space requirements defined in the Queensland Electricity Connections Metering Manual (QECMM) cater for both metering types and sizes.

Will all Metering Providers (MPs) be installing the same brand of Type 4 metering?

The type of meter will be the same (Type 1-4); however, the Brand of the metering is likely to differ.

Will the Ergon Energy Electrical Contractor Hotline still be available for technical enquiries Post 1 December 2017?

Yes, you will still be able to contact the Ergon Energy Electrical Contractor Hotline for technical enquiries. It is preferred that you refer to the QECMM initially before phoning the Electrical Contractor Hotline.

Will the Meter Provider (MP) be responsible for the installation of a Controlled Load device?

From 1 December 2017, the Controlled Load device is required to be a separate network device and will continue to be installed by Ergon Energy.

Who should be contacted if the Metering Provider has not attended site after Ergon Energy has completed their work?

You should contact the customer's Electricity Retailer as they will be able to provide an update on the status of their Meter Providers (MP) work.

Will I need to select new metering types on the Form A to facilitate the installation of Type 4 metering?

The metering selection types available on the Electrical Partners Portal (EPP) will not change.

Does the Metering Provider offer Third Party Billing arrangements?

You will need to discuss this with the Electricity Retailer / Metering Provider as to whether they provide the option of Third Party Billing.

When upgrading a NMI from single phase to multiphase, who is responsible for upgrading the meter panel if there are space restrictions in the existing panel?

The Electrical Contractor completing the multi-phase upgrade will be responsible for upgrading the meter panel to accommodate the extra space required.

Can a Metering Provider relocate existing Type 6 Meters?

No, a Meter Provider can only relocate the metering owned by them. The distributor is required to move the Type 6 Meters.

If a Type 6 meter and its meter box is damaged as a result of a natural disaster, who will be responsible for the replacement of the meter and the rectification of the meter box?

If a customer's installation is damaged as a result of a natural disaster, the Electrical Contractor would be required to make repairs as per the current process. If as a result of the damage the Type 6 Meter was unable to be replaced a Meter Fault and Issue Notification would be sent to the Retailer and a Type 4 Meter would be required to be installed.

I need to replace the property pole at a customer's premise. New consumer mains and meter isolation links are also required as the meter panel will need to be relocation to the new pole, will this force the metering to churn to Type 4?

Existing Type 6 meter:

If there is no change in load requirements and only a Point of Attachment Relocation and Move Meter is required, then there is no requirement for a meter change.

Existing Type 4 meter:

If there is no change in load requirements and only a Point of Attachment Relocation and Move Meter is required, Ergon and the Metering Provider will work together to coordinate an appointment to complete all components of the job.

My customer is installing Solar – will they still be able to have a Type 4 Meter?

Yes, all meters installed after 1 December 2017 are required to be Type 4 Digital Meters.

Where on the board should the MIL and MNL be mounted?

This is as per the existing process as stipulated in the Queensland Electricity Connections Metering Manual.

When will a coordinated appointment be required?

New Connections

New Connections will only require a coordinated appointment when transferring from a Temporary Builders Supply to a Permanent Connection.

Existing Connections

Already connected premises will only need a coordinated appointment when cutting over to a new switchboard or if the existing meter needs to be exchanged. This is to ensure the customer is not left without power for an extended period of time.

Is there a specific end date for when all required paperwork is to be submitted to ensure the customer receives a new Type 4 Digital Meter?

There is no end date for Type 4 Meter installations.

What is the process to restore a customer's supply in an emergency?

If the customer has lost power due to a metering fault, regardless of the metering type, Ergon Energy will attend and bypass the meter to restore supply to the customer. They will then issue a

Meter Fault and Issue Notification to the Retailer to notify them of the situation. The Retailer will ensure the Meter Provider attends to rectify the metering fault.

Will Ergon Energy continue to perform move meter services?

Ergon Energy will not move a Type 6 meter in the Ergon Distribution Network area. This request will initiate a meter churn.

Will I still need to submit paperwork on the portal if the meter seal had to be broken?

Yes, you must still submit the relative form via the EPP to notify of a broken meter seal. Ergon Energy will then notify the relevant Retailer.

Will Ergon know if the customer has been remotely disconnected?

The Meter Provider (MP) will be able to submit a notification to advise the customer has been remotely disconnected.

How will I know who the Retailer is?

Your customer should advise their Retailer to you.

Can I still speak to Ergon regarding the fees associated with metering?

You will need to refer to your customer's Retailer for the fees associated with metering as the Electricity Retailer's Metering Provider is now responsible for metering.

Can I still order LVCT Meter Kits like I do now?

The CT meter is the responsibility of the Retailer and Metering co-ordinator. Ergon will still provide the LVCT kit upon receipt of the LVCT equipment order form and approval of the switchboard drawings. You can continue to order LV CT Metering Kits as you do today.

Will the portal notify the electrical contractor when the DNSP has connected up to the MIL?

Yes, the portal will continue to send email notification of when Ergon Network have connected up to the MIL.

Is the Distributor still responsible for providing the NMI number?

Yes, the Distributor will still be responsible for providing the NMI number.

Where will the meter number be located on the meter?

This is dependent on the meter you have installed. Please contact your Metering Provider for further information.

Who appoints the Metering Coordinator?

The Metering Coordinator is appointed by the Retailer through a contract. The Metering Coordinator then appoints a Metering Provider and Metering Data Provider.

Who is responsible for the disconnection of the relay and the disposal of it?

The DNSP is responsible for the removal and disposal of a relay.

Will there be different processes for lodging defect notices for each Metering Provider?

Yes, each Metering Provider may have a different process for lodging defects. Please contact your Metering Provider for further information.

Customer Related Questions

Will the customer lose their 44 cent Feed in Tariff (FiT) if they change their Retailer?

The customer should not lose their Solar 44 cent FiT entitlement when changing Electricity Retailers. Customers should refer to their Retailer for further information around Solar Feed In Tariff entitlements.

Who should customers call if they have questions regarding the accuracy of their metering?

The customer should contact their Electricity Retailer for all enquiries relating to their account and metering.

If I move from Ergon Retail to another Retailer, can I decided to come back to Ergon Retail?

Once an Ergon Retail customer switches to another Retailer they are currently unable to return to Ergon Retail.

Fees & Charges

Will there be additional costs for customers with the inclusion of Metering Providers?

Customers will need to refer to their Electricity Retailer for any costs associated with their metering and services.

Portal

What number do I call if I am having an issue with the Ergon Electrical Partners Portal?

Electrical Contractors Hotline - 1800 237 466 Option 2 – Form A Enquiries or email SIPortalAdministration@ergon.com.au for general EPP enquiries.

Will the PoC terminology on the Electrical Partner Portal & Ergon Energy website be updated?

Any PoC terminology changes will be ready for go-live on 1 December 2017.