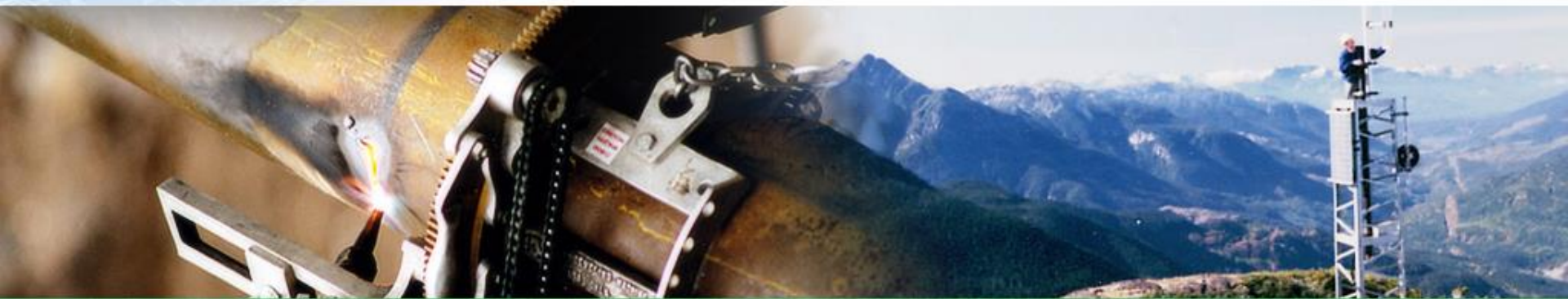




# Automated Meter Reading Community Information Session

February 2020

Presented by Dwain McRae (PNG)  
and Paul Frost (Util-Assist)

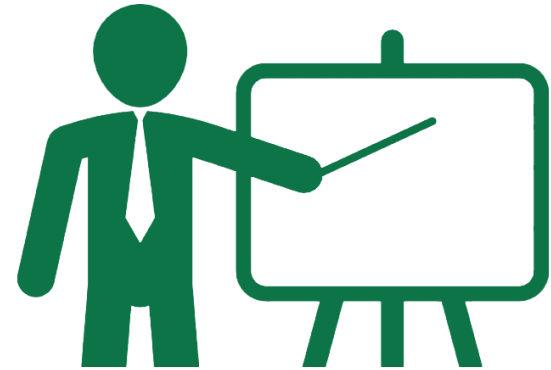


## Purpose of the Session

- To inform the public and gather comments and feedback regarding PNG's plan to implement Automated Meter Reading (AMR) later this year.
- To notify that PNG will be applying to the BC Utilities Commission for approval to deploy the technology. Feedback from this session to be included in the application.

# Agenda

1. Project Overview
2. Introducing AMR
3. Why Implement AMR?
4. Next Steps
5. Common Concerns
6. Question and Answer Period



# Project Overview

# Project Highlights

- Proposed installation of automated meter reading (AMR) technology at homes and businesses in:
  - Fort St. John area
  - Dawson Creek area
  - Tumbler Ridge area
- The plan is to start installations in Fall 2020, following regulatory approval
- Project vendor is Itron, a leading manufacturer of meters and reading technology



# Project Highlights

- AMR will:
  - ✓ Improve the efficiency of meter reading and gas billing
  - ✓ Improve safety for employees
  - ✓ Prevent reading and recording errors
  - ✓ Increase the quality of customer service by eliminating estimated billing

# Introducing AMR

# Automated Meter Reading

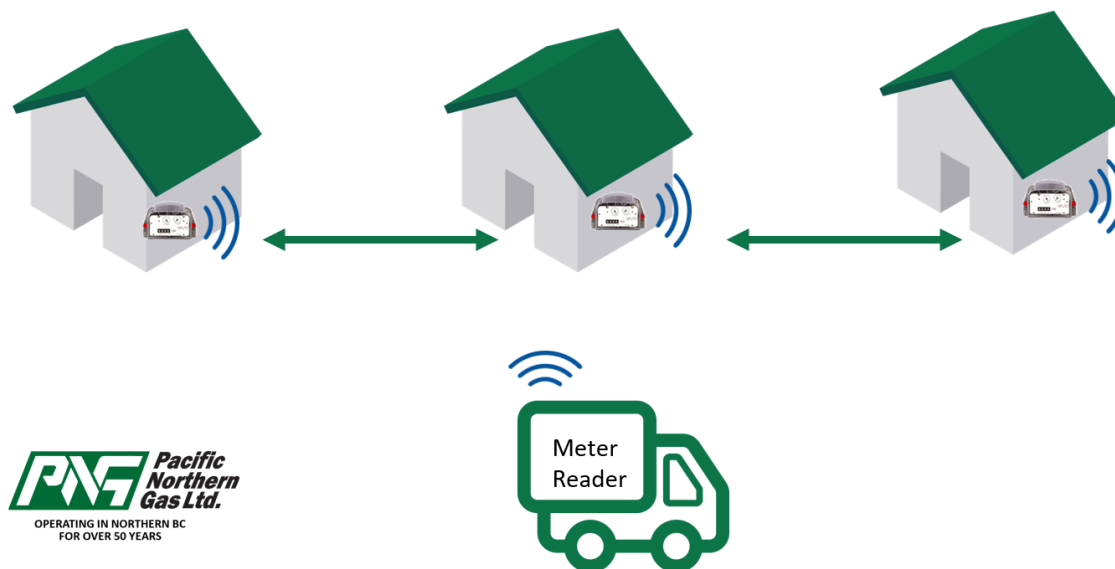
- Replaces traditional meter reading with a radio-based option
- An ERT (encoder receiver transmitter) is attached to each meter
- Meter collects data on how much gas is used and when
- Automatic reading enhances accuracy by avoiding human error





# Automated Meter Reading

- When the reader passes nearby (on foot or in a vehicle), the current meter reading is sent to the reader.



- The reader can collect and store thousands of readings very quickly.

# Why Implement AMR?

# Access and Accuracy

- Access issues can mean that a meter reader is unable to reach the meter to take a reading:
  - Unrestrained animals
  - Locked or blocked gates
  - Ice buildup on meter
- Today, if a reading cannot be taken, the bill is prepared based on estimated usage, which can vary considerably from actual usage.
- AMR eliminates this issue, ensuring that accurate readings are available every month.



# Employee Health and Safety

- On-foot meter reading has numerous risks:
  - Animals
  - Premise/slip-and-fall hazards
  - Inclement weather
- By avoiding premise visits, AMR keeps workers safe and ensures customer privacy.



# Environmental Benefits

- Generally supports the intent of the BC greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction objectives
- Eliminates use of five vehicles associated with meter reading activities:
  - Each vehicle travels ~13,000 km per year and contributes ~4 tonnes of CO2 equivalent GHG emissions per year



# Cost Savings

- AMR will provide cost savings for PNG's customers in several ways:
  - Fewer people and vehicles required to read meters
  - Reduces labour costs
  - Reduces vehicle operating costs



# Next Steps

# AMR Rollout

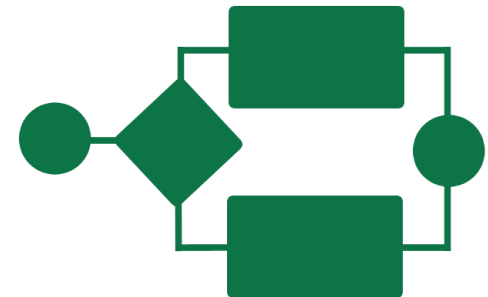
- The project will start Fall 2020, contingent upon regulatory approval
- Commercial and residential customers will keep their existing meters
- An ERT will be retrofitted to each meter





# Installation Process

- The ERT installation will be performed by Itron contractors and PNG personnel.
- Users will be notified by a letter with their bill, via social media, and through a notice published in the newspaper.
- The installation takes only 10 - 15 minutes with no interruption to service during this process.
- As long as PNG has access to your meter, no one needs to be home for the installation.



# Common Questions

# Safety Standards

- ERT modules meet Industry Canada standards for radio frequency (RF) safety
- No demonstrated relationship between RF emissions and human health
- RF emissions from ERTs are much lower than devices such as cell phones or microwave ovens



# Safety Standards

- Additional factors:
  - Limited time on the air: ERTs transmit for very short intervals, spread throughout the day. RF exposure is a fraction of the limits specified by the U.S. Federal Communications Commission and Industry Canada.
  - Low power: ERTs uses a fraction of one watt, powered by a 20-year battery.
  - Limited proximity to humans: ERTs are typically installed outside. RF energy falls off quickly with distance, so exposure is much lower than from other RF devices located within the home.



# What Will It Cost?

- There will be no additional cost to customers for the AMR technology or implementation.
- The AMR implementation is expected to save PNG's customers money over the life of the technology.



# Question and Answer Period

For more  
information, contact:

**PNG Customer Care Centre**  
[AMRproject@png.ca](mailto:AMRproject@png.ca)  
1-800-667-2297