FAQs – Advanced Metering Infrastructure Project

What is an advanced meter?
An advanced meter is a digital device that not only reads usage data for electricity, but transmits that data to us over a secure wireless network. Unlike the current analog meters, advanced meters do not need to be read by a meter reader and provides two-way communication for improved efficiencies and outage management.

Is that the same as a smart meter?
Yes, these meters are sometimes referred to as "smart meters." The word "smart" is often being used in the utility industry because the technology being installed is helping make the power grid and distribution system smarter.

Why do the meters need to be changed?
Unfortunately, our current meter infrastructure is aging and needs replaced. Instead of replacing the meters with a similar product, we looked at making an investment in state-of-the art infrastructure that will provide long-term reliability and greater benefits to our residents and businesses. Doing so with advanced meters will enable us to provide a higher level of service and quicker response times.

I heard that advanced meters are an invasion of privacy. Is this true?
That is another myth commonly heard about advanced meters. These meters measure how much energy you use, based on the time of day, and not how you use that energy. We also adhere to strict policies, following state laws that regulate the use of personal information for business functions, like billing and customer service. We keep your data private and secure.

How will I be notified of the installation process?
We will communicate in advance of the installation process, including a customer letter. We also will contact customers a few days in advance to remind them that we will be in the neighborhood replacing meters.

What can I expect when a meter is installed?
A typical electric meter will take approximately 5 minutes to replace. In order to do the work safely, your electric service will be turned off briefly while the work is being done. As long as they can access your meter, you do not have to be present for this work. If you are not at home at the time of the replacement, a door hanger will be left to let you know the work was complete. If they are not able to access the meter, a door hanger will be left providing you information to reschedule.

Will my account and usage information remain confidential?
Our system adheres to the best practices and standards for cyber security and privacy. Our meters and associated communications system also are encrypted and equipped with security measures to prevent unauthorized access and detect attempts at theft.

Moreover, companies, from utilities to developers, are working with federal agencies, such as the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Energy, and the National Institute of

Standards and Technology, to strengthen privacy and security standards to provide even more safeguards for consumer protection.

I heard that advanced meters are not as reliable as analog meters?
This has been a common recurring myth that often comes up during meter installation. The truth is that advanced meters are rigorously tested for accuracy even before they leave the manufacturing plant. They are subject to strict manufacturing design standards set by the American National Standards Institute. In many cases, it has been found that advanced meters are often more accurate than older analog meters.

Are advanced meters safe?
Yes, advanced meters are safe. They must meet safety requirements and standards as defined by the National Electric Safety Code. These meters are installed only by trained professionals, who exercise standard safety precautions.

Do advanced meters pose a health threat because of the wireless communication?
No, in fact, no credible evidence shows any threat to human health from radio frequency emissions at or below radio frequency exposure limits developed by the Federal Communication Commission (FCC). With over 25,000 articles published on the topic over the last 30 years, scientific knowledge in this area is now more extensive than for most chemicals.

Will the meter or communication system interfere with my home or business equipment?
Advanced meters should not adversely affect the stability or performance of home wireless networks. The FCC regulates all electronics to prevent one type of electronic equipment from interfering with other electronic and wireless devices that operate in the same frequency band.

Will implementing this program raise my bill?
Implementing the AMI program is not expected to raise our customers' rates. It will, however, help our customers become more engaged in their electricity/water usage and help them better manage their usage, which could save them money in the long run.

How did Painesville City determine the need for this program?
After careful review of our current infrastructure, including operations and maintenance expenses, it was determined that implementing the AMI program would help reduce costs and allow us to utilize advanced technology to improve our business operations. We presented this information to council who carefully reviewed the proposal and approved the project. Because we are a member AMP, Inc., we also were able to purchase the meters and communication components under an aggregated purchasing agreement with its vendors/partners. This not only reduced our costs, but reduced the risk associated with implementing this type of program.

What if I don't want a meter installed?
The installation of advanced meters is part of our infrastructure improvement efforts and considered a standard device. We recognize there may be some concerns and would encourage you to talk to us directly so that we can answer questions and address concerns.

What is Distribution Automation?

Distribution automation, using a host of various technologies, including sensors, processors, switches and communication networks, improves reliability by reducing the number of customers affected by an outage and the amount of time a customer is without power.

What is street lighting control?
Through the use of AMI and its related communication systems, we will have the capability of better maintaining our street lights and controlling them so that they operate more efficiently.

For information about AMI, visit the US Department of Energy at SmartGrid.gov, the Smart Grid Consumer Collaborative at whatissmartgrid.org, or www.painesville.com/electric.

What companies are involved in the project?

- **American Municipal Power, Inc. (AMP)** is a nonprofit corporation that owns and operates electric facilities with the purpose of providing generation, transmission and distribution of electric power and energy to its members. By coordinating, negotiating and developing power-supply options and interconnection agreements, AMP is able to purchase wholesale electric power and energy and sell it to members at rates based on the cost and dispatch fees. The organization also develops alternate power resources to best meet members' short- and long-term needs. Operating an energy control center 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, AMP is always on demand to serve its member communities. AMP provides a wide range of other services on a cooperative, nonprofit basis for the mutual benefit of all member communities. AMI is one of these services.