



## History in the Making: Avista brings historic home into 21st century by installing community's first smart electric meter

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### A milestone for Avista's Smarter Together project

SPOKANE, Wash., Feb. 27, 2019 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Today a home listed on the National Register of Historic Places was brought into the 21<sup>st</sup> century when Avista installed the very first smart electric meter in the Millwood community near Spokane. It's an important milestone for Avista's Smarter Together project.

"This home – and its owners – are stepping into the future. This iconic landmark has been part of the Millwood community since it was built in 1923, and today we're excited to bring this historic home into the 21<sup>st</sup> century by installing the first smart electric meter and smart natural gas module. It's a major step toward modernizing our grid to meet the energy demands of today and tomorrow," said Avista Vice President of Energy Delivery Heather Rosentrater.

This is the first of many smart installations that will take place as part of Avista's Smarter Together project. After completing a small-scale deployment last fall, Avista is ready to begin major deployments next week. Over the next 20 months, nearly every Avista customer in Washington state will receive a new smart electric meter to replace their existing meter, and natural gas customers will receive a new smart gas module on the existing natural gas meter.

After they're installed, smart meters will measure customers' energy usage and securely transmit the information to Avista. Then Avista uses the smart meter data to generate energy bills and share usage information with customers on the web.

Customers will receive numerous benefits from smart technology:

- **Information at their fingertips:** online access to charts and graphs will provide more insight into the energy they use.
- **More control over their energy dollar:** timely usage information means customers will be able to better manage their energy bill.
- **Faster response to power outages:** smart meters communicate directly with Avista, which allows the utility to detect – and restore – power outages more quickly.
- **More personalized service:** Avista representatives will have more information available to provide solutions unique to specific customer questions.
- **Contribute to a more sustainable community:** Avista can operate the grid more efficiently to help reduce the region's carbon footprint.

"This technology is a real game-changer. It allows customers to go online any time and track their energy usage to date -- similar to the way cell phone data usage is tracked and lets you know where you are in your plan. Instead of waiting to receive their monthly bill, customers can see their projected bill amount based on their current usage trend, which eliminates surprises when their bill arrives," Rosentrater added. "We'll also have more visibility into the grid than ever before. Because the smart meters will let us know when power is out, we'll be able to detect and isolate problems and restore power more quickly for customers."

More than 76 million smart meters are already deployed to more than half of all households in the United States. The number is expected to grow to 90 million by 2020 when Avista's Smarter Together project is completed in Washington. Smart meters are becoming the utility standard.

"This is the next critical step in Avista's journey to modernize the grid and build the utility of the future to meet our customers' current and future needs. We've come a long way since we installed smart meters in Pullman to create a test bed for learning several years ago. We've invested in large-scale battery storage. We're a founding partner in a smart city initiative called Urbanova. And we're constructing the Catalyst building to create an innovation hub. Smart meter technology is the foundation for even greater possibilities going forward," said Rosentrater.

Avista is installing Itron's OpenWay Riva solution because it offers next-generation enhanced meter functionality. The Smarter Together project continues a partnership that began several decades ago -- when Avista was Washington Water Power and created Itron to make meter reading easier. Today, the Liberty Lake, Wash.-based spinoff has grown into a \$2 billion, global technology industry leader.

"Congratulations to Avista for leading the way as one of the first utilities to install Itron's OpenWay Riva solution. It's a testament to Avista's pioneering vision and history of innovation. Itron has seen the difference this technology can make for consumers and utilities around the globe. This technology is moving our entire community forward, enabling smart city capabilities, and preparing for the utility of the future," said Itron Senior Vice President of Networked Solutions Sharelynn Moore. "We're proud to be partners in progress – helping bring these new possibilities to our own backyard. Together,

Avista and Itron are partnering to create a more resourceful world.”

Avista will work with meter installation partner Wellington Energy, which will install the majority of the total 424,000 smart electric meters and smart gas modules. Because many customers have both electric and natural gas service from Avista, approximately 240,000 customers are expected to be upgraded by the time the project wraps up in the fall 2020. A deployment map and schedule is available at [www.myavista.com/smartmeters](http://www.myavista.com/smartmeters).

Visit [www.myavista.com/smartmeters](http://www.myavista.com/smartmeters) for more information about the Smarter Together project, including videos, customer benefits, frequently asked questions, fact sheets and much more.

**About Avista Utilities**

[Avista](#) Utilities is involved in the production, transmission and distribution of energy. We provide energy services and electricity to 387,000 customers and natural gas to 354,000 customers in a service territory that covers 30,000 square miles in eastern Washington, northern Idaho and parts of southern and eastern Oregon, with a population of 1.6 million. Avista Utilities is an operating division of [Avista Corp.](#) (NYSE: AVA). For more information, please visit [www.myavista.com](http://www.myavista.com).

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