

Duke Energy offers new programs to customers

THE JOURNAL STAFF

SENECA — Duke Energy Carolinas is offering a number of new enhanced services that will provide customers more control over their energy use as well as tailored bill payment options.

Customers with smart meters can select billing due dates and receive alerts that will guide their monthly budget making and help them manage their personal energy lifestyle.

"Customers depend on energy more than ever to power their lives in ways that were never possible before," Duke Energy customer and delivery operations vice president Lloyd Yates said. "It's important to us to offer smart options that will provide customers with more choice and control over their energy use and offer bill-lowering tools to best fit their needs."

The pick-your-due-date program lets eligible Duke Energy Carolinas customers opt for a billing due date that best aligns with their personal needs and financial situations in order to provide more flexibility and control.

Because monthly energy costs can be tricky to predict, Duke Energy Carolinas' customers can now take control of their electricity use and monthly budget with usage alerts.

Customers will automatically receive an email halfway through the billing cycle. The email will

include the current bill amount and a projection of what their final monthly bill could cost. Customers also have the option to receive mid-cycle alerts via text message.

Customers can also set up budget alerts to help keep their bill in check. They will receive a notification when their bill is expected to reach a specific dollar amount of their choosing, allowing them to course-correct and cut back on usage if they wish — similar to a cellphone provider sending data usage updates when customers are nearing the limits of their plan.

These offerings become available as new smart meters are installed across the Carolinas. The meters are an evolution of the company's previous meter-reading technology, enabling greater benefits and a better experience for customers.

Hundreds of thousands of the meters have already been deployed across the Duke Energy Carolinas territory, making these programs available to many customers.

"The smart meter installations are just the first step of a bold initiative to invest \$16 billion over the next 10 years to strengthen the energy grid in the Carolinas," Yates said. "These enhancements will make the grid more secure, improve power quality and reliability and continue to enable more options for our customers."