

Are smart meters too smart?

The polling tells government a large majority believe the planet is warming thanks to man made CO₂. Polling would also tell government that a majority do not think that means they should buy an electric car, install a heat pumps or stop eating meat.

More curiously around half do not even want to accept a free smart meter urged on them by greens. People have been suspicious about these products fearing they might be used to change tariffs or even cut power off at busy times. This has always been denied by the suppliers and the smart meters fitted have not been used in these ways.

Now we learn that the energy companies do want to use them to get people to use power overnight and not use it during the morning or evening peak. They plan to offer new tariff schedules with cheap overnight power and dear peak hour power. They say these will be discretionary, not mandatory.

I guess it would be possible to set washing machines, driers and dishwashers to run overnight. You could not cook the meal, turn the lights on or have the Tv running outside peak hours. The tariffs would have to be steeply tiered to change conduct but will put people off if the rates are too high for all the normal uses people will have at peak times.

All this is only needed because we keep putting more wind generation on the system leaving us short of power at peak times on low or very high wind days.