



CLEWISTON UTILITIES

SURGE PROTECTION

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. What is a Power Surge?

A. Minor voltage fluctuations are normal on any electrical system and typically are harmless. However, a power “surge” or “spike” is when there is a rapid rise in the flow of power, which usually causes damage (often unseen).

Q. What causes a Power Surge?

A. Downed power lines, bad weather, birds, squirrels or balloons coming in contact with power lines, and even the normal cycling on and off of large appliances can cause a momentary surge that can be damaging to your household equipment.

Q. Will a Meter-Based Surge Protection Device protect everything?

A. This device (like any other surge protection product) is not designed to handle direct or nearby lightning strikes, to keep your clocks from blinking after an outage or to save energy.

Note: A meter-based SPD alone may not provide enough protection for your electronic equipment. Electronic equipment is becoming more complex and sensitive to power surges. Surges can enter via phone or cable lines. For this reason, we highly recommend using both a Meter-based device for general protection and quality point-of-use outlet protectors for added protection for your sensitive electronic equipment such as TVs, DVD players, garage door openers, and satellite and computer systems.

Q. What are the protection limitations of the Meter-Based Surge Protection Device?

A. The MB-SPD can only prevent power surges that come in through the power line. It cannot prevent surges that enter through other paths like phone lines, cable lines, or outdoor electric circuits (i.e. driveway lights, sprinkler systems). It is not designed to handle direct or nearby lightning strikes or sustained/continuous over-voltages.

Q. Will it protect me from something as severe as a direct lightning strike?

A. No. Nothing is a complete guarantee from a direct lightning strike. No product on the market can effectively handle such a high level of energy.

Q. If the Meter-Based Surge Protection Device fails, will it cut off power to my house?

A. No. The SPD will self-sacrifice if affected by a surge larger than it’s rated for. When this happens, the SPD goes off line. The MB-SPD will not cut off power to your house but the unit will become inactive. The status light on the unit will go off if the device fails.

Q. How long will the Meter-Based Surge Protection Device unit last?

A. The number, duration and intensity of surges that the component sees over its lifetime determine the lifespan of a SPD. However, if the MB-SPD fails, Clewiston Utilities will replace it free of charge as long as you continue to pay the monthly service fee.

Q. What do the red lights on the Meter-Based Surge Protection Device unit mean?

A. The red status lights indicate the unit is working normally. If you notice that one of the red lights is off, please contact Clewiston Utilities for service.

Q. If my electricity goes off, will the Surge Protection Device help?

A. No, the SPD does not provide backup power nor will it prevent power outages. They are designed only to help prevent power line surges that could cause damage to appliances and equipment within your home.

Q. Is Clewiston Utilities Surge Protection Program an insurance policy?

A. No, but the surge protection devices utilized through the program have Manufacturer's Warranties. If an item fails due to a power surge entering through the electric meter, there will be damage to the primary SPD and/or point of use SPDs. If an item fails and there is not damage to the primary and/or point-of-use protectors, this means a surge did not enter through those paths and the manufacturer's warranty will not apply. Other than the manufacturer's warranty, no warranty is made, expressed or implied.

Q. What happens if I cancel the surge protection service or move before the two year commitment is up?

A. If you request the Meter-Based Surge Protection Device be removed before the two-year commitment period expires, you will be charged a cancellation fee. However, if you move and relocate to another home within Clewiston Utilities service area, we can transfer the service to your new home and there is no fee.

Q. Why do I need a primary SPD at the meter? Can't I use point-of-use surge protectors throughout my home?

A. Most point-of-use protectors are not designed to handle the intensity of a large power surge. The high capacity rating of the meter-based surge protection device (MB-SPD) will suppress large surges and provide a layer of protection for the major appliances within the home, such as stoves, refrigerators, washers, dryers, air conditioners, etc. as well as the wiring. Because of its large capacity, the MB-SPD cannot suppress low-level surges that can affect sensitive electronic items such as TV's, computers, microwaves and garage door openers. For this reason, point-of-use surge protection devices are recommended as the second layer of the surge protection for these sensitive items.

Q. Why do I need point-of-use surge protectors if I have the primary Meter-Based Surge Protection Device installed at the electric meter?

A. The primary unit helps protect major appliances including your washer/dryer, stove, refrigerator and water heater. Point-of-use protectors will help protect sensitive electronics from low-level surges that enter through electric, cable and telephone lines. You should have a point-of-use protector for each electronic item you wish to protect. Electronic items include entertainment systems, computers, garage door openers and microwave ovens.

Q. Will a Meter-Based Surge Protection Device protect a well pump or sprinkler system?

A. The primary MB-SPD will help protect against power surges that enter through the electric meter. However, it can't prevent damage caused by direct or nearby lightning strikes.