

Testimony of Leslie P. in the
[DTE Advanced \(Smart\) Meter Opt-Out Case, U-17053](#)

Leslie P’s minor son has experienced documented endocrine abnormalities that immediately followed the installation of a smart meter on his family home. Leslie has suffered severe health effects since the installation of a wireless digital meter on her home. What follows are the relevant portions of the testimony Leslie P. offered in the DTE opt-out case, [U-17053](#). The judge refused to allow any of this health testimony, stating that it was impermissible because the only thing to be decided at the hearing was whether DTE’s proposed radio-off smart meter opt-out fulfilled cost-of-service principles. Leslie P., Linda K., and Cynthia E. have filed an appeal with the Michigan Court of Appeals.

Since submission of this testimony, Leslie has experienced a worsening of her health due to daily exposure to smart meters both inside and outside of buildings *even though* she removed the smart meter from her home. For some people, even a few minutes of exposure causes severe and debilitating health effects.

DIRECT TESTIMONY OF LESLIE P.

Q. What is the purpose of your testimony?

A. To provide information that establishes that there is a need for a no-fee opt-out and the need for an analog meter option.

Q. How long have you lived at your current residence?

A. I have lived in my home since 1981, for 31 years. I own my home.

Q. What do you do for a living?

A. I worked as a mail carrier for 18 years. For the past 13 years I have worked as a landscaper.

Q. When was a smart meter installed on your home?

A. July 18, 2012.

Q. Did you know it had been installed on your home?

A. No, I didn’t. Later, when I couldn’t sleep, I called DTE, and they told me the date it had been installed.

Q. Something led you to call DTE. What was that?

A. Never in my life have I had a problem sleeping. “When my head hits the pillow,” as the saying goes, “I’m out like a light.” But now I was lying awake for hours without falling asleep, night after night. 12 am, 2 am, 4 am, I’m still awake! I wondered, “What’s going on?”

I talked to a friend, telling him my dilemma, and he told me that the smart meters could alter your sleep. "What are smart meters?" I asked. I had never heard of them.

Q. So prior to your conversation with your friend, you knew nothing about smart meters?

A. No.

q. So you weren't anxious about smart meters and thus experiencing insomnia?

A. No. Like I said, I had never heard of them before. Like I said, my entire life, I have slept like a rock—that is, until a smart meters was installed on my home.

Q. Prior to talking to your friend, did you know that a smart meter had been installed on your home?

A. No. I was never contacted or asked if this meter could go on my home. After I talked to my friend, I went to look to see if a smart meter had been installed on my home. It had been. I contacted DTE immediately, this was some time in August, asking them to take this meter off my house. They said I was the first person to call and complain about the smart meter causing any problems. The representative said she was sure I must have had problems sleeping before.

Q. What did DTE tell you they would do?

A. They said they could not take the meter off my house and at this time there was no opt-out program but they were working on it.

Q. What did you do next?

A. I continued to call and call and call them and said, "Please take this meter off my house. I can't sleep, I can't work." I called at 3 a.m. one night when I couldn't sleep. Like the first representative, this representative said he'd never heard of such a problem. I finally set up a tent in my backyard, after weeks of not sleeping. I slept really well, not quite as well as when I was sleeping in my own bed in my own home before I had a smart meter, but no one sleeps quite as well in a tent as in their own bed. It has been very stormy and windy this last month, and about three weeks ago the tent blew over on me at about 3 a.m. It covered me so thoroughly, and was so heavy, I thought I was going to suffocate!

Q. Did you continue to sleep in the tent?

A. I moved back into my house because every time I set the tent up, it blew back down the winds were so high. My nights are now sleepless.

Q. Do you experience any other health problems or symptoms from the smart meter?

A. At night, I lie there feeling a vibration going through all of my body and my ears ring loudly. Landscaping is really hard work, and I wonder some days how I am going to make it. The sleep deprivation makes me extremely fatigued and worn out. Day after day after day of exhaustion has made me feel suicidal at times. I just don't know how I can keep going on! I have felt such a

fatigue and depression. This is totally affecting my personality and thus my friendships and other relationships. This is affecting my productivity at work – I am so tired! My memory has been affected – I will be talking to a person and totally go blank and can't finish my sentence. I have pain in my body I haven't had before—I feel an achiness around my joints. This has been progressive. In the last two days, I have begun feeling an achiness around the vertebrae in my back.

I feel a physical agitation in my body. I work outside all day. I come home, and within a couple hours, I feel so agitated in my body. When I was able to sleep in my tent, I would look so forward to going outside. People would say, “Leslie, you can't sleep out there, it's so cold.” And I would be so happy because I didn't feel that agitation outside and I could sleep.

I experience ringing in my ears whenever I am in any building with a smart meter. At one client's house, the ringing in my ears was so loud I couldn't believe it. Buildings with fluorescent lights are particularly bad.

Q. How do you know it is smart meters that are affecting your health?

A. I know because I never had a problem before smart meters.

Q. Did you have any health problems prior to the installation of smart meters? If so, what were they and when did they begin?

A. Hypothyroidism. This was diagnosed about twelve years ago.

Q. Does this cause fatigue?

A. No, because I take medication for it.

Q. So could this be what is causing you to have trouble sleeping at night?

A. No, because I never have had trouble sleeping, that is, not until the smart meters were installed. The fatigue was caused by the hypothyroidism, not by lack of sleep.

Q. Any other health conditions?

A. I feel like some asthma, though it's never been diagnosed.

Q. Have you had sensitivity to any other electrical or wireless devices other than smart meters?

A. Yes. I am extremely affected by my cell phone. I feel agitated when I am using it, and I have ever since I got it five years ago. I have started to use the speaker phone rather than hold the phone against my ear. That helps slightly.

Q. You said you have contemplated suicide after experiencing day after day of unending fatigue since smart meter installation. Have you ever contemplated suicide prior to this?

A. Never. Definitely never. But after I was so exhausted after not sleeping for days, I was going to work one day, completely exhausted. I thought, “How can anyone go on day after day like this

without sleeping?” I thought, “Now I know why people think about suicide. People that don’t sleep, how do they keep on going?”

Q. Have the health effects you experience as a result of smart meters affected your ability to work and earn a living? If the answer is yes, describe how.

A. I have been late for work because I have needed to try to rest—I guess I can’t really call it sleep anymore. I’ve never actually missed work, but I have been late for work. My productivity is less. I’ve never been late for work in the past.

Q. Have the health effects you experience as a result of smart meters affected your ability to interact socially with others? If the answer is yes, describe how.

A. Yes. When you are so tired, you don’t even want to socialize with anyone. I feel angry, so fatigued. All I think about is sleeping.

It’s negatively affected my most intimate relationship in the last few months. It’s had a huge impact. The lack of sleep has made me so fatigued and angry, and it’s hard to love someone when you feel that way.

Q. Have the health effects you experience as a result of smart meters affected your ability to access public services, such as the public library, government offices? If the answer is yes, describe how.

A. Yes, because going into any building with a smart meter, I feel agitated.

Q. Have the health effects you experience as a result of smart meters affected your ability to access religious or spiritual services? If the answer is yes, describe how.

A. My spiritual life is outside, so no, it hasn’t.

Q. Have the health effects you experience as a result of smart meters affected your ability to perform one or more major life activities not already mentioned? If the answer is yes, describe what activities and how the effects have affected your performance of these activities.

A. Interacting with others. Reading, because I get so agitated in my body and I can’t concentrate. I used to love to read, and I kept wondering, “Why can’t I read now.” Inability to think, concentrate, comprehend. Sleeping, obviously. Performing manual tasks because being in the house is so hard—how can I clean my house, wash my dishes, etc when I just need to get out of my house.

As far as physical labor goes, I am more tired, it’s harder to be productive.

Breathing—it has been harder for me to breathe in the house. I have asthma.

My memory is a lot worse. I have to write everything down now. My son keeps telling me, “Mom, I told you that yesterday.”

Q. Has your ability to live in your home been affected by the installation of smart meters?

A. Totally. I think that has been covered.

Q. Is there anything else you wish to say about how smart meters have affected your health and/or your life?

A. Yes. My sixteen-year-old son, Drew, sleeps a couple feet away from the meter. He has juvenile diabetes. We just went to see his endocrinologist, Dr. Gregg, at the University of Michigan Mott's Children's Hospital on November 1. He's been going there for 2 years, since his diagnosis when he was 14. There is this number called A1c. There's this blood test they give the kids called A1C. It's a blood test that shows what his blood sugars combined were for the last three months. His numbers were always below 7. His last appointment, they were 6.8. [Exhibit 1.] The doctors have always been so happy because they want these numbers to always be below 7.

I have Drew on a very clean, organic diet and he exercises playing hockey and lacrosse, all of which help keep his blood sugars at a good level. On November 1, his A1c was taken, and the level had shot up to 9.5. [Exhibit 1.] The doctor asked if anything had changed as far as his diet and exercise. Nothing had. It's very clear that his blood sugar levels have shot up because of the smart meters. Nothing else in his life has changed, and the levels have been consistent for two years. There's no other explanation. When levels are above 7, it wreaks havoc on the body. Many things can happen to the body, to his limbs, to his organs.

Dr. Gregg has sent a letter to DTE describing her findings and stating that the smart meter needs to be taken off the home.

From a *Prevention Magazine* article that I read, I have learned that the EMFs emitted by smart meters can elevate blood sugar levels. They discussed work by Dr. Magda Havas of Trent University, whose research has shown that voltage transients can elevate blood sugar levels of diabetics. [Pertinent area is attached as Exhibit 2, highlighted in yellow.]

EXHIBIT 2

Prevention Magazine Article

<http://www.prevention.com/health/healthy-living/electromagnetic-fields-and-your-health>

Is Dirty Electricity Making You Sick?

Keep in mind that all the cells in your body, whether islets in the pancreas awaiting a signal to manufacture insulin or white blood cells speeding to the site of an injury, use electricity--or "electron change"--to communicate with each other. By overlapping the body's signaling mechanisms, could transients interfere with the secretion of insulin, drown out the call-and-response of the immune system, and cause other physical havoc?

Some preliminary research implies the answer is yes. Over the past 3 years, Magda Havas, PhD, a researcher in the department of environmental and resource studies at Trent University in Ontario, has published several studies that suggest exposure to transients may elevate blood sugar levels among people with diabetes and prediabetes and that people with multiple sclerosis improve their balance and have fewer tremors after just a few days in a transient-free environment. Her work also shows that after schools installed filters to clean up transients, two-thirds of teachers reported improvement in symptoms that had been plaguing them, including headache, dry eye, facial flushing, asthma, skin irritation, and depression.

Transients are particularly insidious because they accumulate and strengthen, their frequency reaching into the dangerous RF range. Because they travel along home and utility wiring, your neighbor's energy choices will affect the electrical pollution in your house. In other words, a CFL illuminating a porch down the block can send nasty transients into your bedroom.

Something else is sending transients into your home: the earth. From your high school science texts, you know that electricity must travel along a complete circuit, always returning to its source (the utility) along a neutral wire. In the early 1990s, says Stetzer, as transients began overloading utility wiring, public service commissions in many states told utilities to drive neutral rods into the ground on every existing pole and every new one they erected. "Today, more than 70% of all current going out on the wires returns to substations via the earth," says Stetzer--encountering along the way all sorts of subterranean conductors, such as water, sewer, and natural-gas pipes, that ferry even more electrical pollution into your home.

<http://www.prevention.com/health/healthy-living/electromagnetic-fields-and-your-health#ixzz22iUSKV5z>

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