

REPORTING SMART METER/METER-BASE ASSEMBLY FIRES

The Asks

The Electrical Safety Authority (ESA) is seeking assistance from fire safety partners to report electrical utility meter assembly fires to ESA so that they can be investigated. The contact number (24/7) is 1-877.372.7233.

Why the interest from ESA

The root cause of meter assembly fires must be better identified to prevent future meter assembly fires.

The ESA considers this public safety concern serious since a) the potential of catastrophic fire involving meter assemblies is high, b) the frequency of meter assembly fires in Ontario has not been increasing and c) meter assembly fires attract high stakeholder interest.

Why the problem

Collection of Evidence

As with many fires, evidence is often consumed or damaged by the fire, making it difficult for investigators to determine what causes the fire.

Multiple Ownerships within the Meter Assembly

Meter assemblies have two major parts. The meter and the connection to the powerline are owned by the electrical utility (called Local Distribution Company – LDC). The homeowner (or the facility) owns the remaining part attached to the home (or facility).

The LDCs are required to report incidents involving their meters to ESA. Utility Companies are not required to report fires of other equipment they do not own. So far to ESA's knowledge, there are just as many fires involving the meter as fires involving other parts of the assemblies. Figure 1 illustrates the demarcation point of the meter assemblies.

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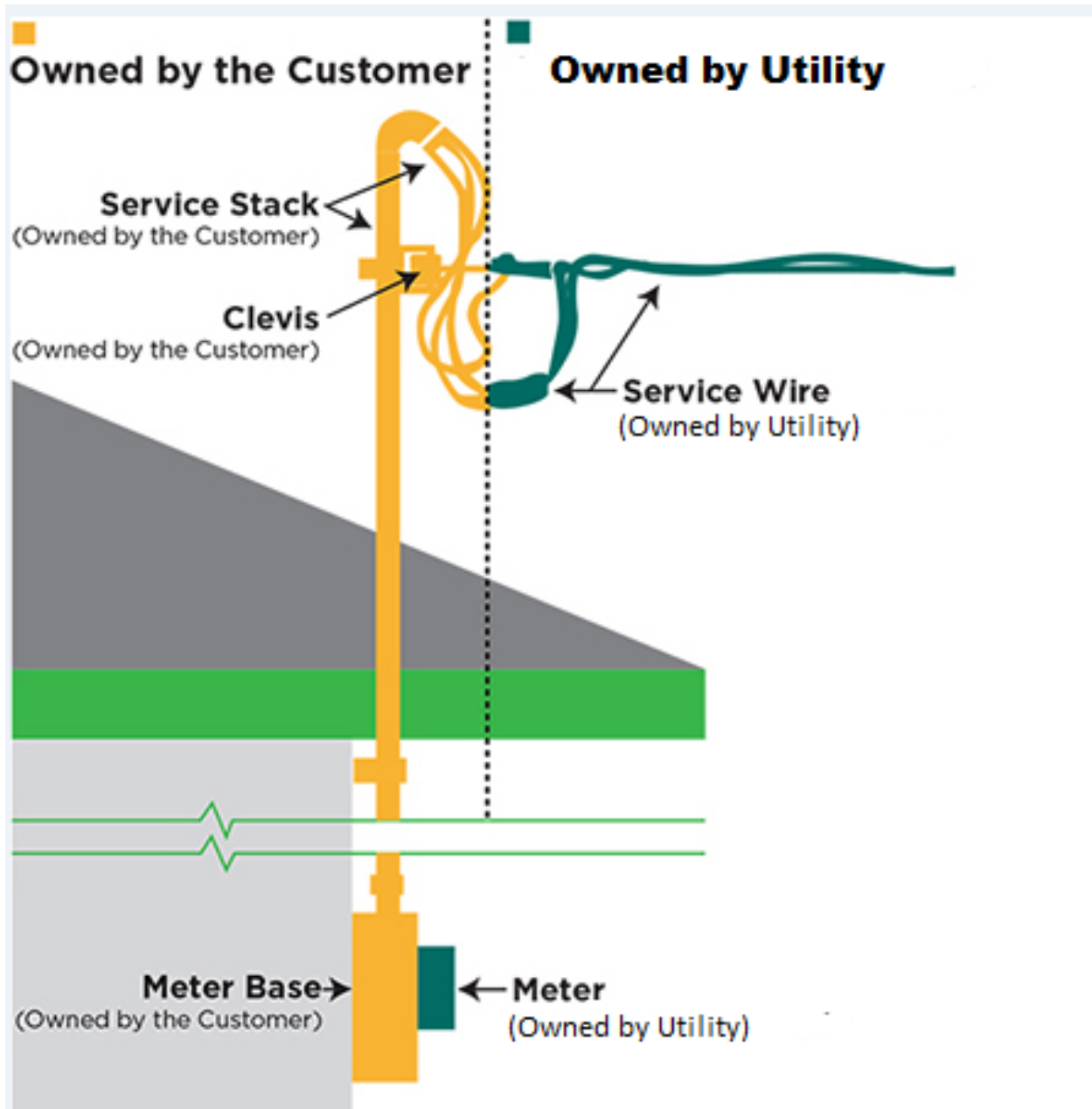


Figure 1.