CONNECT PORTAL

User Guide

The Connect Portal is configured for use by residential and commercial accounts as well as accounts with multiple meters. This specific documentation is intended for Residential accounts with one meter as well as sub-metered off-peak, interruptible, or time of use loads.

MENU SELECTIONS

Library

Information on how to best use the portal as well as other Dakota Electric program details can be found in the Library.

Reports

Reports can be created and saved to your *Default Dashboard* or to *My Saved Reports* by using the "+ Add to..." drop-down. The *My Saved Reports* section will only display once the first report has been saved.

Settings

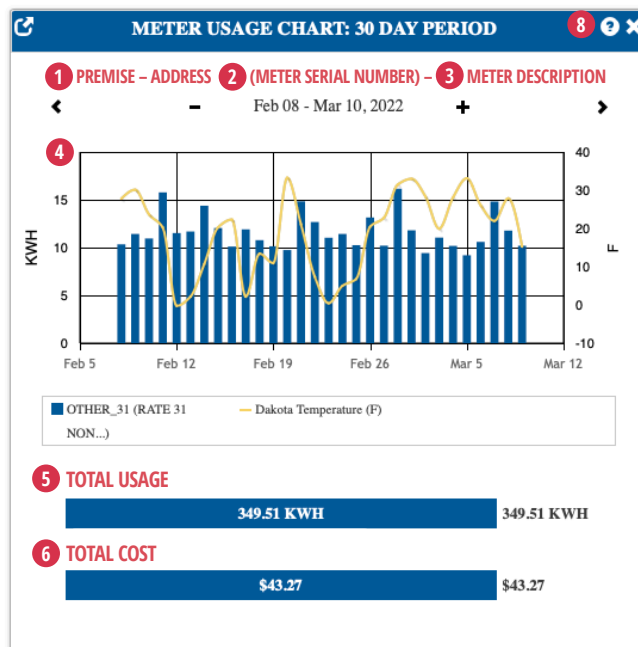Settings allows users to configure notifications as well as label and organize meters and meter events.
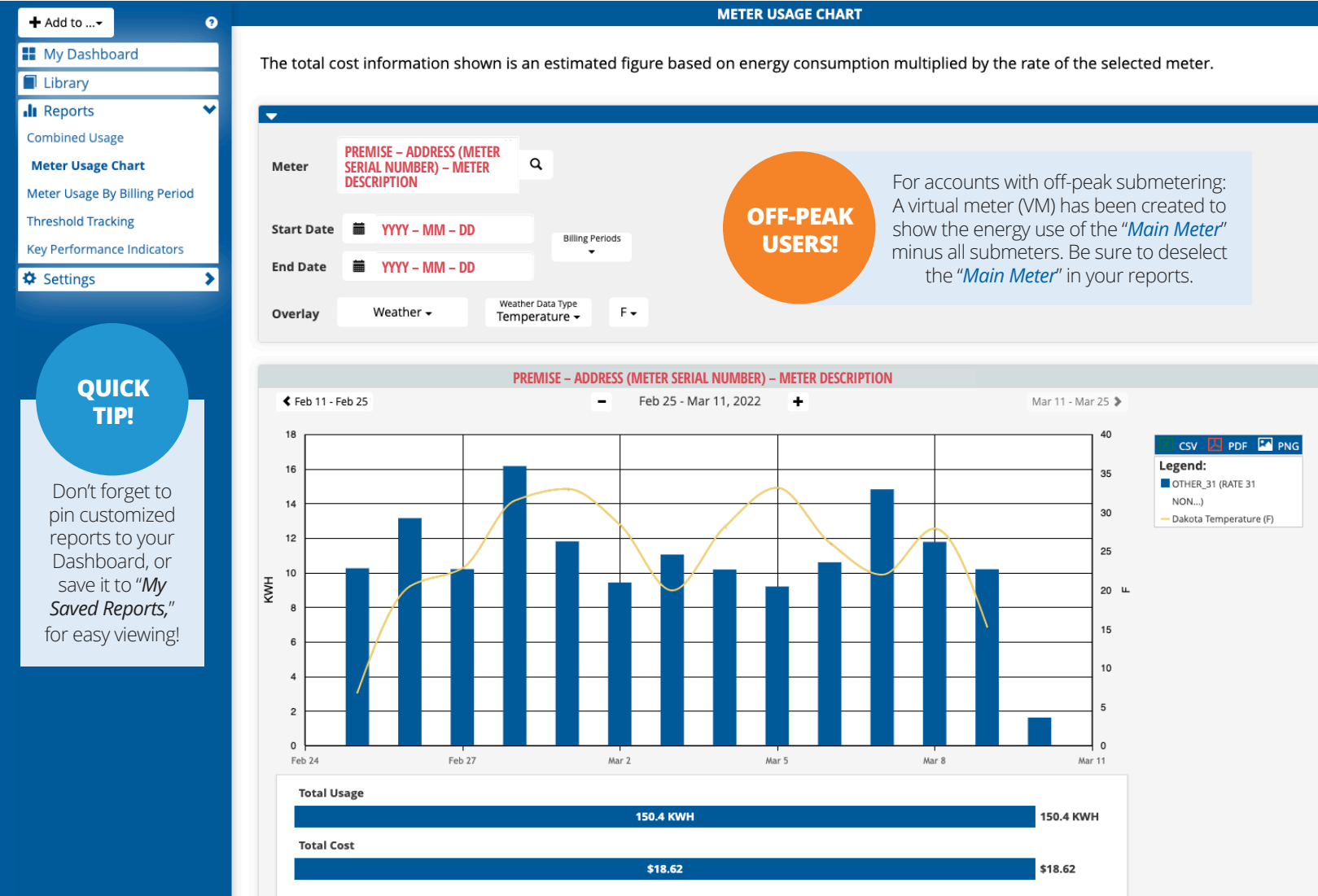
DEFAULT DASHBOARD LEGEND

1. Premise number and associated service address.
2. Meter serial number as written on meter and billing statements.
3. A meter description states the purpose of the meter. E.g., Main for primary service meter.
4. The default graph shows daily electric use for 30 days with the daily average temperature overlay.
5. **Total Usage** is shown for the time frame indicated on the graph.
6. **Total Cost** is an estimate based on usage displayed in the graph but does not include taxes, fees, or fixed charges.
7. **Green Button Download** is a tool you can use to download your energy data for use in audits and benchmarking.
8. Click the Info symbol on any page for guidance.
9. Number of meters listed on the account. **Note:** The Default Dashboard Meter Usage Chart will randomly select which of your meters to display each login.

Meter Usage Chart

METER USAGE CHART

The total cost information shown is an estimated figure based on energy consumption multiplied by the rate of the selected meter.

Add to ...

- My Dashboard
- Library
- **Reports**
  - Combined Usage
  - **Meter Usage Chart**
  - Meter Usage By Billing Period
  - Threshold Tracking
  - Key Performance Indicators
- Settings

Meter: PREMISE – ADDRESS (METER SERIAL NUMBER) – METER DESCRIPTION

Start Date YYYY – MM – DD

End Date YYYY – MM – DD

Billing Periods

Overlay Weather | Weather Data Type Temperature | F

OFF-PEAK USERS!

For accounts with off-peak submetering: A virtual meter (VM) has been created to show the energy use of the "*Main Meter*" minus all submeters. Be sure to deselect the "*Main Meter*" in your reports.

QUICK TIP!

Don't forget to pin customized reports to your Dashboard, or save it to "*My Saved Reports,*" for easy viewing!

PREMISE – ADDRESS (METER SERIAL NUMBER) – METER DESCRIPTION

◄ Feb 11 - Feb 25   —   Feb 25 - Mar 11, 2022   +   Mar 11 - Mar 25 ►

CSV | PDF | PNG

Legend:
- ■ OTHER_31 (RATE 31 NON...)
- — Dakota Temperature (F)

Total Usage — 150.4 KWH — 150.4 KWH

Total Cost — $18.62 — $18.62

HOW TO:
Configure your Meter Usage Chart

STEP ONE – *Customizing*

Insert a customized *Date Range* or select a *Billing Period* time frame to apply to your reports. Please note that the billing period ranges do not always align with the billing dates on your bills due to time allowed for processing reads.

STEP TWO – *Exporting Data*

Export the data displayed in the graph by clicking the CSV, PDF or PNG formats.

STEP THREE - *Overlay Options*

- **Average –** shows average of usage displayed in the report.
- **Weather –** Display usage graphs with an average temperature line, relative humidity, daily precipitation, and wind speed.

HELPFUL HINT!

Review the trend in daily usage over a matter of weeks or months before drilling down to the hourly data. If available, compare usage during the time period to usage from the same time the previous year.

Disclaimer for accounts with off-peak: Total Cost bar will show usage shown on graph multiplied by the standard electric rate assumptions. Actual costs for energy will be less due to the off-peak portion of the usage being billed at an off-peak rate.

Threshold Tracking

Thresholds are a good way to keep tabs on your electric use and how it changes over time.

- Click "+Add" to create a new Threshold.
- Set the Threshold up for a specific meter or a virtual meter created to show a sum of meters.
- Go to *Threshold Tracking* to view the status of the Threshold.
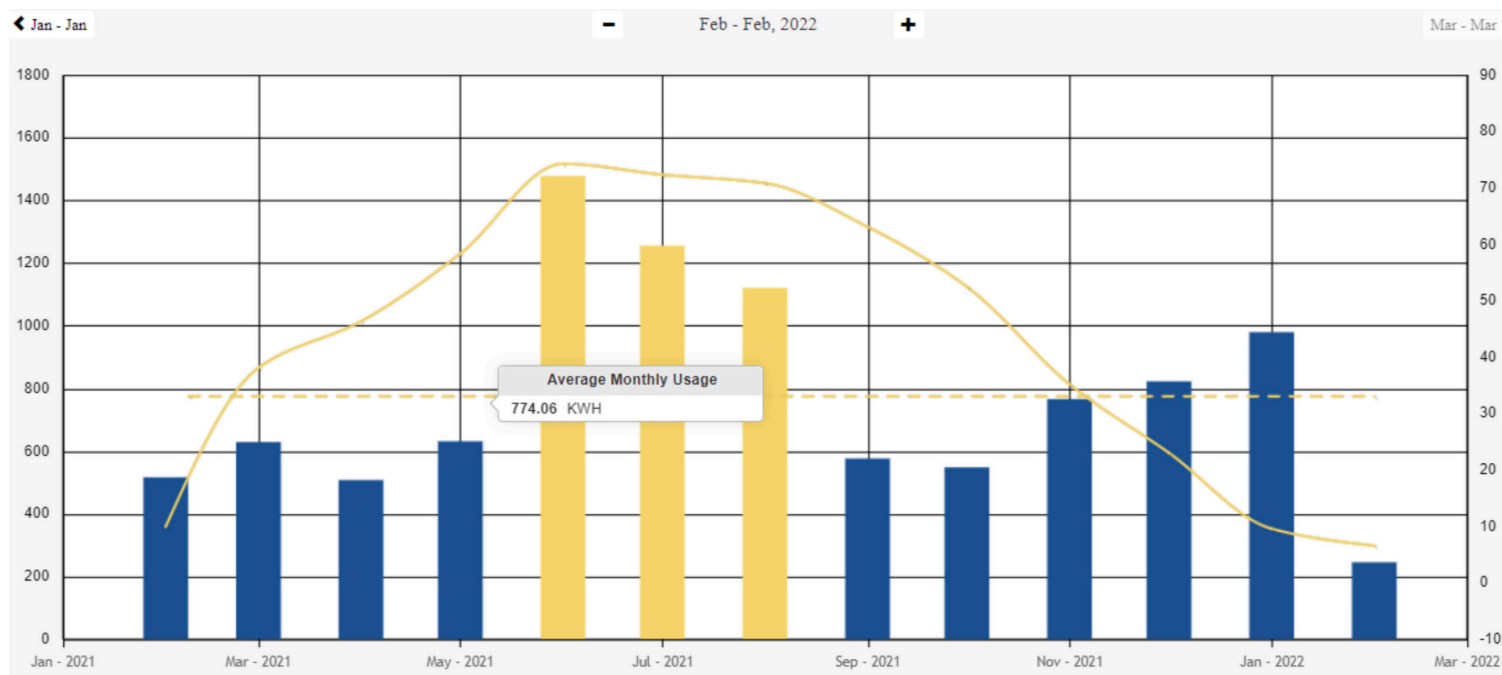
Note: Interval thresholds are configured in Notifications.

THRESHOLD EXAMPLE 1:

Set up a Threshold notification for "above average" electricity use within your billing period.

STEP ONE

Go to *Reports*, *Meter Usage Chart*. Change the *Start Date* to go back 1 year from the current day. Select the 'Average' Overlay function. A dotted line will result on your graph and by hovering over, you can find your monthly average kWh consumption. In this example, the monthly average is 774 kWh.

STEP TWO

Go to *Thresholds* in Settings and click "+Add" to create a new Threshold. In this example, the Threshold could be named "Exceeding Average Monthly Usage". Select *Target* usage as "Below" and enter your average usage (774 kWh in the example). Keep the period defined as "Billing Cycle".

STEP THREE

Go to *Notifications* and "+Add" a Usage Threshold Summary named "Exceeding Average Monthly Usage." Select the frequency you would like to receive notifications (daily or only when off track). Select or enter the best contact method for delivery of this notification and indicate your preference on delivery time(s).

DID YOU KNOW?

View notification history and where the notifications were sent by visiting: *Settings* > *Notifications*.

THRESHOLD EXAMPLE 2:

Set up a Threshold notification based on keeping power costs below a specific dollar amount.

STEP ONE
Choose a dollar amount you'd like to keep your bills below.

STEP TWO
Convert that dollar amount to kWh. To get a more specific kWh value, look at your most recent bill and subtract off the fixed charge amount and taxes. Then divide the remaining dollar amount by the cost per kWh. For a less specific kWh value, take the dollar amount you chose in step one and divide it by the current electric rate. *Note: The kWh value will be higher than if you subtract off the fixed charge and taxes.*

> *Disclaimer for off-peak accounts: You must set separate thresholds for your virtual meter vs off peak meter(s). Use the standard rate with your virtual meter and applicable off-peak rate(s) with each off-peak meter.*

STEP THREE
Go to *Thresholds* in Settings and click "+Add" to create a new Threshold. In this example, the Threshold could be named "Exceeding [*Insert $ Amount*] Electric Bill Threshold." Select *Target* usage as "Below" and enter your kWh value from step two. Keep the period defined as "Billing Cycle".

STEP FOUR
Go to *Notifications* and "+Add" a Usage Threshold Summary named "Exceeding [*Insert $ Amount*] Electric Bill Threshold." Select the frequency you would like to receive notifications (daily or only when off track). Select or enter the best contact method for delivery of this notification and indicate your preference on delivery time(s).

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

LOAD FACTOR
Derived by dividing the total kilowatt-hours (kWh) consumed in a designated period by the product of the maximum demand in kilowatts (kW) and the number of hours in the period. In the example below, the monthly kWh consumption is 36,000 and the peak demand is 100 kW. There were 30 days in the billing period. It is a useful indicator for describing the consumption characteristics of electricity over a period of time.

MAX DEMAND
Queries your maximum demand calculated based off interval consumption readings throughout the selected timeframes. This KPI is most commonly helpful to businesses and homeowners on a demand-based rate.

TOTAL USAGE + USAGE DURING TIME WINDOW
If you have a full year of data on your meter(s), you can use these KPIs to compare your rate with other whole-home rates such as a whole-home Time of Use plan. Rate plans can be found at www.dakotaelectric.com/member-services/billing-payment/electric-rates-rights.

TOTAL USAGE
Ex: This KPI can be used to find total consumption in a given time period.

USAGE DURING TIME WINDOW
This KPI can be used to determine whether your home or business would benefit from being placed on a Time of Use rate. Contact Dakota Electric for assistance with this type of calculation.

VOLTAGE
This KPI calculates statistics on voltages for a meter or group of meters over a specified time period. The KPI can show the minimum, maximum, or average voltage over this period. Residential services should be between 235-245 volts. Low or zero voltage occurrences may indicate a past full or partial outage.
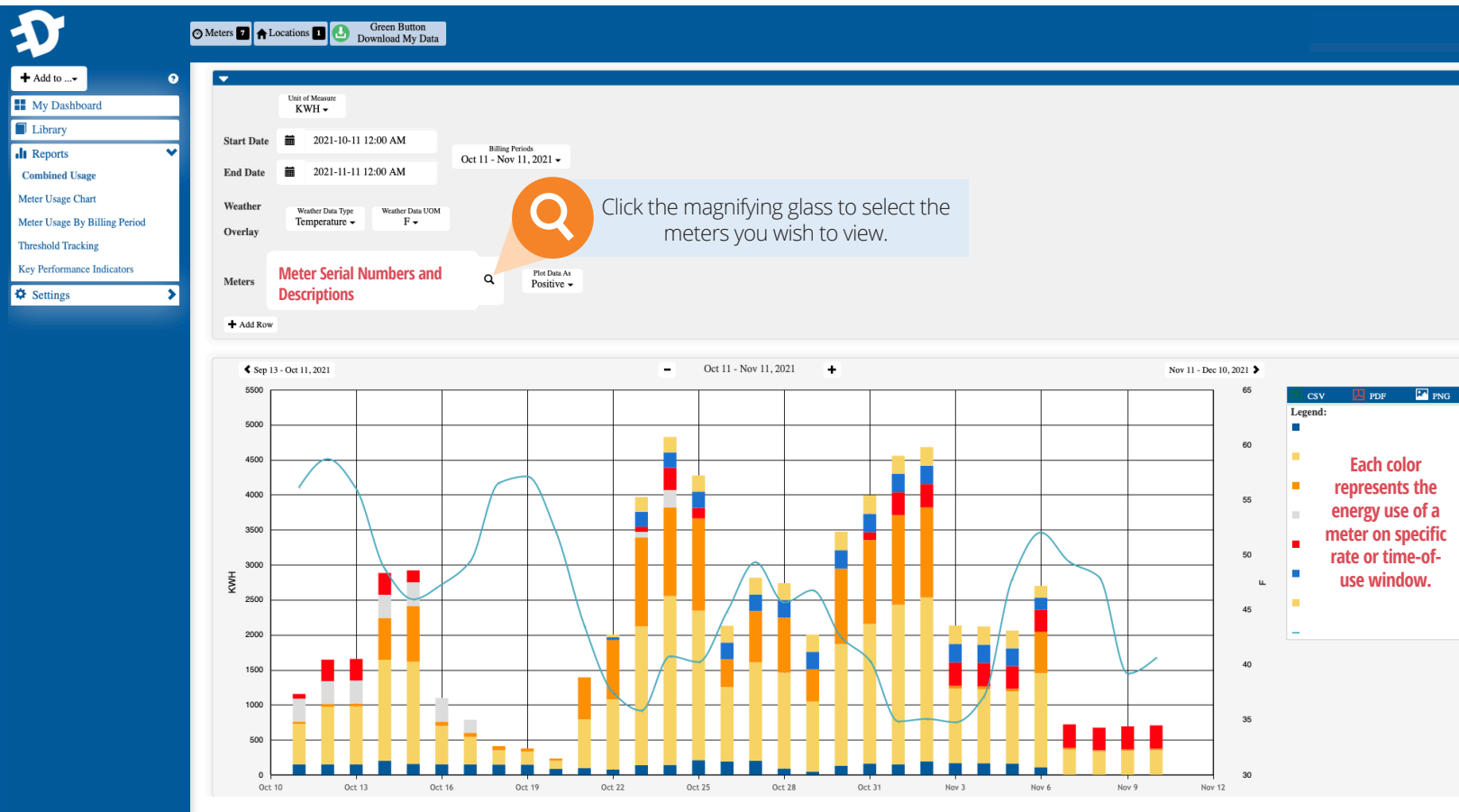
WEATHER
Provides weather related data from weather station near Farmington, MN.

Combined Usage Chart

The Combined Usage Chart is meant to provide easy viewing of the sum of multiple meters or submeters.

HOW TO:
Configure your Combined Usage Chart

STEP ONE – *Customizing*

Insert a customized *Date Range* or select a *Billing Period* time frame to apply to your reports. Please note that the billing period ranges do not always align with the billing dates on your bills due to time allowed for processing reads.

STEP TWO – *Remove "Main Meter"*

Use the magnifying glass to see the list of your meters that can be included in the Combined Usage graph. Remember that the default *Virtual Meter (VM)* represents your *Main Meter* minus your submetered usage and should be removed from your reports so you do not count that usage twice.

For example, a *Main Meter* might show 1,000 kWh was consumed during a month where the home's *Off-Peak Meter (submeter)* shows 300 kWh of usage. The energy billed at the residential rate would therefore be 700 kWh which is represented by the *Virtual Meter (VM)*.

STEP THREE – *Exporting Data*

Export the data displayed in the graph by clicking the CSV, PDF or PNG formats.

STEP THREE – *Overlay Options*

- **Average –** shows average of usage displayed in the report.
- **Weather –** Display usage graphs with an average temperature line, relative humidity, daily precipitation, and wind speed.

Configure notifications as well as label and organize meters and meter events in Settings.

Customizable Settings

- **Thresholds:** View thresholds that have been configured in *Threshold Tracking Reports*.

- **Contact Methods:** Add email addresses for contacts that you would like to receive reports.

- **Notifications:** Configure interval and usage thresholds and assign them to contacts.

- **Markers:** Can be used to flag abnormalities in usage and note why they exist.

- **Meter Names:** Meters can be renamed within Connect, meter nicknames will not appear on billing statements.

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