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Power Cost Monitor WiFi Edition Review



Today, Microsoft Hohm and Blue Line Innovations, the maker of the well-known **PowerCost Monitor** home electricity meter, announced the launch of their partnership that uploads electricity usage data from a Power Cost Monitor to [Microsoft Hohm](#)'s online portal.

The idea is, once you become aware and understand your energy use, you can reduce your energy use and in turn reduce your electricity bill. Studies have shown that you can save up to 20% on your electric bill through awareness – The Power Cost Monitor is designed to do just that.

Microsoft Hohm is a free online application that provides real-time electricity usage data that you can use to monitor over time; in 30 minute intervals to over a period of one year (see screenshot below).



[Buy the Power Cost Monitor WiFi Edition](#)

The PowerCost Monitor WiFi Edition includes both PowerCost Monitor and the WiFi Gateway upgrade accessory.

Microsoft Hohm works with the Power Cost Monitor through the addition of the new WiFi Gateway that connects to your Power Cost Monitor's utility sensor via the 433MHz frequency that transmits that data over your WiFi 802.11b wireless home network which then uploads the data to your Microsoft Hohm account.

Setting up a Microsoft Hohm account is free and easy to do. All you need is a MSN login, so if you already have an MSN Chat or hotmail login, you're good to go.

Easy Installation

Installation took me about 20 minutes. Despite the fact that you do have to go in and out of your house a couple of times to reset and sync the sensor, following the instructions in the manual was really easy and straight forward.

Issues I had

I installed the entire kit at our test bench at work with no problems. We have encryption enabled at work and didn't find this to be a problem. However, I did have an issue over the weekend installing it at home and discovered that you need to pay close attention to the type of encryption protocol set in your router's admin (ie. 192.168.1.1 for Linksys routers).

I live in Canada and at the moment, although you can use the entire kit in Canada, because Microsoft Hohm is not configured to Canadian homes yet, I had to enter, "90210" in my zip code because I didn't have one. In hindsight, I should have picked a zip code as close to the Colorado/Montana border as possible. Basically what that means is I'm not able to compare my electricity use to the area average. So, I hope Microsoft Hohm supports Canada in the near future.

Does it work?

Yes, after I was able to get the green light to appear on the WiFi gateway and 3 lines of "completed" green text appeared in the installation wizard, I logged in to Microsoft Hohm and after about 10 minutes saw my electricity data appear.