Claims

1. An apparatus for determining the type of source for a utility being monitored by a utility meter, the apparatus comprising a means for receiving a utility to be monitored by a utility meter, means for analysing the utility to determine whether the received utility is from a first source of the utility or a second different source of the utility, wherein the analysing means is adapted to determine the type of source from which a utility received by the utility meter originated.

2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the analysing means is operable to check a signature of the utility to determine if it is a predetermined signature of the first source of utility or a predetermined signature of the second source of utility.

3. The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the predetermined signature is based on a property of the first source and second source of the utility.

4. The apparatus of claim 3 wherein the property is one or more of the frequency, rate of change of frequency, perturbation of frequency, voltage, pressure and / or rate of change of voltage or pressure of the first source and second source of the utility.

5. The apparatus of claims 3 or 4 wherein the property is the capacity or the availability pattern of the first source and second source.

6. The apparatus of any preceding claim, wherein the analysing means is operable to monitor stability of the received utility to determine whether the utility is from the first source or second source.

7. The apparatus of any of claims 2 to 6, wherein the predetermined signature relating to each utility source is adapted to be learnt by the analysing means over a period of time.

8. The apparatus of any of claims 2 to 7, wherein the apparatus further comprises a storage means for storing the predetermined signature.

9. The apparatus of any preceding claim, further comprising means for logging at least one parameter of the received utility and the analysing means is adapted to analyse data relating to the logged parameter in the determination of whether the received utility is from a first source of the utility or a second source of the utility.

10. The apparatus of any preceding claim, wherein the utility is electricity.

11. A utility meter comprising a housing containing the apparatus of any preceding claim and a means for measuring the consumption of a utility, wherein the measuring means is arranged to provide data relating to the measurement of utility consumption to the analysing means.

12. The utility meter of claim 11, wherein the meter is an electricity meter.

13. A method of determining the type of source for a utility being monitored by a utility meter, the method comprising:

receiving a utility to be monitored by a utility meter; and

analysing the utility to determine whether the received utility is from a first source of the utility or a second different source of the utility, wherein the analysing includes determining the type of source from which a utility received by the utility meter originated.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein the analysing step includes checking a signature of the utility to determine if it is a predetermined signature of the first source of utility or a predetermined signature of the second source of utility.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein the predetermined signature is based on a property of the first source and second source of the utility.

16. The method of claim 15 wherein the property is one or more of the frequency, rate of change of frequency, perturbation of frequency, voltage, pressure and / or rate of change of voltage or pressure of the first source and second source of the utility.

17. The method of claims 15 or 16 wherein the property is the capacity or the availability pattern of the first source and second source.

18. The method of any of claims 13 to 17, wherein the analysing means is operable to monitor stability of the received utility to determine whether the utility is from the first source or second source.

19. The method of any of claims 14 to 18 wherein the predetermined signature relating to each utility source is learnt over a period of time.

20. The method of any of claims 14 to 19, further comprising storing the predetermined signature.

21. The method of any of claims 13 to 20, further comprising logging at least one parameter of the received utility and, in the analysing step, analysing data relating to the logged parameter in the determination of whether the received utility is from a first source of the utility or a second source of the utility.

22. The method of any of claims 13 to 21, wherein the utility is electricity.

23. A system comprising a first source of a utility, a second source of the utility, and a utility meter located downstream of the first and second source of the utility to receive the utility from either the first or second source through a utility supply line and located remote from the utility sources, the system further comprising the apparatus according to any one of claims 1 to 10, the apparatus being located downstream of the first and second source, the system comprising a switching means for controlling switching upstream of the apparatus such that the utility from either the first or second source is delivered to apparatus through a single supply line that is connected to the apparatus.