

Feature Story:

The Switch Is On: New Meters, New Possibilities

Later this summer, NHEC will begin deploying an Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) that will enable your electric meter to send and receive usage information on a wireless network that covers the length and breadth of NHEC service territory. The biggest change you'll notice at first – no more meter readers. AMI meters report their readings via brief radio frequency transmissions, greatly reducing the need for contract meter readers. Not only will your new meter automate the reading process, it will provide you with a wealth of information that, if you choose, can help you better understand and manage your electricity usage.

Information When You Want It

Instead of seeing your previous month's electricity usage only when you get a new bill, you'll be able to view your usage anytime in weekly, daily, even hourly increments. Using a web portal conveniently located on your account homepage on the NHEC website (www.nhec.coop), you'll find charts, graphs and other data that show how much power you're using and when you're using it. If you take steps to reduce your usage, you can track their effectiveness by setting an "energy marker" that notes the steps you took and when you took them. The conversion to AMI meters will not affect your regular reading and billing schedule. You will continue receiving your monthly bill at the usual time.

Security, Accuracy

The automation of meter reading will virtually eliminate mis-reads and estimated readings. As meter data is collected and sent to NHEC headquarters for processing, it will be traveling on a network that employs state-of-the-art security. NHEC has developed a Cyber Security Plan specifically for the AMI project, which has been reviewed and approved by the Department of Energy (DOE). From a practical standpoint, the only information being transmitted by your AMI meter will be voltage and wattage data and a unique identifying number that associates that data with a particular meter. No personal or financial information will be sent or received by your AMI meter.

What's Next?

All members will be getting new meters. NHEC and its project partners will begin installing new AMI meters as early as June of this year. Approximately 35,000 meters, located largely in the Lakes Region, are scheduled to be installed by the end of 2011. Installations will be complete by the end of 2012. NHEC will be notifying members by mail when their meter is scheduled for installation during that month. We'll also be updating the installation schedule on our website: www.nhec.coop. Check the page often for project updates, FAQs and information that will help put the power of a smarter grid to work for you.

Smart Grid: before and after

"Smart grid" isn't easily defined: it means many things to many people. Electric co-ops advocate smart grid technology that benefits consumers by making electricity move more efficiently and affordably. Data exchange and two-way communications are key.



Without "smarts," the electric grid does a great job of getting electricity from a power plant to your home, although information is limited. Electric co-ops must get electricity use data by manually reading meters. That information is then passed back to consumers in a monthly bill. All system upkeep is done manually, meaning co-op staff must travel to maintain all parts of the grid.



With smart grid technology, information and communications are wide open. You can monitor electric use information from your home, and your co-op can do the same remotely. The grid itself can be monitored electronically, making outages easier to pinpoint and repair. Smart grid encompasses information exchange, automation, system visibility, control, and (most importantly) the ability to save consumers money.

Source: National Rural Electric Cooperative Association
Graphics by Funnellinc.com

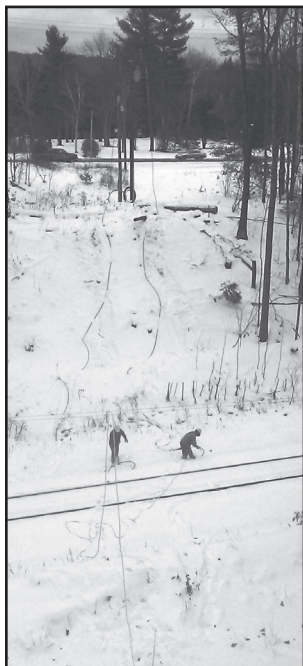
Elster Group Hired for AMI Project

NHEC has contracted with the Elster Group to provide equipment and expertise during the Cooperative's installation of an Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI).

One of the world's largest electricity, gas and water measurement and control providers, Elster has deployed more than 200 million metering devices in more than 130 countries over the last 10 years. Elster's products and solutions are widely used by utilities in traditional and emerging Smart Grid markets.

As prime contractor, Elster will work with NHEC to provide meters, communications equipment, software and technology solutions during the two-year project. One of the first orders of business will be a detailed propagation study that identifies the precise location of communications equipment that will enable nearly all 84,000 NHEC electric meters to send and receive information. Learn more about the Elster Group and its EnergyAxis Smart Grid solutions at www.energyaxis.com.

Over the Road, Under the Line, Over the Tracks...



NHEC recently completed work on a line construction project in Charlestown with more than its share of obstacles.

Approximately 2,500 feet of 12,000 volt overhead and underground power line was built in order to move 217 Co-op members off the far reaches of the electric distribution system served by the Charlestown Substation and onto the system fed by the Calavant Metering Point.

Along the way, the line needed to pass over State Route 11, under an existing Central Vermont Public Service transmission line, over an active railroad track and under a new subdivision served by Public Service of New Hampshire. The result – a lot of permits and paperwork, but also improved reliability and power quality for the 217 members that are now being fed by the Calavant metering point and the 932 members still being fed from NHEC's Charlestown Substation.

2011 Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy Programs

NHEC is again providing programs and incentives for residential and commercial members to invest in renewable energy systems and energy efficiency improvements that save energy and reduce carbon emissions. Below are highlights of the 2011 programs; complete details are available online at nhec.coop, or by calling Member Solutions at 1-800-698-2007. Rebates and program eligibility are available on a first-come-first served basis.

Home Performance with ENERGY STAR

Rebates up to \$4,000 towards installation of recommended energy efficiency measures. On-bill financing available for qualified members.

ENERGY STAR Homes New Construction

Rebates up to \$4,000 for construction of homes that meet or exceed the ENERGY STAR standard for energy efficiency.

Heat Pump and Geothermal Rebates

Rebates up to \$4,000 on the installation of Low Temperature, Hybrid, or Geothermal Heat Pumps for new construction; up to \$10,000 for conversions.

Solar Hot Water Rebates

Rebates up to \$750 on the installation of qualified solar hot water systems.

Commercial & Industrial Fossil Fuel Savings

Rebates up to \$5,000 on measures that save fossil fuel.

Watts Happening

Board of Directors Meetings

The NHEC board of directors regularly meets on the last Tuesday of each month at the cooperative's headquarters in Plymouth. Please check the Board of Directors page on the Co-op website at www.nhec.coop, or call Sharon Yeaton at (603) 536-8801 to confirm the current month's meeting time and location.

72nd Annual Meeting Is June 8

All Co-op members are welcome to attend the 2011 Annual Meeting, which will be held Wednesday, June 8 at the Plymouth Senior Center, 8 Depot Street, Plymouth, NH. A spaghetti dinner with all the fixings starts at 5 p.m. Special thanks to our friends at the Italian Farmhouse Restaurant in Plymouth, a member of the Common Man family of restaurants, which is donating the meal for the third year in a row. A suggested donation of \$5 will benefit the Senior Center and its programs. If you plan to join us for dinner, please RSVP to Member Solutions at 1-800-698-2007. Thank you!

Co-op Classifieds – Free Ads for Members Only

Cleaning out the basement or garage? Get a jump on spring cleaning and put that stuff up for sale in the online Co-op Classifieds. Ads are free of charge for members and there's no limit to how many ads you can post. To get started, register online for free at www.nhec.coop and follow the link from your account homepage.

Free CFL Bulb Recycling

Members can recycle fluorescent lights for free at two NHEC locations. Our Plymouth headquarters (Tenney Mountain Hwy) and Meredith District building (Route 25) are accepting tubes up to four feet in length, compact fluorescents, U-shaped and circular tubes (limit six per household, per visit). Hours of Operation:

Plymouth: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., M-F

Meredith: 7:30 a.m. – 2 p.m., M-F



For member service
please call
1-800-698-2007
Monday-Friday, 8-5:00
or visit us online at www.nhec.coop

To report an outage
please call
1-800-343-6432

New Hampshire Electric Cooperative
579 Tenney Mountain Highway
Plymouth, NH 03264