

05-07 Ruralite
AMR Update

We provide *Salem Scoop* to report on the activities of the Oregon state Legislature. But what's the "scoop" on the automated meter reading (AMR) project Coos-Curry Electric Cooperative, Inc. (CCEC) has been involved in for over a year?

The *AMR Scoop* is that the project is going very well. But before I provide an update, let me take a step back and give some basics about the technology and the program. Your electric cooperative began the process of investigating this new technology a little over two years ago. During the investigation, we looked for a system that would provide improved meter accuracy, more consistent billing periods and the ability to look back over time or trend individual member's usage patterns. We also wanted a way to obtain instantaneous meter readings, the ability to remotely disconnect or connect an electric service and the ability to gather outage information quickly to reduce the length of power outages and generally give us better outage management tools.

We started with a pilot project to install approximately 200 AMR meters primarily in the area of Lobster Creek up to Illahe served out of the Geisel substation. The project quickly grew beyond a pilot when we discovered the capabilities of the AMR technology and we began a system-wide deployment to take full advantage of those capabilities.

Installing a system like this takes time and there are specific steps and processes that must be followed for the system to be effective and productive. Think of it as a three-legged stool with three components that must be complete for it to work properly.

Leg #1 includes the installation of the substation equipment and bulk communications needed to allow CCEC to request and receive meter data from your home or business over the power lines to the substation. The

bulk communications – DSL, dial-up, satellite or a wireless connection – is the link between the substation and the office.

Leg #2 is the AMR meter, which is nothing but a highly accurate recording and storage device. AMR meters are able to store usage information that is available upon request for a variety of purposes. They also include a communications module that allows them to send the stored data over the power lines, through the substation and back to the office for use in answering member questions.

Leg #3 is the line conditioning equipment that includes the boosters and filters that enhance the signal strength and make sure they get back to the substation where they are then sent to our office. If these devices are not installed in pre-determined, critical locations, the signals will not be heard and the meter data will not reach the office.

All 3 legs are critical to the success of the entire program.

So, here's where we are according to our Project Coordinator, Steve Deraita.

Leg #1 substation equipment: We have 4 of the 14 substations up and running. One is located in the Gold Beach area and the other 3 are in the Coquille area. We are currently working on the 4 substations that are located in the Bandon area down to Port Orford and hope to have them operational by June 2007.

Leg #2 AMR meter installation: We currently have 3,234 meters installed and 2,500 meters are currently being installed in the Bandon to Port Orford areas.

Leg #3 line conditioning equipment: All repeaters in the Gold Beach area are installed and we are currently working to get the Coquille area repeaters located and installed. This is the final step and can only be

accomplished when the meters are deployed and we know the locations where the repeaters are needed.

Look for more updates later in the year. And, feel free to contact Steve or any of our area offices if you have questions.