



# CENTRAL ELECTRIC

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jeff Beaman  
Central Electric Cooperative  
Member Services Director  
Office: 541-312-7753  
Cell: 541-480-7431  
Email: [jbeaman@cec.coop](mailto:jbeaman@cec.coop)

Date: Jan. 10, 2011

## **Central Electric Begins Meter Change-out Program, All Members to Receive New Electronic Meters by mid-2013**

REDMOND, Ore. – Central Electric Cooperative’s (CEC) members began receiving new electric meters today, marking the next major step in the Coop’s three-year program to upgrade its metering system and billing processes. All members are scheduled to receive meters capable of transmitting usage data by the middle of 2013.

These meters’ sophisticated data exchange capabilities have prompted many to dub them “smart meters.” They are an integral part of CEC’s Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) project. AMI gives Central Electric the capability to read electric meters remotely, eventually eliminating the need for meter readers to travel to members’ property for monthly readings.

“This program will improve efficiency on multiple fronts,” said CEC President and Chief Executive Officer Dave Markham. “In addition to decreasing our vehicle emissions by eliminating monthly trips and reducing associated costs, we will be able to read meters on a much more regular schedule, which improves our billing processes. Late this year, our members will have immediate access to usage information through a secure website. This will make resolution of billing questions much more efficient and our members more knowledgeable when making energy saving decisions.”

The ability to “ping” meters – send an electronic signal to determine whether or not electricity is flowing to a service point – will, in some cases, lead to more efficient service restoration after power outages. “All of these benefits contribute to lower operating costs and improved service,” said Markham.

CEC has contracted national metering services company TruCheck Metering Solutions to convert most of the meters with CEC technicians handling the balance. The first area to receive the new meters is in Central Electric’s service area northwest of Redmond.

“Our change-out schedule will move steadily around our 5,300-square-mile service area over the next two-and-a-half years,” said CEC’s project manager Brad Wilson. “We will notify each member by mail two to three weeks in advance of their meter change-out. TruCheck’s technicians will alert the consumer if they are on-site when they arrive, then proceed with the conversion. They will leave a door hanger to make sure all members know a new meter has been installed. A brief outage is necessary for a safe conversion, so the consumer may have to re-set clocks and other electronic

(more)

equipment. Otherwise, there will be no noticeable change in service.”

**AMI Project Background**

Central Electric officially launched its AMI project in May 2010 after being awarded \$4.65 million in matching funds by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), a grant provided under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. It funds half of the five-year, \$9.3 million project to enhance the reliability and efficiency of CEC’s electrical system. The balance is funded through CEC’s ongoing capital budget, the cooperative’s process for funding the projects and infrastructure that support the reliable, efficient and safe delivery of electricity to its members.

The project’s first three years are focused on the meter upgrades and the installation of communications systems and other equipment. The final two years of the five-year program will be spent in partnership with DOE monitoring, evaluating and reporting on system performance and benefits.

**Central Electric Cooperative, Inc. Background**

A member-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperative, Central Electric (CEC) has provided electric utility services to its members in central Oregon since 1940. At the close of 2010, CEC served 31,729 accounts held by 24,781 members in its 5,300 square-mile service territory in Deschutes, Crook, Jefferson, and parts of Lake, Linn, Wasco, and Grant counties. CEC’s electrical system includes 24 substations and 3,886 miles of energized power lines, including 183 miles of transmission line, 2,296 miles of overhead distribution line and 1,407 miles of underground distribution line.

#####