

GETTING CONNECTED

Smart Meter Information

“Owned by Those We Serve”

August 2013

Volume IV Issue VIII

Kit Carson Electric Co-operative

CEO's Message



Smart Meter Q & A

In the midst of the huge fiber optic construction project undertaken by KCEC there are many questions that have been asked by our members. Some of those questions relate to *Smart Meters* being installed at residences and businesses

throughout our service territory. We are constantly in pursuit of ways to bring efficiency, safety and affordability to our members. Smart meters do all those things and more. Since smart meters are relatively new, at least in our communities, many of our members are not familiar with them. I will try to answer some of the frequently asked questions here.

What is a smart meter? Smart meters use two-way communications to transmit information to our central dispatch center at the Taos Regional Command and Communications Center. The information includes energy usage and power quality monitoring.

How does the smart meter communicate with the central dispatch center? There are several different types of smart meters. KCEC will be using a power line carrier system in Taos and Questa. This system uses existing electric distribution lines to communicate with the meter and transmit information.

What about radio frequencies? The power line carrier system is not wireless and does not use radio frequencies to transmit information. The information is sent from the meter to the substation over an existing electric line. It is then transmitted from the substation to our office via an existing, secure connection. The smart meter is a circuit board and does not emit radiation or radioactive material. In fact, smart meters emit about 500 million times less than your average microwave oven.

What are the benefits of smart meters? Rather than

having a meter reader physically check each meter the information is accurately transmitted to central dispatch, saving you, as members, costs for transportation and payroll. They will also provide our members with useful information to help make decisions about energy management, as well as giving our customer service personnel useful information to assist with billing issues. Another major benefit will be the ability to pinpoint where outages have taken place. In this way, even if you are not a home, we will know your power has been interrupted and be able to make necessary repairs.

How accurate are the smart meters? There is a certification process through the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), which all smart meters must meet or exceed for accuracy and performance. Meters are also periodically tested for accuracy by KCEC to insure they are continuing to perform at these high standards.

Can smart meters identify personal information or activity? No, the meters collect hourly energy usage only. Smart meters collect the same data a meter reader would, but is less invasive, as the data is collected remotely. KCEC has a privacy policy, which we strictly adhere to. Your personal information is never given to a third party. For even greater privacy, please consider taking advantage of our on-line bill paying service. You can get more information at our website, kitcarson.com or by calling our Customer Service Department at (575) 751-9064.

I hope this clears up some of the mysteries about smart meters. Remember if you have questions about any of your Kit Carson Electric Co-op services don't hesitate to call our Customer Service Department at (575) 751-9064 or our public information officer-Steve Fuhlendorf at (575) 758-2258 ext. 143.

Sincerely,
Luis Reyes, CEO

Taos Age of Fiber Optics Launches at Fiestas

The Old County Courthouse on the Historic Taos Plaza was the site of the first test of the Enchanted Light Fiber Optic High Speed Internet Project during the Taos Fiestas de Santiago y Santa Ana July 19, 20 and 21. KCEC has existing fiber in the area of the plaza, so we were able to make this first connection.

Visitors to the Old County Courthouse were able to see video streaming from several cameras strategically placed around the plaza, so well as a live feed from Glenn Pike from Taos TV. Historic images of fiestas, as well as other images of old Taos we also projected cour-

tesy of Bill Whaley. A reception was held Saturday evening, July 20th in the mural room, highlighting the historic frescos created in the 1930's, as part of the WPA program, featuring famous Taos artists of that era.

The presentations and reception were a collaboration between KCEC, Taos County government, the Town of Taos, UNM-Taos and the Taos Entrepreneurial Network (TEN). The Taos County Commission is working with the TEN to coordinate the revitalization of the Old County Courthouse as an economic development hub. At KCEC we are assisting by providing the first Enchanted Light Fiber Optic connection, which is the highest speed internet available in northern New Mexico.

KCEC Board of Trustees Meeting Summary

The KCEC Board of Trustees meet at 9am on the last Tuesday of each month. Below is a brief summary of the meeting held on July 30, 2013:

- The Rio Grande del Norte Coalition and Renewable Taos made presentations in opposition to Tri-State's proposed transmission line through northern New Mexico.
- ⇒ Mr. Reyes asked the coalition to consider supporting KCEC with the PRC in regard to the proposed rate increase from Tri-State. It was agreed they and Renewable Taos will both support KCEC's position.
- All KCEC department managers were asked to cut their budgets by 3% for the remainder of the 2013 fiscal year. This has been accomplished.
- May through September each year show budget losses due to declining usage. During these months heaters are not used, ski resorts are not running their lifts or making snow, and residents do not use lights as much due to longer daylight hours.
- Line loss is a major expense. Every 1% line loss equals \$200,000. So far in 2013 line loss has cost more than \$850,000.
- Tri-State: Oral arguments will be the end of August in federal court for Tri-State case contending the PRC does not have regulatory authority over them.
- ⇒ **The protest of the Tri-State rate increase has saved KCEC members \$654,432 through the end of June 2013!**
- ⇒ Tri-State was given 60 days by the PRC to work with KCEC in regard to withdrawing their proposed rate increase.
- Broadband update:
- ⇒ Of the \$64 million, \$12.9 million of the grant has been expended and \$5.5 million of the loan. For a total of \$18.4 million. This leaves about \$46 million yet to be spent in our communities, generating jobs and producing economic impact, plus gross receipts tax.
- ⇒ The project is 33% complete.

Board of Trustees

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Board Meeting

The board of trustees meet the last Tuesday of the month at 9:00am in the cooperative boardroom.

Contacts:

Main Office: (575) 758-2258/ 1-800-688-6780

Customer Service: (575) 751-9064/ 1-800-944-8159

Customer Service Fax: (575) 758-4611

Administration Fax: (575) 758-4890

Automated System: (575) 751-8132

Power Outages/Service Interruptions: (575) 758-6100

Emergency Line-locates: NM One Call 1-800-321-2537

Questa Satellite Office: (575) 586-2113-Call for office hours

Peñasco Satellite Office: (575) 587-1900-Call for office hours

New Mexico Public Regulatory Commission (PERA Building):
1-800-947-4722

Learn more about Kit Carson Electric on the Internet at:

www.kitcarson.com