



ACEC UPDATE

By Jay A. Porter,
PE, Chief Executive Officer

Update on New Meters Last month I talked about the kickoff of our new meter installation project. This project will have several phases of installation and will take approximately two years for all members within our service territory to receive a new meter. This installation project begins as the life of our current meters comes to an end.

For now, I would like to address a question you may be wondering most; how much is this going to cost me? The answer is, there will be no additional direct costs to you to install this new meter and there is no rate increase anticipated in association with this project.

To better answer your other questions about these meters and the installation process see the following pages for more information.

Member Survey Participation We ask you to please participate as we will be conducting a member survey starting at the end of March. Your voice matters and your feedback is valuable to us. The survey will be conducted by phone or email and should only take a few minutes. Let us know how we're doing!

Journeyman Graduation Congratulations to our newest journeyman line technicians: Trevin Jensen, Eric Kitchen, and Dustin Hess. Upon graduation from an Electrical Power Distribution program, these men were hired at Adams-Columbia as apprentices. To become a journeyman, 8,000 hours of training in the field of line distribution, construction, maintenance and related subjects are required. 7,360 of these hours are on-the-job training and 640 are instructional.

I would like to remind anyone considering a career in



Front: Jon Gessner-Operations, Manager
Back: Jon Congdon, Operations Asst Manager; Josh Berger, Operations Supervisor; Trevin Jensen; Eric Kitchen; Dustin Hess; Shawn Pietrzak, Operations Supervisor; Duane Moore, Operations Supervisor



Adams-Columbia Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner



linework of our Jon Steinhaus Line Worker Scholarship. This scholarship is available March 1–April 12. Details and application can be found on our website under Co-op Programs.

Daylight Savings Time Don't forget to "spring forward" on Sunday, March 10. That being said, as spring approaches I would like to advise all members to call Diggers Hotline before you begin any outdoor projects. Just dial 811 anywhere in Wisconsin three working days in advance of digging.

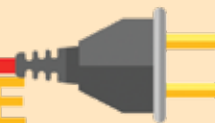
Annual Meeting Join us Saturday, May 11, at the Adams-Friendship Fine Arts Center. We will begin our 32nd annual meeting at 9:30 a.m. If you plan on attending we ask that you RSVP to acec@acecwi.com or by calling (800) 831-8629 by April 5. Can't make it to the meeting on May 11? Don't forget that our eVote option will be available April 1–May 10. This option is available to all members via their SmartHub account.

There are three director seats up for election at the 2019 annual meeting. The deadline to submit paperwork to run for the board was February 8, and we now have our official candidates:

- **District 2:** Incumbent Patrick Connolly vs. new candidates Adam Jones and Ethan Olson
- **District 3:** Incumbent Marj Colby vs. new candidate Aaron Hoerke
- **District 4:** Incumbent Lawrence Becker vs. new candidates John Church and Jon Ebert

Get to know the candidates! Join us for a candidate forum on April 3 and 4, details on page 18. You can also read about the candidates in next month's issue. We'll have a biography of each candidate highlighting what they feel they would bring to Adams-Columbia's board if elected.

SAFETY MESSAGE



March is National Eye Safety Month

Here at ACEC we take safety very seriously, and eye safety is no different. Each employee is given a pair of safety glasses when they start. It may sound like a simple safety tool, but according to preventblindness.com, more than 2,000 people injure their eyes at work each day. I am encouraging you to remember to put on a pair of safety glasses when you are working on DIY projects around the home. Another way we should protect our eyes doesn't require safety glasses, that's doing things to reduce eye strain. With all of our SMART devices, we're straining our eyes to focus on small screens at close distances. This advice sounds funny, but remember to blink... a lot. Take breaks and take care of your eyes.



New Meters

Upgrades for Improving Efficiency, Reliability, and Enhanced Service

We are investing in new meters to improve the efficiency and reliability of our electric system and enhance service to you. You may have questions about these new meters and how they work. Here are the most common questions we have received – and answers:

Why is the new system needed?

Our current Automated Meter Reading (AMR) system was state-of-the-art when it was first implemented 15 years ago, but it is now nearing the end of its life. Much like a cell phone from 15 years ago, or repairs that need to be made on a 15-year-old vehicle, we've simply reached the point where replacement makes the most sense over expensive repairs.

How does my new meter work?

The meters send their reading through an encrypted data packet to the office via a combination fiber optic and cellular network, which is dedicated to only ACEC's information exchange.

What information does the new meter record?

The same information that has been getting recorded, which includes the amount of electricity used, the overall peak demand of the electric account, and the number of times the meter has experienced a loss of power for any reason. You can log on to SmartHub to view your own electric usage information.

How will the co-op read the new meters?

Very much like the current one. We read the meter on command from our offices, through a computer-generated request. On a daily basis, meters emit power for less than one minute per day to communicate to our office.

Is my personal data secure?

Yes, only metering data will be transmitted via an encrypted, highly secure system. No personal information about members is stored within the meter or included in what is delivered from the meter back to the office. The meter records whole-house energy usage just like your existing meter.

Will the communications system interfere with any equipment in my home?

No, our system meets criteria set by the Federal Communications Commission and should not interfere with any equipment inside a home or business.

When will my meter be installed?

Installation of the new meters will take approximately two years start to finish, beginning the summer of 2019. Our crews will begin putting equipment on poles a few months ahead of meters being installed. We will notify you in advance of when crews will be in your area to exchange your meter.

Who will be installing the meters?

Our employees will be installing a portion of the meters, while Allegiant Utility Services, our contractor, will be installing the balance of them. Contract employees and vehicles will have co-op identification, so you will know they are acting on behalf of the co-op. Allegiant has installed hundreds of thousands of AMI meters throughout the country.

How will I know if my meter has been changed?

If you are not home, a co-op employee or contractor will leave a door hanger on your front door to let you know they have changed the meter. You do not have to be present during the meter exchange. If workers are unable to access your meter because of a locked gate or other obstruction, we will be in contact with you.

Will I lose electrical service during installation?

Yes, for a few minutes. You may need to reset electronic clocks and other devices. The technician will notify you before turning off the power. If you are not present, the technician will leave a door hanger to notify you of a successful meter exchange.

The Rundown

What's the difference between the current system and new one?

There is very little change between the current system and the new one. Both are comprised entirely of electronic meters, and both systems measure the same types of electric use information.

There are three main differences:

- The first is the new AMI meters report back to ACEC collection points using a dedicated wireless network, while the current system uses the power lines to carry information back to an ACEC collection point. For comparison, the new system works much like a cell phone, while the current system works like a land line telephone.
- The second and exciting difference is the new meters can automatically signal cooperative monitoring equipment of an outage, allowing for more efficient response to outages and problems on the distribution system.
- And the third is most meters will have remote disconnect capabilities, where only a few do in the current system.

How can I get answers to my specific questions?

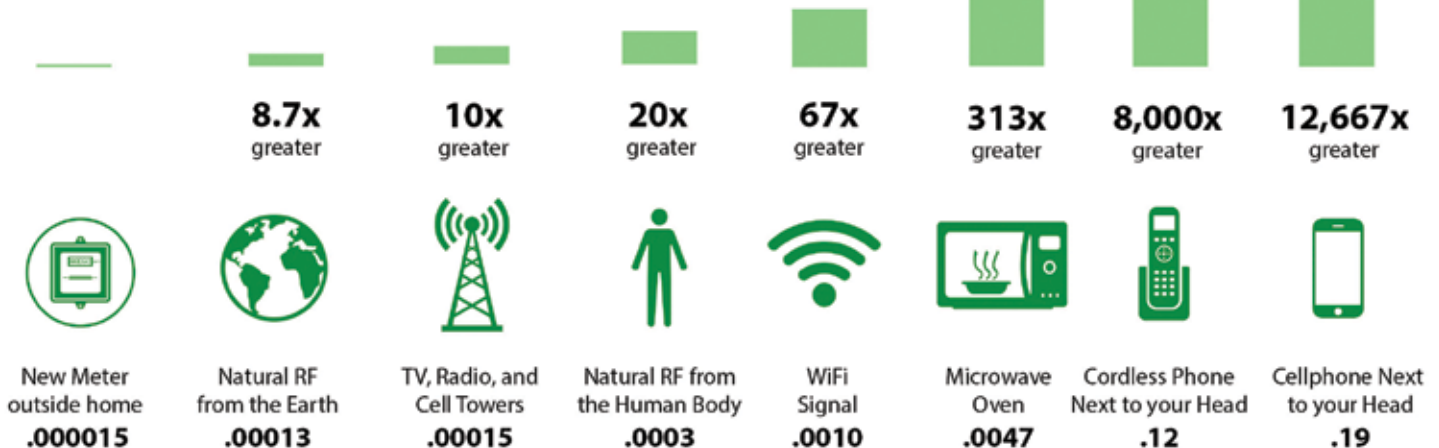
You can call us at (800) 831-8629, Monday-Friday from 7:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m., or email acec@acecwi.com.

Are They Safe?

The new meters use Radio Frequency or RF to communicate information to our office. Some people have asked if RF levels from the meters are safe. The short answer is, yes. The RF level from the meter is low; we've put together a graph of levels of RF in everyday items for comparison.

The Federal Communications Commission, FCC, has a safety exposure limit of 1 milliwatt per square centimeter (mW/cm²). To reach this limit you would have to be within 1 foot of 7,000 meters all communicating at the same time. Remember, you have one meter that is located outside and it only communicates for under a minute per day.

The measurements on the graph are based on the FCC average exposure standard of 30 minutes. Measurements are listed in mW/cm².





**Adams-Friendship
Fine Arts Center**
E North St, Adams, WI 53910



Saturday,
May 11th



Registration Start: 8:45 a.m.
Meeting Start: 9:30 a.m.

ANNUAL MEETING 2019

There are three director seats up for election at this year's annual meeting. Join us from 5:00 - 6:00 p.m. for a candidate forum Wednesday, April 3rd at the World War II Center in Wautoma or 5:00 - 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 4 at the Westfield Community Center. If you plan to attend the candidate forum or the annual meeting, please RSVP by emailing acec@acecwi.com or calling (800) 831-8629.

MEET THE
CANDIDATES

District **2**

Incumbent Patrick Connolly
Candidate Adam Jones
Candidate Ethan Olson

District **3**

Incumbent Marj Colby
Candidate Aaron Hoernke

District **4**

Incumbent Lawrence Becker
Candidate John Church
Candidate Jon Ebert


Can't make the meeting? Vote online!



eVote starting April 1st



Adams-Columbia Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

Customer Service & Billing	800-831-8629
Power Outage Reporting	888-928-2232
Diggers Hotline	800-242-8511

**To make a payment anytime 24/7,
please call 1-844-219-1223.**

Jay A. Porter, PE—CEO
Ashley Miller—Editor

Friendship Service Center

401 East Lake Street • P.O. Box 70
Friendship, WI 53934-0070
Office Hours: Monday – Friday, 7:30 – 4:00
www.acecwi.com

The Friendship Service Center is located in the Village of Friendship, in Adams County. From Highway 13, travel east three blocks on East Lake Street. Lake Street is also marked as County Highway J.

Adams-Columbia Electric Cooperative maintains operations facilities in Pardeeville and Wautoma. These facilities are not open for general business; however, drive-up payment stations are available at both locations. ACEC employees will meet with cooperative members in Pardeeville and Wautoma by prearranged appointment only.