

New Meters to Help Us Serve You Better

Empire Electric is upgrading its metering system

Empire Electric exists to serve its members. Our mission is to “safely, responsibly, and reliably meet the electrical energy needs of our member-owners.” One part of fulfilling our mission is maintaining equipment that effectively and efficiently allows power to be delivered to homes and businesses. Familiar equipment such as poles, wires, and transformers are all necessary components of power delivery. Meters are also important pieces of the power system as they are the devices that allow energy usage and production data to be accurately captured.

In the 1990s, Empire deployed its first automated metering system. That system was called “Turtle.” The Turtle system allowed Empire to read meters remotely. Instead of sending technicians to manually read each meter each month, the Turtle system automatically sent reads through the power lines back to the office, which allowed Empire to realize savings in labor and fuel costs associated with monthly meter reading. The Turtle system has served us well, but, as with most other technology from the 1990s, the system has become obsolete. The technology is no longer supported by the manufacturer and replacement parts are becoming harder and harder to find. Thus, we will replace the Turtle system in 2017. After several months of evaluation and analysis, we decided on a system produced by Landis and Gyr, better known as L&G, as Turtle’s replacement. We are very excited about the benefits the L&G system will bring to our members.

One specific benefit is faster outage recognition. The new meters will automatically send an outage notification to our office when they experience a power outage. This will allow us to detect problems more quickly and to locate outages more precisely. In some cases, we will be able to fix the problem before members know their power has been out.

Another specific benefit is better member service. The new system will allow us to provide more member service programs, such as potentially a pre-pay program. Also, the new system will provide more granular information about power use. Armed with this information, Empire’s consumer services representatives will be in a better position to help members address billing inquiries. Additionally, we plan to provide members access to their detailed usage data, which will help members better understand how and when electricity is used.

We will be sending members a tentative schedule of the installation in the months to come and this schedule will also be provided on our website. We will again notify you just prior to the meter change out of when you can expect us to be in your area. We plan to have the new system fully deployed by the end of 2017.

Members can find more information about the new metering system on the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page on the website.

Again, Empire Electric exists to serve its members. We are excited about the new metering system and we are confident it will enable us to serve our members better. If you have any questions about the new metering system or any other cooperative business, please do not hesitate to contact us.