



Integration

Meter upgrades complete, employees utilizing technology

It took less than one year for Chapman Metering, of Avoca, Iowa, to work through SCEC's service territory upgrading meters. Project Integration - SCEC's information management and metering system conversion - wrapped up in late 2016. With the new digital meters in place, employees are beginning to utilize the new technology.

Automatic Outage Reporting

Among the immediate benefits of the new meters is automatic outage reporting. Once a meter senses there is no power coming from the Co-op's distribution system, it can immediately send a signal to the office or after-hours call-center, notifying employees of the outage. From 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, the Co-op office in Hammond will see the outage and send a crew to repair. If an outage occurs after hours or on a weekend, the Cooperative Response Center, Inc. (CRC), will notify and dispatch the on-call lineworker. CRC will also call the member's phone number on record to verify the outage, if it occurs before 8 p.m. or after 8 a.m. CRC will not call a member after 8 p.m.

If members prefer the peace of mind of calling or texting in their outage, they can call 800-924-3407. Outage texting is also available (message and data rates may apply). More information and instructions to sign up are at www.scecnet.net and type "outage texting" in the search bar.

In the event of a major outage, updates will be posted at www.scecnet.net and on the Co-op's social media pages (see pg. 2).

Viewing Electricity Use

If a member calls SCEC with a concern or inquiry regarding their account, an SCEC employee can access up-to-the-minute

electric use for the member, including usage in 15-minute intervals. The former metering system only reported a member's electricity use every 27 hours. SCEC can only see overall electric use, but the updated usage information is enough to let employees determine the next step to help the member and whether a technician or lineworker should be dispatched.

In one instance, a member called to report an outage. When an SCEC employee checked the account, they determined there was power flowing to the meter from the Co-op's distribution system and the outage was due to a fault in the member's equipment (see graphic below). This allowed the member to immediately call their electrician and begin resolving the problem. Prior to Project Integration, SCEC would have most likely sent two lineworkers and a truck to the member's home, which would have taken longer, only to realize they weren't able to help the member.

Another instance where this will be helpful is during a major outage. Once lineworkers have large-scale outages restored, they begin to focus on the smaller, single-account outages. It will save the lineworkers precious minutes to check a meter on the system via their iPads and make sure power was restored. In the past, they would have to drive to the account to manually check the meter. In situations where lineworkers have been working for 16+ hours straight, saving an hour of their time means one hour sooner they get home to their families (and to sleep).

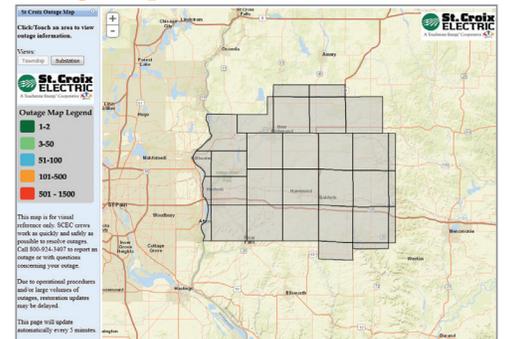
Detecting Tampering/Meter Fault

The new Sensus meters can detect when tampering has occurred or if the meter is not functioning properly. These situations will trigger an alarm to the Co-op office

protects the member by making the meter off limits and containing the voltage. The 120/240 voltage within the meter kills more people than any other voltage. Only a trained, authorized serviceman can cut the seal on the meter or remove it. Not even an experienced electrician has permission to remove the meter seal.

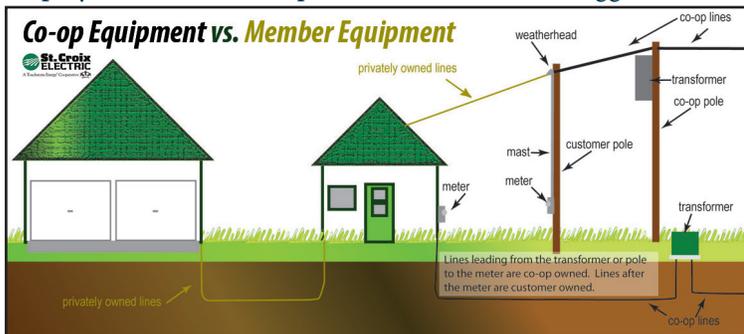
Tampered meters may mean legal action and potential loss of electric service for the member whose meter shows signs of tampering. It also endangers the lives of those in the home, their neighbors and lineworkers. If SCEC investigates an alarm and determines meter tampering has occurred, the member will be assessed a minimum penalty of \$250 and is responsible for reimbursing the Cooperative for materials and labor to repair the tampered meter and surrounding equipment. The total bill for such a situation could easily exceed \$1,000. For the average residential SCEC member, that is the equivalent of around six months of regular electric bills.

Outage Map



SCEC now offers an online Outage Map for members to reference. The map can be found at www.scecnet.net. On a desktop computer, a dark blue Outage Map button is located at the top of the home page. On a smartphone or tablet, scroll down to "Quick Links" and click on the "Outage Map" option. There is a small arrow immediately to the right of "St. Croix Outage Map" at the top of the left tab that will collapse the tab so the map can fill the screen. The Outage Map will only show outages by township or substation, not specific address.

As more features become available, they will be discussed in future newsletters.



in Hammond, which employees will promptly investigate.

Energy theft is an issue St. Croix Electric Cooperative takes seriously. The Cooperative seals all meters, which