

## Aclara Meter Data Management System Improves Customer Service at Pee Dee Electric Cooperative

Wellesley, Mass. – January 18, 2011 – Pee Dee Electric Cooperative, Darlington, South Carolina, is using Aclara’s cost-effective, mid-market Meter Data Management System (MDMS) to enhance all aspects of its customer service, allowing the utility to refine its time-of-use (TOU) rates and improve customer billing for its 30,000 residential and commercial members. Aclara is part of the Utility Solutions Group of ESCO Technologies Inc. (NYSE:ESE).

The cooperative went from kick-off to finalization of its MDMS system in just four months. “We went gangbusters on the project,” says Brian Kelley, vice-president of marketing at Pee Dee, one of the nation’s top-ranked rural electric cooperatives for customer service. “We’re extremely impressed with the Aclara team and its processes for defining the scope of work. When the product was delivered it was configured exactly to our specifications.”

The utility, a long-time user of Aclara’s TWACS AMI solution for meter reading, is also piloting the TWACS Prepayment Solution and the Aclara’s home area networking (HAN) technology. The MDMS will be the backbone for prepayment and the HAN offering, allowing people to view consumption data on in-home displays or via Web-enabled devices.

Completion of the MDMS also paves the way for introduction of Pee Dee’s *i-on energy* website, which will be powered by Aclara’s smart customer-engagement solution, ENERGYprism®. The program will make it easier for Pee Dee customers to monitor and adjust energy use and become more energy efficient. “Having a meter-data-management system improves the quality of our data and gives us a platform to present the hourly interval data to our members,” says Kelley.

The Validate, Estimate, and Edit (VEE) engine that powers the Aclara MDMS allows the utility to refine meter data so that it can be used in a wide range of customer-service applications. The ability of the MDMS to mathematically estimate and compare interval data from one time period to the next, for example, allows identification of discrepancies such as negative or excessively high reads. The utility can use the information to pinpoint problems with the operation of systems such as water heaters or heat pumps, potentially saving customers money.

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Simplifying management of interval data associated with specific time periods also provides more flexibility and precision in setting a range of rates. For instance, the utility is piloting a commercial coincident peak (CP) demand rate versus the current non-coincident peak demand rate. The MDMS-validated interval data gives Pee Dee the ability to offer the CP rate without having to change the meter. Rates based on coincident peaks will save certain commercial customers money, while also saving Pee Dee money.

The ability to manage interval data through the MDMS is also reducing costs by utilizing the validated interval data for residential TOU billing. This has allowed Pee Dee to get rid of special meters for customers on a TOU rate. These meters manage interval data to enforce TOU rates, but are costly and must be reprogrammed if rates change. “Eliminating TOU meters reduces service orders and the need to roll a truck to switch out meters or make programming changes,” says Kelley. “With meter-data-management we can rely on standard residential meters and manage the TOU rates from the office.”

Although nearly 30 percent of Pee Dee Electric’s 30,000 residential and commercial members already pay bills or access energy-consumption details online, the MDMS will allow customers even more access to information about their usage. Today, the cooperative’s members log onto two different websites to access less information and functionality than will be available from *i-on energy*. The program will offer energy-use analysis based on hourly meter reads provided by the MDMS, making it possible for customers to make informed energy-use decisions that maximize efficiency and reduce costs. Information available to consumers also will be readily available to Pee-Dee’s customer-service representatives, allowing them to more effectively communicate with customers.

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**About Aclara**

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