

## **Pee Dee Electric Co-op Prepares for the Future with Aclara's MDMS and Customer-Engagement Software**

SOLON, Ohio – September 9, 2010 – Pee Dee Electric Cooperative, Darlington, South Carolina, is preparing for a Smart Grid future by implementing Aclara's Meter Data Management System (MDMS) and ENERGYprism® customer-engagement software to meet growing consumer interest in household energy management. Aclara is part of the Utility Solutions Group of ESCO Technologies Inc. (NYSE:ESE).

One of the top-ranked rural electric cooperatives in the nation for customer service, nearly 30 percent of Pee Dee Electric's 30,000 residential and commercial members already pay bills or access energy-consumption details online. "Consumers want to know how much energy they're using, and they don't want to wait a month for a piece of paper to arrive in the mail to find out," says Robbie Howle, Information Technology Specialist at Pee Dee Electric.

Aclara's solution will simplify the process of accessing billing and usage information. Previously, according to Brian Kelley, Pee Dee Electric's Vice President of Marketing, the cooperative's members had to log onto two different web sites to access less information and functionality than what is easily available through the ENERGYprism solution.

The software will help consumers understand monthly changes in bills, reducing the need for members to call a contact center representative (CSR). Consumers also will have access to information about how their usage compares with that of peers, where energy dollars are spent in the home, and more. Plus, CSRs will have the same detailed information consumers see via the software's Contact Center Channel, ensuring that they can answer member questions easily.

On the MDMS side of the equation, interval data and load profiles will be available to the utility, allowing it to manage distribution of electricity better. "The centerpiece of our solution is the MDMS," says Pee Dee Electric's Kelley. It will enable the cooperative to gain more value and insight from hourly meter data by performing critical functions such as data validation, estimation and editing (VEE), data storage, as well as integration with multiple utility systems, including the CIS."

“Aclara’s MDMS is also the backbone for the prepayment and HAN technology that will allow people to see consumption data on in-home displays or on the Web,” Kelley adds. “We’re at a point where our wholesaler is going to need to add new generation, and it’s expensive, so we’re looking for ways to educate people to make them smarter consumers of energy.”

Pee Dee Electric’s wholesale supplier, Central Electric Power Cooperative, is partially funding the new technology through grants from the South Carolina Budget and Control Board’s State Energy Office, which ultimately gained monies from federal Stimulus-Bill funds.

According to Kelley and Howle, competitive pricing is one reason Pee Dee Electric chose Aclara’s MDMS and ENERGYprism software. Howle adds that the Aclara solution lets Pee Dee Electric leverage its long-standing investment in advanced metering infrastructure (AMI). “We have been running Aclara’s AMI infrastructure for eight years,” he explains. “This lets us build on that current relationship.”

The co-op is on pace to have its MDMS and ENERGYprism software installed and operational by the end of 2010. As part of its efforts to help members become more energy efficient, Pee Dee Electric, a long-time user of Aclara’s Two-Way Automated Communications System (TWACS) for meter reading, also is piloting the TWACS Prepayment Solution and the Aclara HANfx®, an expandable home area networking (HAN) technology.

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**About Aclara**

The Aclara brand represents the industry’s leading Intelligent Infrastructure<sup>™</sup> technologies for providing device networking, data-value management, and customer communications to water, gas, and electric utilities globally. Over 500 utilities in nine countries rely on proven Aclara solutions to connect with their customers. Aclara is part of the Utility Solutions Group of ESCO Technologies Inc. (NYSE: ESE), St. Louis. Capturing data. Liberating knowledge.® [www.Aclara.com](http://www.Aclara.com).

**About Pee Dee Electric Cooperative**

Headquartered in Darlington, S.C., Pee Dee Electric Cooperative provides electricity to more than 30,000 residents, businesses and industries via 3,700+ miles of line in South Carolina’s Chesterfield, Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Lee, and Marion counties. The locally owned co-op was established in 1939.