

## Lee County Electric Co-op Taps Meter Data Management and Customer-Care Tools from Aclara for Smart Grid

WELLESLEY, Mass. – February 2, 2010 – One of the largest electric cooperatives in the nation, Lee County Electric Cooperative (LCEC), has chosen the ENERGYprism® Customer Care and Energy Vision® Operational Efficiency solutions from Aclara®, a leader in Intelligent Infrastructure™ and part of the Utility Solutions Group of ESCO Technologies Inc. (NYSE:ESE). Aclara's customer portal and meter-data-management system (MDMS) will help LCEC transform its advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) into a foundation for smart-grid development. These additions to the utility's information systems will allow Lee County Electric to turn consumption data into powerful knowledge for utility workers and customers alike.

Based in North Fort Myers, Fla., LCEC has been collecting daily consumption data from its 210,000 customers since 2002 via the Aclara Two-Way Automatic Communications System (TWACS(R)) technology, a fixed-network AMI solution that transmits meter readings over power lines. With the addition of the Aclara Software MDMS, the utility gains the ability to quickly validate, store and integrate data from many utility systems, giving utility managers better decision-making power.

The Aclara applications also will empower consumers by giving each utility customer online information on household energy use, as well as tools to understand bills, compare usage to similar households, pinpoint where energy dollars go based on a home profile, and learn ways to make smarter energy choices. In addition, Aclara's "Bill-To-Date" feature lets customers see how much their electric bill is at any point in the billing cycle, determine what the final bill may be at the end of the billing period, and set a customizable threshold that triggers an alert from the utility.

"We're opening up an all-new dialogue with customers," said Dennie Hamilton Sr. VP & CEO for LCEC. "By giving customers the power to have us call, text or email with alerts before a high bill arrives, we're offering proactive customer service and the chance for no-surprises energy bills."

Hamilton also notes that the MDMS positions the utility to support emerging technologies. "It won't be long before people come home from work, plug in their cars and expect vehicles to be charged for a morning commute," he said. "With the MDMS, we'll be able to implement an hourly meter-reading schedule, and we'll have two-way communications into each household. That means we'll be ready to balance charging load as more and more plug-in vehicles hit the road."

Hourly meter readings also equip the utility to offer time-based rates and other demand response programs, as well as pre-pay. In addition, the software will facilitate net billing for customers who generate their own electricity.

"Utilities are facing increasing pressure from regulators to operate more efficiently and support Green energy," said Jackie Lemmerhirt, Senior Director of Product Management for Aclara Software Inc. "LCEC is now well positioned to meet regulatory mandates for demand response programs and net metering on homes with roof-top solar arrays."

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Along with the MDMS and customer portal, LCEC has contractual options to integrate additional Aclara Software modules to its system for load research and forecasting, distribution asset analysis, device management, and revenue assurance.

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**About Aclara**

The Aclara® brand represents the industry's leading Intelligent Infrastructure™ 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. Create Your Intelligent Infrastructure.™ [www.Aclara.com](http://www.Aclara.com).

**About LCEC**

LCEC is an electric distribution cooperative serving five counties throughout Southwest Florida. LCEC is focused on delivering reliable electricity and quality service at competitive prices. Effective use of technology and efficient business processes are important to meeting these goals.