

## **New Technology to Change the APS Customer Experience**

At first, it may sound like something out of a 1970s sci-fi movie; people monitoring their electric usage remotely and configuring appliances for maximum efficiency through their home's smart meters.

In this future scene, busy workers are able to program their air conditioners from their work computers or even their cell phones without ever leaving the office.

Meanwhile, the local electric company is increasing electric reliability by doing away with conventional tracking maps, and instead orders repairs, deploys crews and responds to the needs of the entire grid with the click of a mouse.

For APS and its customers, this high tech future is right around the corner.

APS prides itself on innovation and service, and smart meters and the company's state-of-the-art Distribution Operations Management System (DOMS) are cutting-edge technologies that will benefit customers and APS.

"We are excited to be able to provide a new level of service," said APS Vice President of Customer Service Jan Bennett. "The smart meters will allow our customers to gain more control over their energy usage. They also offer APS a diagnostic tool that in turn makes our system more reliable."

Here are some of the benefits the smart meters and DOMS system offer:

- Customers will experience shorter and fewer outages
- No longer will APS have to rely on calls from customers to initiate repair work – outage notifications will be instant
- Smart metering technology also will help APS identify areas more susceptible to service interruptions

APS designed the DOMS software system to replace wall maps, track outages in real time and manage electrical loads, construction and repair crews. DOMS will allow APS to manage and track information and make updates to this grid via computer.

Coupling the smart meter technology with DOMS completes a technological loop that APS hopes will put customers in charge of their electric usage while allowing APS to better serve its customers.

In January 2007, APS passed the 20,000-unit mark in its deployment of "smart meter" technology. These intelligent meters will allow customers to dictate in real time when electricity is used, how much is used and how it is used.

“We are in an era of customization, where people are looking to add their own personal touches to enhance their lives and make themselves and their energy tools more efficient,” said Bennett.

The smart meters will eventually offer two-way communication between customers and APS, limiting smart metering technology only to the imagination of the electric company and its customers. The potential benefits for APS customers include the ability to:

- View in real time the amount of energy their home has consumed and compare that usage among different service plans, enabling customers to always select the most cost-effective options.
- Control appliances from a remote location. Essentially, any appliance set up to operate through a remote could eventually be operated remotely.
- Set a budget, and have their usage conform to that budget.
- Smart meters also will help identify areas more susceptible to service interruptions, allowing APS to make the appropriate system improvements.

More efficient management and quicker response to the needs of the system will result in higher reliability and lower outage durations.

This is the energy future APS is putting into place for its customers. And fortunately, that future isn't far away.