

# A Customer Service Milestone: PPL Electric Utilities Installs One Millionth Automated Meter

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ALLENTOWN, Pa.

PPL Electric Utilities reached a customer service milestone this month: One million homes and businesses in eastern and central Pennsylvania now have automated meters.

"Automated meter reading is an investment in our electric delivery infrastructure for today and tomorrow," said John F. Sipics, president of PPL Electric Utilities. "It is a technology that helps us meet customer expectations for service."

Automated meter reading has resulted in fewer estimated electric bills and is enabling PPL Electric Utilities to evaluate other service enhancements, such as new rate options.

A device inside the meter enables PPL Electric Utilities to get electricity-use information electronically, eliminating the need to read meters manually in most cases.

Only 1 percent of the bills issued in 2003 to customers with automated meters have been estimated, Sipics noted. With manual meter reading, typically 4 to 6 percent of bills issued to PPL Electric Utilities customers were based on estimates, depending on weather and other factors.

The ability to collect electricity-use information at any time, as opposed to once a month with manual meter reading, enabled PPL Electric Utilities to test a time-of-use rate option with a small group of selected residential customers.

"As part of PPL's commitment to Electric Choice in Pennsylvania, we plan to offer customers new and different options for electric service," Sipics said. "Automated meters enable us to test concepts and will help make future alternative pricing plans possible."

PPL Electric Utilities also is using the two-way communications capability of its automated meters to help restore electric service more efficiently after major storms. By sending an electronic signal to meters, the company is able to determine whether power is flowing through them.

While Automated Meter Reading will eliminate about 175 meter reading positions in the company's 29-county service area, very few layoffs are expected as a result of the new system.

"Our meter readers have served customers and represented the company well for many years," Sipics said. "We appreciate the work they have done and have been able to offer other positions to most of the meter readers who want to stay with the company."

PPL Electric Utilities is on schedule to complete the \$160 million project next year. By the end of 2004, all of the company's 1.3 million customers will have automated meters.

PPL Electric Utilities is a subsidiary of PPL Corporation (NYSE: PPL). Headquartered in Allentown, Pa., PPL Corporation controls about 11,500 megawatts of generating capacity in the United States, sells energy in key U.S. markets and delivers electricity to customers in Pennsylvania, the United Kingdom and Latin America.

SOURCE: PPL Electric Utilities

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