

# The Energy Line

**F**rom the President & CEO

*Energy information for the customers of Wellsboro Electric*

## Smart Choices on the way

The dawn of a new year marks the beginning of a new era for Wellsboro Electric Co. as we prepare to apply “smart grid” technology to our electric distribution system.

We have begun deploying two-way automatic meters, known as smart meters, at homes and businesses within our service territory as part of our Smart Choices project. This project will allow us to provide energy-saving choices to consumers, improve outage restoration times and set the stage for future energy conservation initiatives such as load management and time-of-use rates.

So just what is this so-called “smart grid?” It’s basically an electric distribution system overlaid with computer intelligence and networking capabilities, allowing two-way communication between the utility and its customers. Smart grids have the potential to improve the efficiency of energy distribution and electric use, both through the grids’ design and through consumer participation.

We were fortunate to be one of 100 utilities nationwide to receive federal stimulus funding for our smart grid project back in 2009. The \$431,625 grant we received through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act is being used to purchase smart meters and related software and substation equipment to bring us to the forefront of 21st century electrical system technology.

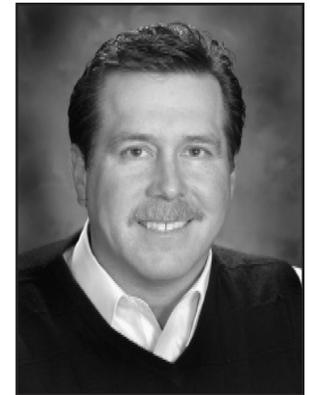
As part of our Smart Choices project, we began installing smart meters at various residential customer locations last month. We plan to have about 440 smart meters installed by mid-January, when we go “live” with the project and begin receiving meter readings here at the Wellsboro office. Over the course of the next two years, we will install two-way metering devices at the homes of over 2,600 residential customers — about half of our residential customer base — and all of our commercial and industrial accounts.

The two-way meters will communicate to and from the office, providing customers with the ability to obtain accurate, near real-time electric use information from a home computer or the Wellsboro office. Customers will also be able to access their historic electric consumption data on an hourly basis in order to evaluate and potentially change their energy use habits.

The smart grid technology will also enable us to determine how much and where energy is being consumed, and alerts us to voltage problems and power outages on the system, allowing us to restore outages and address electrical disturbances in a more efficient and cost-effective way.

For most customers receiving two-way smart meters, no outage will be required. Those customers will be notified that their meter has been changed via a door tag. For some smart meter installations, a brief outage will be required. We will contact those customers directly to make arrangements for the outage, which usually lasts less than 10 minutes. Should you have questions about our Smart Choices project, please give us a call.

Best wishes to all of our customers for a terrific New Year.

### Wellsboro Electric

33 Austin Street  
Wellsboro, PA 16901  
(570) 724-3516

[www.wellsboroelectric.com](http://www.wellsboroelectric.com)

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## Customers can pay bills, view account information online

Wellsboro Electric customers can now view their account information 24 hours a day, seven days a week, as well as pay their electric bills online through E-Bill, our internet bill presentation and payment program.

E-Bill gives customers the ability to:

- Pay your electric bill online using your checking account, credit card or debit card
- View your current bill online
- View your billing and payment history
- Monitor receipt of payment
- View your electric consumption and costs in chart form
- Change your account information
- Start or stop service
- Receive your bill electronically.

E-Bill will eventually tie in with Wellsboro Electric's Smart Choices project.

Over the next two years, the company will install smart meters at about half of our customer locations. These advanced, two-way meters will not only provide meter readings directly to the office, but will enable customers to view their electric consumption data on an hourly basis through the E-Bill program.

By monitoring personal electric use, customers can take control of their energy costs by making informed decisions about changing consumption habits.

To explore the features of E-Bill, visit the WECO website at [www.wellsboroelectric.com](http://www.wellsboroelectric.com) and click on the E-Bill option on the home page.

## Important info about Electric Choice

Pennsylvania's Electric Choice program gives you the ability to choose the company that supplies your electricity.

As your local distribution utility, Wellsboro Electric Co. owns and maintains the wires, poles and meters necessary to deliver power to your home and sends you an electric bill each month. That will not change, regardless of whether you purchase generation through Wellsboro Electric or from an alternate electric generation supplier.

While there are currently no alternate electric generation suppliers offering to provide generation service within Wells-

boro Electric's service territory, we continue to be prepared for that possibility.

The cost you currently pay for generation and transmission service, known as the "Price to Compare," which is adjusted quarterly, is expected to be about 7.05 cents per kWh through March 2011.

The Price to Compare is used by consumers to make informed financial decisions during the generation shopping process.

For additional information about Pennsylvania Electric Choice, contact the office or visit the following websites:

- [www.papowerswitch.com](http://www.papowerswitch.com)
- [www.puc.state.pa.us/utilitychoice](http://www.puc.state.pa.us/utilitychoice)

## Need help paying your heating bills?

If you need help paying your heating bill, you may be able to receive assistance through the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

Funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the program provides energy-assistance grants to help low-income households pay their heating bills through the winter.

LIHEAP offers both cash grants and crisis grants. Cash grants help families pay their heating bills. If you are eligible for a cash grant, the grant will be sent directly to your utility or fuel dealer, and the payment will be credited on your bill.

Crisis grants are available to help those who have emergency situations in which they are in danger of being without heat. Those situations include: having broken heating equipment or leaking fuel lines; being without fuel; having utility service terminated; or in danger of being without fuel or of having utility service terminated.

If you have a heating emergency, or for more information about LIHEAP, call the Tioga County Assistance Office at 570-724-4051. Following are the income guidelines for acceptance into the program:

Household size	Maximum income (before taxes)
1	\$17,328
2	\$23,312
3	\$29,296
4	\$35,280

*Add \$5,984 for each additional member of the household*

## Let Budget Billing even out payments

You can avoid monthly fluctuations in your electric bill by signing up for Wellsboro Electric's Budget Billing plan.

The program allows you to level out your monthly payments throughout the year. Your payment amount is calculated based on the average of your electric bills for the previous 12 months.

If you are interested in setting up a Budget Billing plan for your account, please contact our office.