

POWERING THE FUTURE: CASE STUDY

In the Know on Outages: How an Indiana co-op is using its AMI system to improve detection



Western Indiana Energy (WIN) REMC is a distribution cooperative serving eight counties and more than 16,500 homes and businesses. Like many not-for-profit power distributors, WIN is always looking to control costs and keep its members' rates low.

So they identified areas where relatively minor operational improvements could yield major cost savings and enhance service. Their first target? Outage management.

Identifying, confirming and repairing outages can be a labor-intensive job — especially if service crews have to be dispatched. So Greg Wolven, Director of Engineering at WIN, began looking for ways to more accurately pinpoint power interruptions and fine tune the cooperative's approach to "rolling trucks." The Gridstream™ PLC system proved to be just the right tool.

Powerful communication

Because Landis+Gyr's PLC technology is "always on" and communicating with endpoints, the system provides unsolicited outage detection and restoration notifications. WIN uses its outage management system to provide confirmation of outage reports. This helps prevent a number of common problems — including the creation of false outage reports.

Previously, this could occur when a service technician took a meter off line for repair, but failed to immediately call it in. Now, by using the AMI and outage management system in tandem, the dispatchers could better distinguish actual outages from simple worker oversights.

All together now

Another advantage of using its AMI system for outage detection: WIN can now validate the operation of all its endpoints at once. Because the system communicates continuously, engineers should be receiving data from every meter, 24 hours a day.

"We have roughly 16,800 meters on our system," said Wolven. "In as little as 20 minutes, I could tell you [if] all are off or [if] any portion are back on. I do not have to do outage verification on all these 16,800 meters. That would take a very significant period of time."

The efficiencies that WIN has gained in outage detection and restoration notification have helped control costs at the cooperative. "For me, that's a big advantage," said Wolven.

Being "Future Ready"

Landis+Gyr is the leader in global energy management. We use our proven experience to help utilities realize the full potential of smart grid — with solutions that are tailored for today's needs, but that also anticipate what's coming. We call this being "Future Ready."



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"Future Ready"?**

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