

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Deb Borton, Public Relations Manager
Consumers Energy
Office: 641-752-1593
Email: dborton@consumersenergy.coop

CONSUMERS ENERGY TO TAKE PART IN NATIONAL SMART GRID DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

Marshalltown, Iowa. (December 17, 2009) Consumers Energy will participate in a national demonstration project of Smart Grid technologies with the help of a grant recently awarded by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). Working with 16 other rural electric cooperatives across ten states, Consumers Energy will install and operate a suite of new technologies to gather data to determine overall benefits and cost-effectiveness of the technologies.

“This is an opportunity for Consumers Energy to strengthen our commitment to energy efficiency using the latest Smart Grid technology available,” said Brian Heithoff, CEO and General Manager of Consumers Energy. “The information we gather through this project will tell us what works best to deliver energy efficiency results; and, increased energy efficiency translates into energy savings for the members we serve.”

Consumers Energy applied for funding through a partnership grant with the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association to the DOE. A total of \$33.9 million was awarded for this nationwide demonstration project from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The DOE funding, which accounts for half of the project’s total cost, will be used to demonstrate advanced Smart Grid technologies and integrated systems to help build a more efficient and functional electrical grid. This is the first nationwide pilot extending and testing technologies from power plant to end consumer.

Technologies will include over 130,000 meters, over 18,000 demand response switches, nearly 4,000 in-home displays or smart thermostats, and others. These technologies will allow communication between different parts of the grid in real time, help grid operators monitor and control the flow of electricity to improve reliability and empower consumers to make choices that lower energy use and save money. The demonstration data will be centralized for all sites and include studies on total demand, distributed energy resources, peak pricing, customer appliance control, and self-healing technologies for improved reliability.

Consumers Energy is a local, member-owned energy solutions cooperative specializing in energy delivery and energy management. The cooperative serves over 5,000 members and customers in six counties throughout Central Iowa: Marshall, Jasper, Polk, Tama, Story, and Hardin.