

## AMR meters to be replaced one last time this fall

**Groton Electric's AMR project is nearing completion—new and improved meters will offer additional features not currently available.**

After four years of prototypes, upgrades and improvements, Groton's automated meter reading system (AMR) will once again be upgraded this fall when all residential meters will be replaced. This is expected to be the final meter change for the new system.

The AMR project began in 2005 when Groton Electric became the beta-test site for a two-way radio system—the first of its kind—manufactured by ArKion Systems Inc. Despite some challenges, the conversion to new state-of-the-art meters was almost seamless to our customers.

However, since we were testing new technology, there were some bumps in the road. An improved meter was revealed after our initial group of meters was installed, so those meters were replaced. The newer meters have been reading successfully since 2007.

Recently, Mueller Water Products Inc., a billion-dollar company and a leader in the North American water infrastructure industry, purchased the assets of ArKion Systems (our current vendor) and has created a division called Mueller Systems Inc. The new division will provide smart metering solutions for the electric, water and gas industries.

As part of their focus on quality, Mueller Systems Inc. used everything that has been learned over the last few years along with their top-notch engineering and product knowledge to produce a high-end meter for Groton that includes some additional features that are not currently available.

The current meters have been working extremely well for meter reading, but there have been some integration issues with the outage reporting and smart thermostat software. The new Mueller communication modules will answer these challenges.

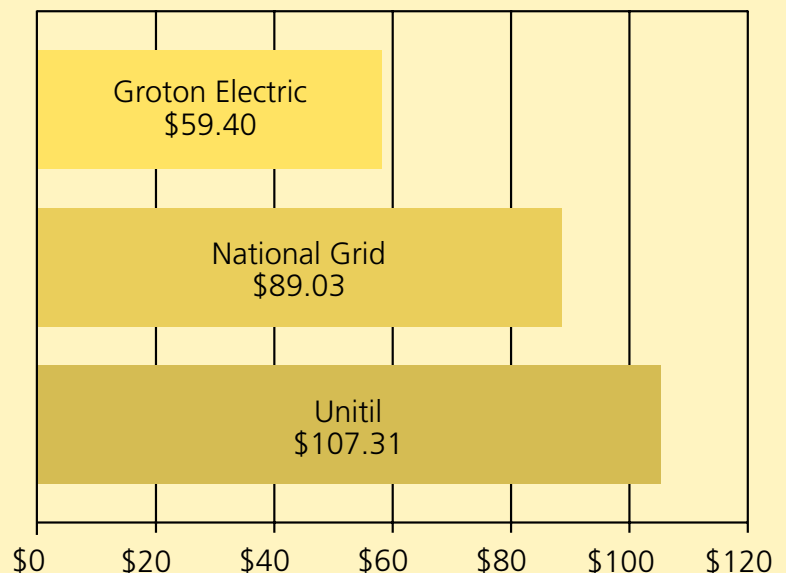
The Mueller® product:

- Is thoughtfully designed to make application and installation as easy and error-free as possible,
- Includes features intended to enhance maintainability and help assure that the full service life of the product is attained, and
- Is backed by Mueller engineering, manufacturing, sales training, and customer service staff.

These new meters will not cost you, the ratepayer, or the Light Department any money; the entire cost is being born by Mueller Systems Inc. Mueller Systems will even contract with a third party to do the installation beginning in early fall.

### See how we compare

The following chart shows a typical 500 kWh bill amount for Groton Electric compared to two local investor-owned utilities. As you can see Groton Electric offers a substantial savings in comparison—National Grid's rates are 50% higher than Groton Electric's rates and Unittel's rates are 81% higher.



*note: this data represents the most current 12-month average*

## Wind power project is one year ahead!

*Present economic conditions offer significant benefits to the Berkshire wind project.*

Groton has a 5.5% ownership share in the Berkshire Wind Cooperative Corporation, which was originally slated to begin producing power in the fall of 2010. The economic benefits being realized include the ability to obtain hard-to-acquire wind turbines quickly and at a lower price, and the contractors needed at a much lower rate. Because of these benefits, we hope to end up millions of dollars under-budget and be operable one year ahead of schedule – in late fall 2009.

## Calling all customers with pool pumps

*Switch to our Time-of-Use rate  
this summer and save money!*

If you're willing to run your pool pump from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. and switch to our Time-of-Use rate, you'll enjoy our lowest rate during those times. You will also help GELD by shifting the high electricity use of the pool pump to the least expensive time to generate and buy electricity. This means Groton electric can purchase at a lower rate, which helps hold down power costs for everyone.

Shifting power consumption away from peak-use periods also helps the environment, since it reduces the need to run expensive and often environmentally unfriendly peaking generators.

GELD's time-of-use rate – it's a win/win/win situation!

## Get your own copy of the 2009 Annual Report

GELD's 2009 Annual Report is now available at our Customer Service desk at 23 Station Ave. Stop by and pick up your copy to read all about YOUR utility, which is owned by you, the people of Groton.

## Equalize your payments

The Groton Electric budget plan begins with the August 31 bill. If you would like to renew or would like information about this plan, please call Barbara at 978-448-1150. If you are interested in predictable budget payments during the winter months, please enroll by August 18.

## 'Tis the season— for lightning storms

*Summer weather can bring everything from lightning storms to hurricanes. Take time now to prepare for possible power outages.*

Taking the time to prepare can greatly reduce the inconveniences of a power outage. Stock up now on nonperishable emergency supplies and make a disaster supply kit with enough supplies to get your family through at least 3-7 days without power.



Here are some ideas to get your kit started:

- Flashlight (battery-operated or hand-cranked)
- Extra "working" batteries
- Candles and matches
- Battery-operated radio
- Wind-up clock
- Blankets/pillows
- First aid kit
- Water and non-perishable food items
- Manual can opener

For more ways to be prepared, visit [www.nhc.noaa.gov](http://www.nhc.noaa.gov).

## Power out? Let us know!

Although our state-of-the-art meters are able to register and report outages as they occur, the outage response software is not yet fully automated. This means we still need to be told when your power is out.

Please call our office *once* to report the outage, and then call back only if your neighbors have electricity and you are still without power. We appreciate everyone's patience as we work through the final challenges in the AMR system.