



Xcel Energy Starts Smart Grid Project In Boulder

By Jonathan Shieber

5/16/2008 – Xcel Energy said that it has begun construction on a \$100 million smart-grid project in Boulder, Colo., expected to be completed in 2010.

The upgrades to the utility's infrastructure involve the roll-out of new technologies from companies including Current Group, GridPoint Inc., and Landis+Gyr AG.

In the first phase of the project, expected to run from March through August 2008, Xcel will install equipment to automate, and monitor smart meters for 15,000 residential, commercial, and light industrial customers.

That project will use monitors from Landis+Gyr, a networking communications system from Current Group, and management software from GridPoint.

The company will also upgrade two sub-stations and five feeders. According to the company, 60% of the total will be spent on hardware and equipment and another 40% will be spent on software applications.

That \$100 million figure from the company includes in-kind contributions and man-hours as well as contracts signed with vendors.

Minneapolis-based Xcel Energy said it would pay for a portion of the project, and will offset its own costs with government grants.

In addition to the meter deployment, the company will also provide a Web portal that shows energy usage to consumers, and the option for some customers to choose in-home automation tools that could be set to control energy use in homes, based on the pricing of peak electricity.

Xcel began building its initiative in December 2007, with the launch of a smart grid consortium that it used to consult on the development of its SmartGridCity initiative.

Earlier this year, the company began purchasing equipment for the project including its 15,000 meter order with Landis+Gyr.

For start-up company GridPoint the deal is a milestone, according to company spokesman Louis Szablya. "We have about 8 utilities that we're working with now," he said. "This is the most significant transaction that we've done."

Xcel Energy is a electricity and natural gas company with regulated operations in eight Western and Midwestern states.

<http://www.currentgroup.com>

<http://www.landisgyr.com>

<http://www.gridpoint.com>

<http://www.xcelenergy.com>