

For Immediate Release

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## **Texas project aimed at lowering electricity bills, reducing power use during peak demand launched**

Advanced metering and utility communications devices are among the cutting-edge technologies that will be used in a consumer project announced today that is expected to cut electricity bills and lower Texan's residential electric use during the late afternoons -- the peak demand period of the day.

The Center for the Commercialization of Electric Technologies (CCET) and some of its member companies are heading the research and demonstration effort known as the "Demand Response Project". CCET is managed by a Board of Directors of member companies and officers: Robert Howden, Chief Executive Officer, and Dr. Milton Holloway, Chief Operating Officer.

Robert Howden said "The project will take up to two years to fully demonstrate that the new electric technologies can provide consumers with the ability to manage their electricity use and reduce their electric bills. Orientation and installation processes in Dallas and Houston are complete, launching the long-anticipated project that begins today," he added.

Dallas-based Oncor Electric Delivery is providing the technology to complete the project in Dallas while three retail companies, Reliant Energy, TXU Energy and Direct Energy are expected to recruit about 500 residential customers to take part in the research. Houston-based CenterPoint Energy will participate in the project with the same three retail companies, Reliant Energy, TXU Energy and Direct Energy, and about 500 residential customers.

During customer recruitment, retail electric providers will educate the participating consumers in the use of advanced metering technology. Also, within a few weeks, CURRENT GROUP and Comverge, both CCET members, are expected to install two-way communicating thermostats and switches in homes participating in the demonstration project.

Agreements signed by residential customers will allow Oncor and CenterPoint to reduce power load in individual residences by cycling air conditioners and turning off pool pumps, especially at peak times in summer months.

The Electric Reliability Council of Texas, the grid operator for much of Texas, will gather 15 minute meter reading data at the end of each month of the trial from both Dallas and Houston. Data will then be used to validate peak demand reductions experienced by consumers.

“The ‘Demand Response Project’ presents a unique opportunity for the electric industry and state leaders to gain insight into what actions produce the biggest benefit of easing congestion on the power grid during peak periods and demonstrating to consumers that they can manage their electric use,” Holloway explained. “Texas’ leading electric market participants are starting this pilot as part of an ongoing statewide initiative to provide Texas consumers with the most efficient, reliable and secure electrical service possible,” he added.

Project benefits include:

- Proof that Oncor and CenterPoint and the Dallas and Houston area retail electric providers can implement cost-effective demand response solutions.
- Demonstrate that consumers can get value from managing their electric use.
- Confirm that electric companies, retail providers and their contractors can cooperate to reduce electric use and cost.
- Establish a foundation for residential emergency response capability in the ERCOT area of Texas.

“Gauging customer reactions and acceptance of load demand management will be important functions of the research,” Holloway said. “Developing and documenting experiences among market participants will be critical to the success of the program,” he emphasized.

*The Center for the Commercialization of Electric Technologies was created in 2005 by the electric industry and technology companies. CCET is made up of 19 Texas electric and high tech companies joined with five universities in a collaborative effort to modernize the Texas electric system. CCET’s purpose is to encourage private sector initiatives that promote growth in high-quality employment, and to lead to scientific breakthroughs in the operation of the Texas electric system. Among the CCET’s objectives is to develop and capture the benefits of advancing technologies in electric energy transmission, distribution and end use by bringing together the extensive existing facilities and technical capabilities of electric utilities, high technology leaders, and Texas universities and colleges.*