



Unifying solutions  
for the **Smart Grid**



Welcome to **Connections**, your source for up-to-date EnergyAxis news and information

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## **Elster Releases EnergyAxis 7.0**

Driven by a vision to solve the utility industry's most pressing AMI challenges, EnergyAxis 7.0 enables numerous enhancements to core system capabilities critical for today's smart grid applications while refining other system components to meet current and future customer needs.

EnergyAxis 7.0 now provides enhanced capabilities such as voltage conservation, commercial load control, grid modernization, outage management and remote system upgrades. It also provides extended and enhanced support for standards and security and enhances EnergyAxis performance with an even wider array of WAN options.

Initially deployed at several EnergyAxis customers in February, EnergyAxis 7.0 is now being staged for rollout with the broader EnergyAxis user community.

Highlights of this system release include:

- Best-In-Class 900MHz Mesh Networking Capabilities
- Enhanced IP Support
- Network Robustness Improvements
- Over the Air Upgrade enhancements
- Support for New WAN Interface Cards
- Enhanced Security
- Support for industry Standards and Interoperability
- Voltage Conservation Support
- Polyphase Load Control Support
- Additional Demand Response Capabilities
- User Interface Enhancements
- New Outage Management capabilities

## Online EnergyAxis Community Debuts

As our user community has continued to grow over the years there has been a growing desire amongst our users to interact with each other on a regular basis and share ideas on how to leverage EnergyAxis to its fullest.

To facilitate this dialog, Elster has launched the EnergyAxis Community Board this month. With this online community our users will be able to share best practices and interact with users from a diverse mix of experiences and applications.

The forum is open to existing EnergyAxis customer representatives who are encouraged to register for a login at [energyaxis.ipbhost.com](http://energyaxis.ipbhost.com). Once your registration has been approved, you can begin interacting with your fellow users.

## Consumers Energy Piloting EnergyAxis

Consumers Energy, a major Michigan utility, has selected EnergyAxis as part of a pilot program to evaluate cutting edge Smart Grid technologies. Consumers Energy plans to install residential and commercial smart meters as part of its Smart Grid pilot program this spring and plans to use the results of that program to help shape its future Smart Grid investment decisions.

Read more <http://www.energyaxis.com/news-release0020.asp>

## Four More Utilities Select EnergyAxis

Elster has added four other utilities to the EnergyAxis family in recent weeks. The Town of Parowan, the oldest city in southern Utah, will deploy EnergyAxis for its electric customers and has plans to extend the system add water customers in the future. South River, New Jersey also has selected EnergyAxis for its electric service.

In Ontario, Canada EnergyAxis continues to be the AMI system of choice with St. Thomas Energy and Lakeland Power Distribution being the latest to select EnergyAxis.

## Update on ARRA Stimulus Grants



Ed Gray  
VP Regulatory Affairs

On March 4, 2010, the US Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources held a hearing on ARRA progress. Senators had hard questions for DOE about why things were going so slow, why approximately 80% of the ARRA funded renewables manufacturing jobs were going overseas, and why DOE was requiring monthly reporting on a number of matters. Four Senators have introduced legislation that would slow or stop certain ARRA incentives unless there is a lot more restriction on funding largely going for foreign manufacturing jobs. The safest bet is to deploy US manufactured products, like those made by Elster.

Also, on March 10, 2010, the Internal Revenue Service ruled the Smart Grid Investment Grants (SGIG) to be nontaxable. This removed a major stumbling block for acceptance of the grants by IOUs. A number of IOUs (as well as government-owned utilities, who don't pay taxes) began to sign the grants agreements. For corporations the grants are to be handled as nontaxable nonshareholder contributions to capital. The tax basis of the property is to be reduced by the grant amount and the grant amount may not be claimed as depreciation deductions. The utility investment cost share may be depreciated.

The combination of these events has resulted in several SGIG grant contracts being signed between the DOE and the utility recipient companies with the expectation that many more will follow shortly.

## EnergyAxis - Security for the Smart Grid

As the Smart Grid evolves, so will the standards to allow inter-operability and defined security solutions. Many industry consultants have raised concerns around the potential of security gaps or holes within Smart Grid deployments, with some concerns pertaining to existing Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) solution offerings. Our white paper is intended to address the security concerns related to AMI systems and how the Elster EnergyAxis System is architected to provide preventative measures against cyber security issues by examining each element of the system in detail

Download the white paper at <http://www.energyaxis.com/ea-inf-white-papers.asp>

## Toronto Hydro and DOMLEC Win Metering International Excellence Awards

Elster utility customers took home two of the three 2010 Metering International Excellence Awards announced earlier this month.

Dominica Electric Services (DOMLEC) won the Business Case category. Their smart grid project has brought multiple business benefits in areas including outage management, system optimization, technical loss reduction, prepaid metering, service calls, damage claim reduction and vegetation management.

Toronto Hydro won the Customer Service category for its "Get Smart Toronto" initiative-a multi-year, integrated communication strategy that has used a phased-in approach for AMI smart meters and TOU pricing.

Read more at <http://www.metering.com/node/17249>

## Upcoming Events

DistribuTECH 2010 - March 22nd - March 25th

Tampa, Florida

<http://www.distributech.com/index.html>

AGA/EEI Customer Service Conference and Exposition - April 11th - 14th

Milwaukee, WI

<http://www.aga.org/Events/EventsataGlance/AGAEEICustomerserviceexposition/>

CIO Utilities Summit - April 18th - 21st

Scottsdale, Arizona

<http://www.cioutilitiessummit.com/>

## 2010 EnergyAxis Users Conference Recap



The 2010 EnergyAxis User Conference was held February 21-25 in Charleston, SC. Utility personnel representing the majority of EnergyAxis customers were in attendance as well as delegates from Elster Partner network.

The bottom line? Here's what the attendees think.

"In an industry being bombarded by hype and snake oil, the Elster EnergyAxis conference included outstanding speakers and interesting discussions that help de-mystify the "Smart Grid" and foster real world solutions."  
Cooper Technologies

"Great opportunity to network with other utilities who are experiencing the same growing pains as we are."  
Anonymous

"The agenda, venue and the quality of speakers was excellent. Having attended previous EA conferences it was great to see familiar faces from around the globe and converse with them on their accomplishments and ideas."  
Peterborough Utilities

"The utility forum and networking opportunities were invaluable in learning what other Elster AMI users are doing, and what issues are they concerned with in terms of implementing a smart grid strategy."  
Orland Utilities Commission

### **Also announced at the 2010 User conference were the winners of the 2010 Elster EnergyAxis Awards.**

Innovation Award went to Metrix, New Zealand in recognition of its extensive network testing methodology.

Smart Utility Award went to Salt River Project, Arizona for its use of EnergyAxis to improve process efficiency and reduce costs.

Green and Clean Award went to Toronto Hydro for its environmentally forward consumer information portal.

Customer Service Award went to Dominica Electric Services Ltd (DOMLEC) for its popular and consumer friendly prepayment program.

Collaboration Award awarded jointly to Merrimac Light and Water Department and Groveland Electric Light Department, Massachusetts for their extensive cooperation to save costs and effectively serve customers.

