

MOUNTAIN PARKS ELECTRIC, INC. (MPEI)
NEW CONSTRUCTION - SERVICE INSTALLATION FREQUENTLY ASKED
QUESTIONS

Effective March 11, 2011

- 1. I am looking into buying or building on a particular piece of land. Who can answer my questions regarding my new service or if the line will need to be extended?** Call the Engineering Department (970) 887-3378 office staff or stop by the Engineering office to visit with the staff. Area maps are available for viewing for the existing electrical lines. The staff will go over the procedures and provide the necessary documentation at no cost. If you desire a field visit by the staking engineer to review preliminary information a \$100.00 non-refundable fee will need to be paid and then an appointment can be scheduled.
- 2. How do I apply for residential service (new construction)?** Contact the Engineering Department at MPEI. You will need to complete a Load Information and Meter Location Form and return it to the Engineering Department along with the required engineering deposit which will be applied to the cost of the project. This completed form provides us with pertinent information including: billing/contact information, property location, electric load information, and site sketch. We may require that you (and/or your electrician and general contractor) meet with a staking engineer at the site of construction. At the meeting you will agree on meter location and the design of the service. **Please Note:** It shall be the sole responsibility of the customer to confirm if overhead utilities, meter pedestal, or junction boxes are allowed in the area they are building. Should the utility be required to be relocated, the customer shall be responsible for all applicable charges.
- 3. How do I go about upgrading my existing service/or relocating my meter?** Contact the Engineering Department at MPEI. You will need to complete a Service Upgrade Load Information and Meter Location Form and return it to Engineering Department along with the \$500 engineering deposit. Once the completed form and engineering deposit has been received, a site visit will be scheduled with a staking engineer to meet with you (and/or your electrician and general contractor). At the meeting the meter location will be agreed upon and the work to be done by the electrician and/or MPEI for the required upgrade or relocation. The engineering deposit will be applied to the cost of the project. If the upgrade or meter relocation doesn't require any work to be done by MPEI, the unused portion will be returned
- 4. When is a meeting with a staking engineer required?** If primary line needs to be installed, or if the existing primary line is not on the property, multi meter building, or if certain conditions exist for a secondary service along with any upgrade in service, a meeting with a staking engineer is required. This meeting serves many purposes. It enables MPEI and the customer to understand what is expected of them for this particular new service. A new service may appear to be very simple, however, there are certain conditions that our representative needs to be aware of before an accurate staking sheet and cost estimate can be completed. These may include; the route for the new primary line, the length of the new line, location and size of the transformer, the availability of existing conduit across a road, if any easements need to be obtained and the number of existing meters on an existing secondary electric pole. These are a few of the many items that are considered at a site visit. The required meeting also helps to keep a new job flowing smoothly through the system by helping to eliminate errors and miscommunications between MPEI and the customer. By doing this, we can help to avoid additional, unforeseen costs and delays.
- 5. How much will it cost to extend electric service to my lot?** It is very difficult to quote costs for extending the primary line. The cost can vary based on items such as the type of primary line construction, size of the structure, type of heat, hot tub, etc.

Primary Lines - A ballpark-starting estimate for the cost of single-phase primary lines is:

Primary Overhead- \$3000 to \$7000 per pole. Due to differences in length, equipment, and other variances specific to each project, these prices are only estimates and may

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vary. Poles can be set approximately every 275 feet, depending on terrain and easements.

Primary Underground - \$20/ft to \$40/ft. Due to differences in length, equipment, and other variances specific to each project, these prices are only estimates and may vary. This estimate does not include the costs to be paid by the customer to have a contractor excavate/backfill and install primary conduit/vaults to MPEI standards. It also does not include secondary service cost.

For secondary service refer to pages 1, 2, and appendix in ESCS, Part 1.

- 6. How much does it cost for a meter?** The cost for a meter includes secondary service whether for a construction or permanent meter. The construction charge is estimated for all projects including a primary line extension, as well as for all large commercial services, multiple-unit residential services, residential services, subdivision developments, conversions, relocations, and all service upgrades. The customer will also pay any applicable capacity charges (see table on page 14 of the ESCS, Part 1). Upon completion of all work in accordance with contract terms the actual construction charges will be reconciled with the construction contract payment.

At separate cost, the customer or their electrician furnishes additional materials and completes part of the installation work as specified in the latest edition of the Cooperative's "Electric Service Construction Standards, Part 1 – Secondary Service & Meter Installations." This includes such items as installation of the meter pedestal, furnishing and installing an overhead service mast, furnishing and installing underground service conduit and cables (including all excavation and backfill).

- 7. How much will my costs be for the transformer?** The costs vary depending on your service. If the transformer services only you, you will pay for the full cost of the transformer. If the transformer can serve others, you will pay a pro-rated portion depending on the size of the transformer and the number of lots it will serve (not to exceed four services). To verify the actual costs please contact MPEI Engineering. (See chart on page 3, ESCS, Part 1)

- 8. Why does MPEI require the customer install the underground secondary service from the transformer to the building?** In many cases in the past MPEI was sending a crew to trench a short distance from the transformer to the customer's property line, and the customer's contractor was trenching from the property line to the meter location on the customer's property. The change makes this work more efficient, using only the customer's contractor to perform all excavation, which provides the customer more control of scheduling their project and minimizes coordination challenges. Either way, the customer was still paying the cost of the entire underground service.

- 9. Why does MPEI require the customer install all underground primary conduits and vaults?** Many large developers in our area have requested that we conduct business in this manner. This business practice gives customers more choice over excavation contractors who specialize in such work and are better equipped for such projects in our territory. This also provides the customer control of schedules in various weather conditions and improved ability to coordinate the installation of electric and communication lines in joint trench. MPEI crews are better equipped, more expert & efficient in the electrical installation work (cable pulling, splicing & terminating work, installing transformers & switches) than excavation work.

- 10. What is the "Capacity Charge?"** Growth in our service territory has created a large increase in the demand on the electrical system, which results in the need to increase the "back bone" capacity of the system. The MPEI Board of Directors has decided that the cost of electric facilities required to supply new load growth should be paid by the developers and builders, rather than subsidized by existing members. The capacity charge rate is based on the average cost for substations and feeders in the Mountain Parks Electric, Inc. system. This action will help to

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minimize future rate increases that would otherwise be needed to finance this growth. If you have any additional questions regarding this or other MPEI related items, please don't hesitate to contact any of our offices. Refer to the table on page 14 of the ESCS, Part 1.

- 11. May I pay for my new electric service with a credit card?** You may use a MasterCard or VISA up to the amount authorized by your credit card company.
- 12. May I pay for my new electric service in installments?** In order to avoid passing on the expenses of a new service to our existing customers, we require full payment in advance. A new service must be paid in full before we will release the job to the Operations Department for construction.
- 13. Why do I need a building permit?** **Grand and Summit counties** require that MPEI ask to have a copy of the building permit or a verbal "ok" from the County Building Department. MPEI can build a primary line extension, with no meters attached, (such as a subdivision) without a **building permit**. **If meters are involved, a building permit** or verbal "ok" is required.
- 14. When will the work be completed?** We will mail you a contract after all staking requirements are met. Upon receipt of the signed contract, payment of all required fees, and a copy of the building permit or a **verbal "ok" from the County Building Department**, the MPEI Engineering Department will release the project to the Operations Department. You will be able to pick up the required equipment, e.g. MPEI furnished meter pedestal, at this time. The Operations Department schedules the construction work for the part installed by MPEI.
- 15. When do I receive my temporary meter?** After MPEI receives the contract, fees, a copy of the building permit, or a verbal "ok" from the County Building Department, MPEI's construction is complete, and a release from the State Electrical Inspector, MPEI will connect the meter.
- 16. When do I receive my permanent meter?** You need to fulfill the same requirements as were required for a temporary meter connect.
- 17. Did you receive the meter release from the State Electrical Inspector?** The State Electrical Inspector notifies us daily of the meter releases. If MPEI still needs paperwork, fees or a copy of the building permit, the job will not be released for construction nor will a meter be connected. If all of MPEI requirements have been met and a release from the State Electrical Inspector has not been received, the customer will have to contact the State Electrical Inspector.
- 18. Do I need to notify MPEI after the State Electrical Inspector has inspected my service?** Normally, the Inspector will notify our office the day after your meter location has been inspected. You are encouraged to call the MPEI Engineering Department the day after the inspection to verify that we have received your meter release.
- 19. Why can't I get a refund on part of my line extension construction charges when a subsequent consumer connects onto the line?** MPEI is a member-owned electric cooperative whose main objective is to provide power to our members in a safe and reliable manner at a reasonable and equitable cost. When a member requests power to be extended to his/her property, MPEI will implement a line extension under the applicable Tariffs approved by the MPEI Board of Directors. MPEI is not, however, in the business of negotiating the cost of a line extension between property owners within a neighborhood. Should the property owners desire to work together to share the cost of extending a line, that negotiation should remain among those property owners. MPEI will simply extend power lines as contracted by those owners desiring electric service. Any members connecting to the line subsequently will pay the costs associated with connecting to the existing lines.

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- 20. Can I cross my neighbor's property for electric service?** An easement will be needed. MPEI will prepare any easement documents and inform the customer of required landowners easements; the customer is responsible to obtain signatures from property owner(s) for all required easement(s) using MPEI documents.
- 21. How close to a pad-mount transformer can I build my house, condominium or other permanent building?** MPEI requires 10-feet of separation from the nearest combustible wall or nearest building overhang, as well as from windows, air intake vents, stairs, doors, or other building openings to the transformer vault. A minimum 3-feet of separation is required from non-combustible walls (brick, masonry, slate, tile, concrete, steel, iron, or other fire-rated assembly accepted in writing by the local fire protection official). The safe operation of our electric power system around the general public is our top priority and must be achieved during the entire 50-plus-years anticipated life of transformers and other electrical facilities. Refer the drawing in ESCS, Part 2 for Minimum Equipment Clearance Guide.
- 22. How close to an overhead power line can I build my house or other permanent structures?** MPEI does not allow houses or other permanent structures to be built under overhead power lines due to the safety hazards which could result during maintenance activities e.g. removing snow from the roof, or from a broken "energized" conductor. MPEI requires a minimum separation from an existing primary conductor to a new structure of 10-feet measured horizontally from the nearest conductor to any overhang or other part of the structure. The safe operation of our electric power system around the general public is our top priority and must be achieved during the entire 50-plus-years anticipated life of poles, conductors, and other electrical facilities. *MPEI is required to meet or exceed the minimum clearance requirements published in the National Electrical Safety Code, which is the industry standard for electric power lines.* Refer to Drawing R120 in the ESCS, Part 2.
- 23. What is the basis for the construction charge estimate used in a site-specific line extension contract?** MPEI staking estimate of construction costs using direct labor, transformer costs, and direct material costs from historical system average inventory price. MPEI adds indirect costs based on the previous calendar year's average indirect costs, presently 35% of direct labor and 20% of direct material costs. Similarly costs are estimated for removal of any existing facilities required for the project. In accordance with contract terms, upon completion of the project the Cooperative will refund any difference between actual and estimated costs for customer overpayments in excess of \$100 or will invoice the customer for all underpayments in excess of \$500. This cost estimating practice assures that project owners pay the full cost for their new construction project such that all other Cooperative members are not subsidizing growth in the service area. As a not-for-profit organization, the Cooperative constructs line extensions and new services without adding margins.
- 24. When will I receive my overpayment refund?** Upon completion of MPEI work, it takes a minimum of 30-days for all labor and material charges to clear MPEI's accounting system and an additional 30-60 days depending on staff workload to reconcile the actual construction charge with contract payment and process the refund or invoice. MPEI will pay interest on the refund amount from the payment date was received until the refund check is prepared.

For any additional information please refer to the MPEI Electrical Construction Standards Part 1 & 2 or @ <http://www.mpei.com/new-constructionelectricconstructionstandards1.htm> or contact the Engineering Department at 970-887-3378.