Meter Aggregation for Net Metering Customers
Summary by William Ball

On September 3rd, the APSC filed the final Order in the meter aggregation Docket (12-060-R). The Docket was first opened on the 8th of August, 2012 and has coursed through much debate among the Parties and a public hearing to finally promulgate the new rules. The utilities are required to file the new language into their net metering contracts by September 20th, 2013 and some have already filed their documentation reflecting the changes.

In a “nut shell”, renewable energy systems that generate more energy than they can consume at their facility can now allocate their net energy credits to other non-net metering accounts that they have with the same utility. The meters all have to be in the same account name and with the same utility, however they can be on separate premises. It doesn't matter if the meters are for residential or commercial and credits can accrue to either from the other.

The implications could be important to the agricultural and business sectors along with local and state entities that may have many meters with a single utility. That being said, don't look for a sudden boom in renewable energy development in Arkansas any time soon. We still have work to do before renewable energy is allowed to compete on a level playing field with conventional resources.

On a life cycle cost evaluation, over the warranted life of many renewable energy systems, electricity can be produced for less than a utility customer is currently paying to the utility. When renewable energy customers can enter into long term power purchase agreements with their utilities, customers will not have to pay for twenty five or more years’ worth of electricity up front, but rather be able amortized costs over the life of their power purchase agreement and often realize savings from day one. Keep the faith.

Below is an excerpt from the final APSC Order.

Rule 2.04. Billing for Net Metering

C) If the kWhs generated by the net metering facility and fed back to the electric utility exceed the kWhs supplied by the electric utility to the net metering customer during the applicable billing period, the utility shall credit the net-metering customer with any accumulated net excess generation in the next applicable billing period.

1 Net excess generation shall first be credited to the net-metering customer’s meter to which the net-metering facility is physically attached (designated meter).
2 After application of subdivision (C)(1) and upon request of the net-metering customer pursuant to subsection (D), any remaining net excess generation shall be credited to one or more of the net-

metering customer’s meters (additional meters) in the rank order provided by the customer.
3. Net excess generation shall be credited as described in subdivisions (C)(1) and (C)(2) during subsequent billing periods; net excess generation credit remaining in a net metering customer’s account at the close of an annual billing cycle, up to an amount equal to four (4) months’ average usage during the annual billing cycle that is closing, shall be credited to the net-metering customer’s account for use during the next annual billing cycle.

4. Except as provided in subsection (C)(3) of this section, any net excess generation credit remaining in a net-metering customer's account at the close of an annual billing cycle shall expire.

D) Upon request from a net-metering customer an electric utility must apply net excess generation to the net-metering customer's additional meters provided that:

1. The net-metering customer must give at least 30 days' notice to the utility.
2. The additional meter(s) must be identified at the time of the request and must be in the net-metering customer's name, in the same utility service territory, and be used to measure only electricity used for the net-metering customer's requirements.
3. In the event that more than one of the net-metering customer's meters is identified, the net-metering customer must designate the rank order for the additional meters to which excess kWhs are to be applied. The net-metering customer cannot designate the rank order more than once during the annual billing cycle
4. The net-metering customer's identified additional meters do not have to be used for the same class of service.

E) Any renewable energy credit created as a result of electricity supplied by a net-metering customer is the property of the net-metering customer that generated the renewable credit.