



# New Service Guide



# Columbia REA

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

*The power of human connections*

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## General

Installing a new electric service is a joint project between the member and Columbia REA. All services provided by the Cooperative are subject to the Cooperative's bylaws, policies, rates, and member agreements. This guide documents the ordinary new service requirements; however, each service will have unique conditions based on the site layout and your service requirements. **Contact the Columbia REA engineering department well in advance of beginning construction to verify which requirements apply to your unique situation. See "Timeline" section below.**

CREA constructs, operates, maintains, and owns all power lines and equipment up to the point of service. The point of service is the location where the member's facilities connect to the Cooperative's facilities. This location varies depending on service requirements and site conditions. The point of service will be identified by the engineering staff during your onsite meeting. The Cooperative also supplies the power and owns the meter. CREA owned or maintained equipment shall be outside and readily accessible to CREA personnel. CREA will obtain any necessary permits from agencies such as state or county government, department of transportation, and railroads.

Before CREA can design the new line extension and electrical service to estimate the cost, you must provide the Cooperative with final property information as required, which may include approved site plans, recorded plat maps, utility easements, final construction grades, and installed property corner pins.

## Timeline

Depending on the service requirements, the process from the initial request to energizing the service will be measured in weeks or months rather than days. Each of these key points in the process will take time to complete:

- Initial contact by the member.
- CREA personnel will contact the member and schedule a site meeting.
- CREA will determine how the new request will best be served and prepare an estimate of cost.
- The member will agree to the estimate of cost, and CREA will prepare a service agreement and associated paperwork including any easements, membership agreement, and other documents as required.
- The member will return the signed agreements and make any payments necessary for construction.
- CREA will complete the design of the new service, obtain any required permits, and schedule the work. CREA will then complete the work as the schedule allows.
- The member will have the new service inspected by the electrical inspector from the Washington Department of Labor and Industry (L&I electrical inspector). This step may occur before or after the CREA work is completed.
- CREA will energize the service.

The actual timeline will be determined by the complexity of the CREA facilities being installed, the time required by any agencies requiring a permit for the new line (such as the City, County, WSDOT, railroad, etc.), and the response time of the member in completing the steps listed above.

## **New Services**

Engineering will develop a design to meet the member's needs and that of the Cooperative. The requesting party or representative should meet at the job site to review the request. The engineer will develop a design and estimate of cost. The engineer will not be able to give an accurate cost while meeting on site.

## **Member Responsibilities**

1. The member will collect the required information, including but not limited to:
  - a. Name and contact information,
  - b. Billing name and contact information (if different),
  - c. Property owner name and contact information (if different),
  - d. Name and contact information for any general contractors and/or electrical contractors working on the project,
  - e. Property information,
    - i. Address,
    - ii. Parcel (tax id) number,
    - iii. Township, range, and section where the property is located, and
    - iv. Site plan as well as any recorded plats, existing easements, etc.
  - f. Service requirements including voltage, expected electrical loading, number of phases, and type of load (residential, shop, commercial, irrigation, etc.)
2. Meet on site with a CREA engineer to determine the location of the service and provide the information listed above which the engineer will use to provide a cost estimate. Estimates are valid for 30 days after which time you must contact CREA to determine if there have been any changes in costs.
3. The member will furnish, install, and maintain all conductors and facilities beyond the point of service.
4. The member will use reasonable care in designing electric wiring and circuits so that the loads on individual phases, legs, and circuits of the Cooperative's service conductors are properly balanced.
5. The member will install safety and protective equipment meeting applicable codes and regulations and should install such additional equipment as recommended by the manufacturers of the motors, electrical equipment, and other devices consuming electricity. The member is responsible for providing and maintaining protection for motors and other electrical equipment from overloads, short circuits, ground faults, low voltage, high voltage, etc. and for protecting three-phase motors and equipment from loss of phase (single-phasing).

6. The member will be responsible for repair of any damaged or deteriorated member furnished facilities (service mast and conductors, meter sockets, service disconnects, etc.). Any repaired or modified facilities must be inspected and approved by the L&I electrical inspector before being re-energized.
7. If the member adds to or increases the size of the electrical loads or equipment, it is the member's responsibility to notify the Cooperative in advance so that the Cooperative's facilities may be modified to accommodate the increased load. No changes shall be made until the Cooperative approves the additional load or completes any necessary upgrades. If the member fails to notify the Cooperative, the member will be responsible for any damage to the meter, transformers, or other Cooperative equipment that is caused by the increased electrical load.
8. Member-owned lights, basketball hoops, satellite dishes, or other obstructions shall not be installed on Cooperative owned poles.
9. Where multiple meters (such as apartment buildings or multiple-tenant commercial buildings) are installed, each meter must be permanently identified with the address or unit number that is being served. Acceptable identification includes engraved plastic or metal tags attached with screws, bolts, or rivets. Permanent ink markers, adhesive labels, etc. are not permitted as permanent identification. Meters will not be installed until acceptable labelling has been provided.

### **Cooperative Responsibilities**

1. Determine the point of service where Cooperative facilities connect to member facilities.
2. Furnish, install, and maintain transformers, service conductors, and meters to provide electrical energy to the point of service.
3. Prior to installation or construction, CREA must approve the meter location and type.
4. Make all connections of the member's facilities to the Cooperative's system.
5. Provide protective devices for all CREA owned equipment. Electrical protection of member owned equipment is the member's responsibility.
6. CREA reserves the right to refuse service or to disconnect/terminate service if the member's wiring, equipment, or use of service does not conform to lawful codes and regulations, or to the rules, terms, and conditions of service from the Cooperative.

### **Overhead Service**

Overhead services should be installed as shown on Page 1 of the New Service Drawings. CREA will furnish and install the meter pole. The member will install the meter base, weather head, and service disconnect. An overhead service may be installed on a CREA installed meter pole or on the side of the house or building being served. Meters will not be installed on CREA poles that support high voltage wires.

## Underground Service

Underground services should be installed as shown on Pages 3, 4, 5, or 7 of the New Service Drawings. Contact CREA Engineering for guidance as to which drawings are applicable to your service. Only CREA authorized and qualified personnel can access transformers, secondary pedestals, and secondary handholes.

It is the excavator's responsibility to notify the "Call Before You Dig" line at 811 or 1-800-424-5555 and schedule a locate of underground utilities at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to any excavation. The standard color codes used to mark utilities are:

- Red                      Electric
- Yellow                 Gas/Oil
- Orange                Communications
- Blue                    Water
- Green                  Sewer
- White                  Area to be located (marked by the excavator before calling 811)



Washington State requires that any digging within 24 inches on either side of the location markings be done by hand.

## Metering

The location of the service entrance on the member's premises must be agreed upon by the member and the Cooperative. Meters should be installed as shown in the New Service Drawings.

### **Location**

Metering equipment should not be installed under any type of breezeway, porch, carport, deck, or similar enclosure. If access to the meter is limited for any reason, the member (at their expense) will relocate the meter socket to a location accessible to CREA personnel. It is the member's responsibility to provide and maintain adequate workspace and clearances around the meter. Obstructions including shrubbery, landscaping, and construction must be kept clear from the meter location.

### **Other Requirements**

All new and temporary meter base installations require a passing inspection by a State Electrical Inspector before being energized. Meter bases should be UL listed and have set screw lugs provided to accommodate the conductor size specified by CREA. All backup generator installations must have a transfer switch installed in accordance with the requirements of the NEC.

All electrical equipment and wiring on the member (load) side of the meter, and including the service mast of overhead services, is owned and maintained by the member. The member is responsible for all repairs, upgrades, or changes to member-owned

equipment. The member may request a disconnection of service to allow electrical work inside the meter socket, please call at least two business days in advance.

It is the members responsibility to ensure all federal, state, or local codes that may apply. The member must obtain all applicable electrical permits and inspections.

### **Example Equipment**

Below are photos of typical equipment that may be used to provide electrical service. Dimensions are approximate and mean to give an idea of the scale of the equipment only. Dimensions of equipment purchased at different times and from different manufactures will vary from the examples shown and will also vary depending on equipment ratings installed.

#### **Overhead**



Single-phase transformer with overhead service



Meter pole and meter base



Single-phase transformer with underground service

**Underground**



Single-phase transformer



Secondary (120/240 volt) junction box



Single-phase primary (14,400 volt) junction box



Three-phase primary (14,400 volt) junction box



Primary (14,400 volt) vault  
5ft W x 7ft L



Commercial multi-meter service



Three-phase transformer with CREA meter

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