



e-“Cooperation”

It started with a vision – a vision for utilities to electronically share inventory lists, buy inventory in bulk and buy parts from each other when the need was urgent.

LCEC’s Materials Management department turned that vision into a reality with the help of Florida-based Advanced Utility Resource Supply, Inc. (AURSI), who developed a web-based system that accomplishes that vision and much more.

AURSI developed a comprehensive web site and then enlisted cooperatives, municipals and suppliers, including, the City of Ocala, Jacksonville Electric Authority, Clay Electric Cooperative, Orlando Utilities Commission, Withlacoochee Electric Cooperative, Hughes Supply, Inc., WESCO International, Inc., Graybar Electric Co., Inc. and Electric Supply of Tampa, Inc.

The AURSI system holds a complete inventory list for all participating utilities and keeps track of the stock number, item description, approved manufacturer, manufacturer catalog number and photographs and drawings of the items.

Utilities can search the system and cross-reference each other’s inventories. This feature has already proven to be a great benefit for LCEC when parts were suddenly in need, and it will be an asset in the future during emergency

situations, such as severe storms or hurricanes.

“From time-to-time, we find we are in need of a certain part, and the AURSI system enables us to type in our inventory number and cross-reference other utilities’ inventory lists to look for a match,” Materials Management Supervisor Jim Stagner said. “If we find a match, we can purchase it from the utility, send a truck to pick it up, and have the part in less than 24 hours.” Over the course of the year, LCEC buyers have used the system several times.

LCEC also uses AURSI to send Request for Quotes (RFQ’s) to suppliers via the Internet. After receiving LCEC’s request, suppliers submit their quotes by entering the information into AURSI, which automatically inserts it into a spreadsheet that LCEC buyers use to directly compare suppliers, specifications and prices. “It is a very convenient feature that makes comparing suppliers products and prices much more efficient,” Stagner said.

AURSI’s features don’t stop there! The system also gives LCEC the ability to list surplus equipment available for auction. “If we have obsolete materials, we post them on the system and recover costs if another utility chooses to purchase them. It prevents us from losing money on obsolete materials,” Stagner said.



In order for the AURSI system to be as efficient as possible, utilities must use a number of the same types of parts. LCEC's Materials Management department is working with other utilities to standardize as many inventory items as possible. "We have standardized approximately 30 percent of our inventory with other utilities in Florida, and we are working to increase that number. If we accomplish this, we can buy items in bulk and save a great deal of money," Stagner said. "It's all in an effort to continue improving efficiency, saving money and reducing the amount of paper being shuffled around."