



Arkansas Cooperative to Modernize Electric Grid with Itron's Gen5 Riva Solution

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Cooperative to Leverage Fiber Network to Improve Grid Resiliency and Reliability Across Rural Service Territory

LIBERTY LAKE, Wash., March 06, 2025 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Itron, Inc. (NASDAQ: ITRI), which is innovating new ways for utilities and cities to manage energy and water, and its channel partner, National Rural Telecommunications Cooperative ([NRTC](#)), are working together with Arkansas Valley Electric Cooperative Corporation ([AVECC](#)), to improve grid resiliency and reliability for AVECC's members across the Arkansas River Valley.

AVECC is leveraging its existing fiber optic network to unlock a broad range of applications at the grid edge. As part of the collaboration, AVECC is deploying [Itron's Gen5 Riva® smart meters](#) and connecting them to Itron's fiber-enabled communications technology. This smart grid project, which was awarded funding through the U.S. Department of Energy's Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnerships ([GRIP](#)) Program, enables AVECC to upgrade its power grid and to improve the delivery of affordable and clean energy across the rural community, which has more than 6,000 miles of distribution lines and nearly 63,000 members across its service territory.

In 2018, AVECC launched its Advanced Smart Grid Project by deploying a Gigabit Passive Optical Network (GPON) fiber communications system that delivers secure, high-speed connectivity directly to its electric substations while also providing members with reliable, high-speed internet access. To further modernize its network, AVECC is enhancing its GPON fiber infrastructure with Itron's [Fiber MiniAP](#) devices to connect Itron electric smart meters throughout its service territory. This will provide AVECC with greater visibility into grid operational data along with control and analytics capability at the edge of the grid. It will also enable AVECC to offer its members enhanced services and access to detailed consumption data.

The Itron Fiber MiniAP is designed to allow utilities, cooperatives or municipalities operating existing GPON fiber networks to cost-effectively extend industrial IoT (IIoT) network coverage in rural, low meter-per-mile areas. It is a flexible network device, seamlessly delivering intelligent connectivity by enabling both fiber and RF Mesh communications to connect smart grid assets for applications such as advanced metering infrastructure, distributed intelligence or grid management.

"With this project, we are initiating the next chapter in our smart grid journey. By integrating Itron technology with our fiber network, we are further modernizing our electric grid to deliver reliable and resilient energy to our members, even in remote areas," said **Chris Howe, Manager of Engineering at AVECC**. "We appreciate the collaboration with Itron and NRTC as we deploy a comprehensive smart grid and improve resiliency against the growing threats of extreme weather and aging infrastructure."

"Itron is proud to partner with AVECC on their grid modernization journey, supporting their ongoing investments in reliability, safety and member services," said **John Marcolini, senior vice president of Networked Solutions at Itron**. "Our commitment is to empower utilities of all sizes with innovative, practical technologies that meet their needs today and help them anticipate the challenges of tomorrow."

"We are committed to helping cooperatives leverage technology to enhance the resilience of rural America's electric grid. As an NRTC member, Arkansas Valley Electric Cooperative gains access to our technical expertise, project management, and logistical support - both now and throughout the solution's lifecycle. With the project in motion, we're eager to drive progress and equip the utility with modern technology," said **Chad Dose, Director of AMI Solutions at NRTC**.

About Itron

Itron is a proven global leader in energy, water, smart city, IIoT and intelligent infrastructure services. For utilities, cities and society, we build innovative systems, create new efficiencies, connect communities, encourage conservation and increase resourcefulness. By safeguarding our invaluable natural resources today and tomorrow, we improve the quality of life for people around the world. Join us: www.itron.com.

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For additional information, contact:

Itron, Inc.

Alison Mallahan
Senior Manager, Corporate Communications
509-891-3802
PR@itron.com

Paul Vincent
Vice President, Investor Relations
512-560-1172
Investors@itron.com

Itron, Inc.

- LinkedIn: <http://www.linkedin.com/company/itroninc>
- X: www.x.com/itroninc
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