Smart Communities Are Powered by Smart Connections

Edison Electric INSTITUTE

Smarter energy infrastructure is a key platform for smart communities.

Smart communities use data and technology to help drive efficiencies, improve sustainability, spur economic development, and enhance the quality of life for their citizens. As the number of smart communities continues to grow, increased electrification and the integration of new and advanced technologies are creating new opportunities for collaboration among electric companies, community leaders, universities, technology companies, other business partners, and customers to achieve these goals.

One thing surges through all smart communities: electricity. As community partners and as managers of the energy grid, electric companies may be the most indispensable players in the smart community movement.

Electric companies play a vital role in working with communities to provide a smart energy future.

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Our Policy Platform

For electric companies and their partners to help smart communities reach their full potential to benefit customers, it is vital that policymakers:

- Increase federal investment in smart communities through innovative programs at the Department of Transportation and the Department of Energy.
- Ensure that electric companies are able to offer a wide range of products and services to customers and communities, including EV charging infrastructure, micro-grids, storage, street and parking lighting management and networking, renewables, emergency power, and efficiency services.

Smart Community Attributes

No two smart communities are alike, but many share common characteristics. These include:

- **Smart Street Lighting**
  Smart street lighting helps communities save energy, lower costs, and reduce maintenance—all while better serving citizens. Smart street lighting also can help communities reduce crime and make parking lots and roadways safer through improved visibility.
- **Smart Transportation**
  Smart transportation integrates electrification and digitization with existing community systems to improve safety and mobility and to provide greater access to community services. This includes automated and electric vehicles (EVs), EV charging infrastructure, and technologies that improve traffic flow.
- **Smart Buildings**
  Smart buildings reduce energy waste and operational costs by measuring energy use, pinpointing operations and maintenance problems, automating lighting and thermostats, and tracking building performance. This improves sustainability, saves energy, and helps create a better environment for building occupants.
- **Distributed Energy Resources**
  Distributed solar and wind, small natural gas units, EVs, energy storage, and energy management technologies—all connected by the energy grid—are helping communities improve sustainability, efficiency, and reliability.
- **Data Analytics and Intelligent Services**
  By analyzing data generated by sensors and monitors, communities can monitor and manage energy use, pedestrian safety, traffic flows, air quality, and more. With the help of intelligent services, such as interactive information kiosks and public Wi-Fi, communities offer residents greater connectivity and access to resources. These technologies and services enable communities to increase efficiency, improve city services, and enhance quality of life for residents.

While each community may have different reasons for wanting to be smart, all smart communities share common attributes—and they all are powered by smart connections and by **smarter energy infrastructure**.

Unlocking a Smart Energy Future

EEI's member companies are leading the way on building smarter energy infrastructure that is key to enabling smart, resilient communities and delivering customers the energy future they want and expect. The electric power industry is the most capital-intensive industry in America, and EEI's member companies invest more than $100 billion each year to make the energy grid smarter, stronger, cleaner, more dynamic, and more secure.

With their substantial physical infrastructure, local workforces, and stakeholder relationships, electric companies are invested in the long-term well-being of their communities. They are well-positioned to be responsible stewards of smart community initiatives and have a proven track record of enabling economic growth in concert with third-party partners. Electric companies bring a unique value proposition to advancing smart community initiatives and projects at scale, reliably, securely, cost-effectively, and with the focus of benefiting all customers.

80 million+

Smart meters are a key building block of a more dynamic and more secure energy grid—and more than 80 million have been installed in U.S. households to date.

95K+

Electric transportation is an important feature of smart community design. Electric companies are expanding access to EV charging infrastructure by deploying more than 95,000 EV charging stations across the United States.

Learn More

Examples of Smart Communities in Action—Electric Companies Play a Leading Role

Read more about electric companies' involvement in smart communities and their partnerships with key stakeholders in EEI's latest report. Available at eei.org/smart.

Electric Perspectives

Electric Perspectives, EEI's flagship publication, provides insights on the transformation underway across the electric power industry. Available in print and accessible online at electricperspectives.com.

Energy Talk

Get the news you need on smart communities, critical policy issues, and electric power industry trends electronically from EEI. Email EnergyTalk@eei.org to subscribe.

About EEI

The **Edison Electric Institute** (EEI) is the association that represents all U.S. investor-owned electric companies. Our members provide electricity for about 220 million Americans, and operate in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. As a whole, the electric power industry supports more than 7 million jobs in communities across the United States. In addition to our U.S. members, EEI has more than 65 international electric companies with operations in more than 90 countries, as International Members, and hundreds of industry suppliers and related organizations as Associate Members.

Organized in 1933, EEI provides public policy leadership, strategic business intelligence, and essential conferences and forums.

For more information, visit our Web site at **www.eei.org.**

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