

The Facts about Fayetteville Public Utilities

Fayetteville Public Utilities is a unique form of electric cooperative in the state of Tennessee.

Lincoln County was the first in Tennessee to get electricity in the rural county areas. Electric lines were built to the Blanche community and the first electric light bulb was turned on in October 1935.

The Fayetteville Power and Light Company was already established before 1935 serving only the congested city areas with electricity. This system operated as a city municipality (owned and governed by the City of Fayetteville).

The Lincoln County Electric Membership Corporation was formed by our rural farmers and residents to bring electricity to the county areas in 1935 and illuminate our small, rural communities like Flintville, McBurg, Taft and Mulberry. This rural electric system was formed as an electric cooperative.

The two independent electric systems continued to operate and supply power to Fayetteville and Lincoln County. Then in 1963, the two electric systems merged to form Fayetteville Electric System. The combination of a municipal and cooperative system created a unique organization. FES operated both as a municipal and a cooperative electric system. We had no so-called “members,” and our customers did not pay a membership fee as with a cooperative business. We are governed by a seven-member board of directors who represent interests of the city and county alike. Our board directs the leadership of the electric system.

Not only does your electric system provide electric service, it also offers a variety of services and programs to enhance electric service. Easy payment plans, financing programs, educational youth programs, and some electric appliance sales are available.

In 2001, FES became the first utility in Tennessee to offer cable television and high-speed Internet access to its customers.

In September 2002, the city utilities were consolidated as our city officials merged the electric, natural gas, water and sewer systems together to form one utility. We are essentially one company offering these four core utility services plus cable TV, high-speed Internet and digital phone services.

As of July 2011, Fayetteville Public Utilities employed a total of 114 people in five departments.

Fayetteville Public Utilities’ Board of Directors consists of four representatives from the city and three from the county. There are no elections; each is appointed by the city and county governments. This is where we differ from a true “electric cooperative.”

Today, FPU maintains over 1,900 miles of electric lines across Fayetteville and Lincoln County.

As of July 2011, the utility serves just fewer than 18,000 electric customers. We have nearly 6,000 natural gas customers, 4,450 water and sewer customers, and 3,340 telecom customers.