

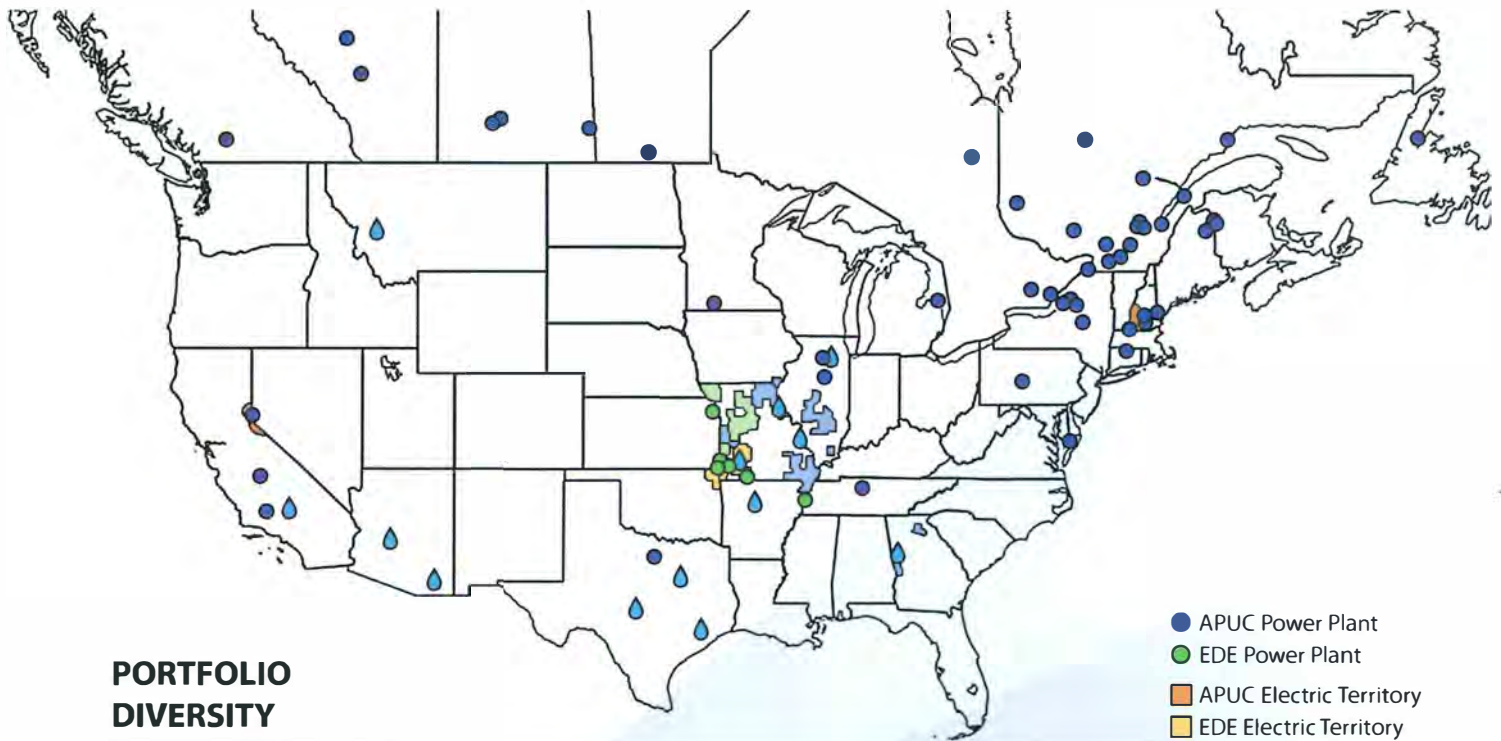
Empire Announces Agreement and Plan of Merger *continued from page 1*

According to Brad Beecher, "I'm very pleased we have found a partner that not only provides added scale, geographic diversity and opportunities for Empire, but also is committed to our customers, employees and communities. The coming year will be an exciting one as we seek the shareholder and regulatory approvals needed and work with stakeholders to communicate the merits of the merger."

So, what to expect next? It is business as usual. "We will continue to provide our customers with safe, reliable service and a positive customer experience," adds Brad.

The transaction closing will take place after all regulatory approvals are granted, which typically takes nine to 18 months.

Additional publications, including the Employee Information Guide and Employee Meeting presentations are available on the ePortal. If you have a question not already covered in the publications that you would like to be considered for future updates, please send it, along with your name and contact information, to the Corporate Communications department.



PORTFOLIO DIVERSITY

Additional Information and Where to Find It

The proposed transaction will be submitted to shareholders of Empire for their consideration. In connection with the transaction, Empire will file a proxy statement and other materials with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC"). This communication is not a substitute for the proxy statement or any other document that Empire may send to its shareholders in connection with the proposed transaction. **EMPIRE SHAREHOLDERS ARE ADVISED TO READ THE PROXY STATEMENT FOR THE PROPOSED TRANSACTION WHEN IT IS FILED, AND ANY AMENDMENT OR SUPPLEMENT THERETO THAT MAY BE FILED, WITH THE SEC BECAUSE THEY WILL CONTAIN IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT EMPIRE AND THE TRANSACTION.**

All such documents, when filed, are available free of charge at the SEC's website at www.sec.gov, at Empire's website at www.empiredistrict.com or by sending a written request to Corporate Secretary, The Empire District Electric Company, 602 S. Joplin Avenue, Joplin, Missouri 64801.

Participants in the Solicitation

Empire and its directors and executive officers are deemed to be participants in any solicitation of Empire shareholders in connection with the proposed transaction. Information about Empire's directors and executive officers is available in Empire's definitive proxy statement, filed on March 18, 2015, in connection with its 2015 annual meeting of shareholders, and in Empire's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2014.