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## 'Self-healing' technology to improve electricity reliability in Beechworth

Electricity distributor SP AusNet will invest almost \$500,000 to upgrade the reliability of power supply to Beechworth residents and surrounding communities.

The installation of automation devices and technology will benefit more than 3,000 customers living in Beechworth, Stanley, Gapstead, Wooragee and Whorougly areas and is expected to be fully operational by the end of January 2011.

SP AusNet's northern region manager Paul Lane said a key feature of the works being carried out in the area was the incorporation of the 'self-healing network', known as Distribution Feeder Automation (DFA) technology.

"DFA technology will immediately pinpoint the section of a powerline if a fault has occurred and open and close remote-controlled switches to safely redirect the electricity around the faulted section by a different route," he said.

"SP AusNet is the only electricity distribution business in Australia to have such a sophisticated system in place on such a wide scale.

"The process is completed in no more than 60 seconds, radically reducing the number of customers affected by a fault and the duration of time to locate and fix the fault on the powerline.

"Historically, when a fault has occurred in a certain section of a high voltage powerline, electricity supply would be shut down to the entire powerline.

"Should a fault occur on the normal supply line to Beechworth from Myrtleford via Gapstead, this upgrade will allow power to be re-routed automatically to come from Wangaratta via Everton, meaning customers in the Beechworth, Stanley and Wooragee areas will be able to remain on supply when previously they would have experienced an extended outage," Mr Lane said.

The planned works are part of SP AusNet's multi-million dollar reliability program, aimed at improving the reliability of electricity supply to SP AusNet's 620,000 customers.

Since 2007, more than 224,600 of SP AusNet's customers have benefited from DFA technology.

SP AusNet currently has 230 self-healing schemes up and running with plans to have more than 300 in place by the end of the year.

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