



WATTS CURRENT

Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative
Reliable. Affordable. Responsible



July 2020

ANNUAL MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

Due to COVID-19, RVEC **will not** have an in-person meeting. You will vote for director elections by mail. In August, you will receive your Annual Meeting information packet with your ballot.



It's A Girl!

Chief Financial Officer Eugene Handlos and wife Megan became proud parents of a baby girl. Joanna was born on May 27th. Congratulations!

Don't Let Summer Heat Spoil Family Fun

As restaurants continue to reopen and take-out food is available everywhere, home is where the cookouts happen. Moving dinner outdoors is a great way to save energy in the summer. Firing up a charcoal grill uses zero electricity.

Other ways to keep energy bills down at dinner time:

- *Get creative with cold side dishes.* Learn how to make gazpacho, colorful salads that mix fruit with raw veggies, and dips featuring avocados, garbanzo beans or tomato bases.
- *Grill veggies outdoors rather than steaming them on the stove.* Asparagus, corn-on-cob and skewer of mushrooms, onions, tomatoes and zucchini all taste better in the summer when they're grilled.
- *Make potato salad or pasta salad in large batches.* That way, you only have to boil the ingredients on the stovetop once for a supply that can last over several dinners.
- *Skip the baking.* Order fresh bread and desserts from a nearby bakery to show your support for local businesses and keep your own oven closed for the season.

Watch Cooperative Property When Burning Ditches



It's that time of the year when many of you may be burning off the weeds, grass, etc. in your ditches.

This burning helps clean things up, but it can also cause problems if a fire is allowed to burn around RVEC poles, anchors, guy assemblies, underground cabinets and so forth.

Burning close to RVEC property not only can cause a lot of damage, but it can also be dangerous and could cause future electric service problems. Any member-owners involved may be invoiced for damage they cause to RVEC property.

To avoid damage to RVEC property, future service problems and danger to yourself and others, please watch where you burn. 08.12.03

— CEO Comments —



Jim Gossett

As I write this message, it has been three months since RVEC restricted lobby access to the public. We are looking forward to seeing member-owners again soon. With the changes in COVID-19 cases in our service territory and adjacent areas, we have yet to set an open date. Meantime, we are available by phone and email. If you have a need we can meet, please let us know!

Many programs are in place for assistance to meet various needs due to the pandemic. This month, I would like to remind you of an existing program that may be useful to you or someone you know.

Homeward, Inc. was established in 1996 by four rural electric cooperatives (RECs) in Iowa. Today eight RECs are members, including Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative. The purpose is to assist rural Iowa families with their housing needs and to help small communities and employers in rural Iowa.

This is accomplished through programs that focus on making homes more affordable and easier to maintain:

- Down Payment Assistance Program is to assist families with their down payments and closing costs as they purchase their rural Iowa home. The home must be in Homeward's 25-county area and in a community of less than 20,000 residents.
- Limited funds for energy efficiency loans for air source and geothermal heat pumps; doors, windows, roofing, insulation, siding, and electrical updates; furnaces and more. 12.10.01
- VA Pride Loan, for U.S. Veterans who own their primary home. These are home improvement loans such as roofing, structural repair, electric work, energy efficiency, and more.
- Community Construction Loans, available to community or economic development groups for a housing development project at 2% interest for 12 months, or until the house is sold.

These programs have differing terms and qualifications. For more information on these housing assistance programs, contact Cheryl at homeward@mchsi.com or visit www.homewardiowa.com.

RVEC has also created a small temporary fund within our Business Revolving Loan Fund to assist small businesses impacted by COVID-19. RVEC is partnering with county-wide economic development organizations and participating local governments to provide low-interest loans to businesses that have a hard time qualifying for other assistance.

All this said, the best way to assist member-owners in these difficult times is to safely provide reliable, affordable, and responsible service. This is still our priority and we feel also feel a responsibility to help you gain access to additional resources when they fit your need.

View Your Daily Usage

Did you know that you can view your daily usage on SmartHub?

SmartHub is a web application that allows you to view and change account information, notify customer service of account inquires, and make payments in a secure environment - right from your mobile device, computer or tablet. You are able to monitor and analyze your electric use all at the touch of a button! This service will help manage your account and will free up your time with this convenient and free service.

Go to www.rvec.coop and click on view and pay my bill to register for the service. SmartHub is also available as an app for smartphones and tablets. The app is free and can be downloaded from iTunes or the Android Market.



Vacation Usage: Your Meter Doesn't Stop While You're Away

Vacation season is upon us and everyone will be traveling to see the sites and sounds of our great country. And while you are gone for a couple of days or weeks, your electric bill will surely go down, right? Wrong.

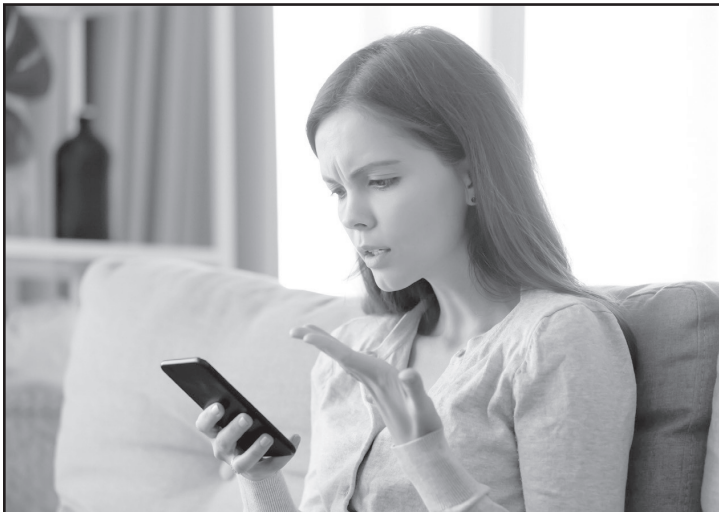
A lot of people believe when they are gone their electric consumption decreases or even stops. When in actuality, most electric appliances are still running unless you have taken measures to shut them off. Here are some questions that you need to ask yourself to see if your electric bill is really going to go down. 34.12.04

- Did you shut off your electric water heater? If not, the water heater will still run in order to maintain the temperature that you have the thermostat set at.
- Were the refrigerator and freezers emptied and turned off? Otherwise, the refrigerator and freezer will continue to run.
- Did you shut off your clocks, computers, dehumidifiers, air conditioner, lights, TVs, power ventilators and attic fans? Some of these items seem small, but everything adds up.

- Outage Information -

If you don't have power or have an emergency call 712.659.3649.

RVEC phones are answered 24 hours a day 7 days a week.



Beware of utility scams.

With all of the confusion and uncertainty in our world today, scammers are taking advantage of these circumstances to target consumers by phone, email and text.

If you receive a suspicious communication threatening immediate disconnection, please call us at (712) 659-3649 or 800-253-6211.



Reduce Energy Usage During Peak Hours

Peak hours are the busiest time for RVEC, since many member-owners are using electricity at the same time. It also costs RVEC more to buy electricity when the demand is high during these peak times, and the cost of your future electricity may also rise. Using less electricity during peak periods of time saves money.

Here's what you can do to help us help you during peak hours. These hours are usually during the hottest summer days between 11 a.m. and 8 p.m.

- Shift household chores and activities away from peak periods. For example, wait to run your dishwasher until you go to bed at nights.
- Use the most energy-efficient appliances you have. Your microwave uses considerably less energy than your stove or cook top range.
- If you're buying a new appliance, make sure you purchase a highly efficient appliance. Look for "Energy Star" labels when you're evaluating.
- Be aware of your energy consumption, and try to get in the habit of using energy efficiently all year!

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Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative
(RVEC) is an equal opportunity
provider and employer.



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Touchstone Energy®
The power of human connections

Beware of Phantom Loads in Your Home

You may turn off the TV and power down your computer and DVD player, but all these appliances – and many others – continue to draw electricity, costing you energy dollars.

Energy use is multiplied in any appliance that has a lit display clock, memory chip, or remote control. These include TVs, DVD and CD players, cable and satellite boxes, cordless phones, microwaves, water coolers, video game players, burglar alarms and much more.

According to the Department of Energy, 40 percent of all electricity used to power home appliances is consumed when the appliances are turned off. It's also estimated that these energy "vampires" use 5 percent of our total electricity and cost U.S. consumers more than \$3 billion annually, according to the Alliance to Save Energy.

So what can you do to save money?

- Look for the Energy Star label on all appliances that you purchase. Energy Star appliances may use as much as 50 percent less than other appliances.
- Purchase appliances – such as computer and monitors – that will go into sleep (also called power management or stand-by mode) when not in use.
- Anytime you purchase an appliance (such as a microwave) with a continually lighted display and/or clock, you will pay for the constant-on feature. If you can live without these features, your energy costs will decrease. 29.01.05
- If you keep items in your entertainment center powered through power strips, you can turn off – and back on – all the equipment at once.



Know what's below.
Call before you dig.

Spot Your Number

Read Watts Current and watch for your location number. If you spot it, call RVEC by the 20th of the month and you will receive an electrical bill credit for \$25.00.