October 2018 Share Package
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Seal Air Leaks, Insulate for High Effeciency

Above, use expanding insulating foam to seal wiring holes and gaps where the sill plate rests on the foundation.

Top, turn off the circuit breaker and use a nonconducting item to check for a leaky gap.

To ask a question, write to **James Dulley**, Energy Report, 6906 Royalgreen Dr., Cincinnati, OH. 45244, or go to **www.dulley.com**.

***Q:** My home has blown-in attic insulation and good windows, but I want to cut my utility bills more. What inefficient spots should I check?*

A: Proper insulation and good-quality windows and doors are the most important efficiency factors. There are many other areas where there are small insulation voids and air leakage that contribute to high utility bills. These areas often are equivalent to leaving a 2-foot-by-3-foot. window open year-round.

Before checking these areas, ensure your ceiling is adequately insulated by looking for gaps and checking insulation depth. Depending on how it was blown in, it may have settled and no longer be the required depth and R-value for your climate. Wind coming in the attic vents can blow it around creating high and low spots. Use a rake to level it.

Any break in the insulation envelope of your house is a possible location for energy loss.

One common leakage spot is electrical wall outlets and switches on outside walls. They often are not insulated and the vapor/air barrier is not taped tightly to them. A 1-percent insulation void can lose 10 times more energy than complete insulation.

To check outlets and switches, turn off the circuit breaker to the outlet or switch. Remove the faceplate and probe around the conduit box with a nonconducting piece of wood or plastic. Look for gaps and insulation voids around it. Insert the tube from a can of expanding foam insulation in the gaps and fill them. Do not fill the inside of the conduit box or large cavities inside the wall.

If you need to make the gap bigger with a screwdriver to see better or to insert the foam insulation tube, first switch off the main circuit breaker to the entire house. Even if the breaker to that outlet is switched off, there may be other hot wires nearby inside the wall.

Install foam draft sealers behind faceplates on outside walls. Choose sealers that are at least ⅛-inch thick so they get compressed. They add only a slight amount of insulation, but improve the overall seal.

Ceiling paddle fans are another place to check. If you installed them yourself after the house was built and added support blocking, the insulation level will be less there. There may also be air leaks where the hole was cut to run the conduit box and wiring. Push the insulation away and caulk the attic floor hole, then cover it with additional insulation.

When painting the trim around doors and windows, pry off the decorative molding. There could be a large, uninsulated gap between the rough opening and the door or window frame. Use low-expansion foam in the gap. Use it sparingly because it can deform the frame as it expands. Recaulk the trim to the window and wall.

Another area in houses that wastes a lot of energy is the sill plate and rim joist. The sill plate is the piece of lumber that rests on top of the foundation. The rim joist rests on top of the sill plate and your house walls rest on the rim joist. The rim joist—often 2-feet-by-10-feet or larger—often is not insulated.

Buy some craft paper-faced fiberglass batt insulation and cut it into short lengths to fit against the rim joist between the floor joists. Standard wall insulation batts are effective. With their short length and the floor joists, they should stay in place without stapling.

When looking at the rim joist and sill plate, you may see a gap between the top of the foundation and the sill plate in spots. The top of a concrete foundation wall is seldom perfectly level and smooth. Squirt urethane foam insulation along the sill plate/foundation wall interface. This blocks outdoor air leakage and adds some insulation value to that area.

shrinkage of the lumber over the years. Specifically, improper toe-nailing technique can result in the gap. ■

Stay Comfortable This Winter

Q: *Last winter was our first in the older home we bought. Even with the heat turned up, it always felt chilly. We added insulation, but are there additional steps we can take to make the house more comfortable this winter?*

A blazing fire in the fireplace provides warmth, but chimneys can pull warm air outdoors when not in use.

Photo by Pixabay

An annual tuneup of your heating system can increase your system's efficiency.

Photo courtesy of the National Renewable Energy Laboratory and the U.S. Department of Energy

To ask a question, send an email to **Patrick Keegan** at energytips@collaborativeefficiency.com.

A: When we talk about comfort in our homes, we usually think about the thermostat. There is more to the picture than just the indoor temperature.

An important piece of the comfort puzzle is radiant heat, which transfers heat from a warm surface to a colder one. A person sitting in a 70-degree room can still feel chilly if there is a cold surface nearby, such as a single-pane window, a hardwood floor or an exterior wall.

Covering these cold surfaces can help. Try using area rugs, wall quilts or tapestries, bookcases and heavy curtains to help prevent heat loss.

Keep in mind, radiant heat can work in your favor. A dark-colored tile floor that gets several hours of direct sun can retain heat during the day and radiate it into the room during the evening.

Another possible cause of discomfort during the winter is air movement. We recognize this when weather forecasts report chill factor, which is a calculation of air temperature and wind speed.

Moving air makes us feel colder, which is why we use fans in the summer. During the winter, cold, outdoor air can infiltrate our homes.

On average, a typical home loses about half of its air every hour. That amount can increase when outdoor temperatures are extremely cold and the wind is blowing. In this case, the best way to keep your home toasty is to minimize air leaks. You can easily locate air leaks in your home with a blower door test, which is typically conducted by an energy auditor. These are some of the most common spots air leaks occur:

- Penetrations and cracks around windows and doors.
- Exterior cracks in brickwork and siding.
- Plumbing and wiring penetrations from the exterior to the interior.
- Mail slots or pet doors.

Products such as caulk, weatherstripping, outlet cover gaskets and dryer vent covers can help seal leaks.

A fireplace also can be a source of air leakage. If you don't use the fireplace, seal the opening or install an inflatable chimney balloon. Before using the fireplace, consider this: Unless you have a high-efficiency insert, your fireplace will suck heated air from the room out through the chimney. Always close the fireplace flue when not in use.

Your pursuit of comfort should include a look at your home's heating system. Is it distributing heat evenly and efficiently? Forced-air systems distribute air through supply ducts and registers.

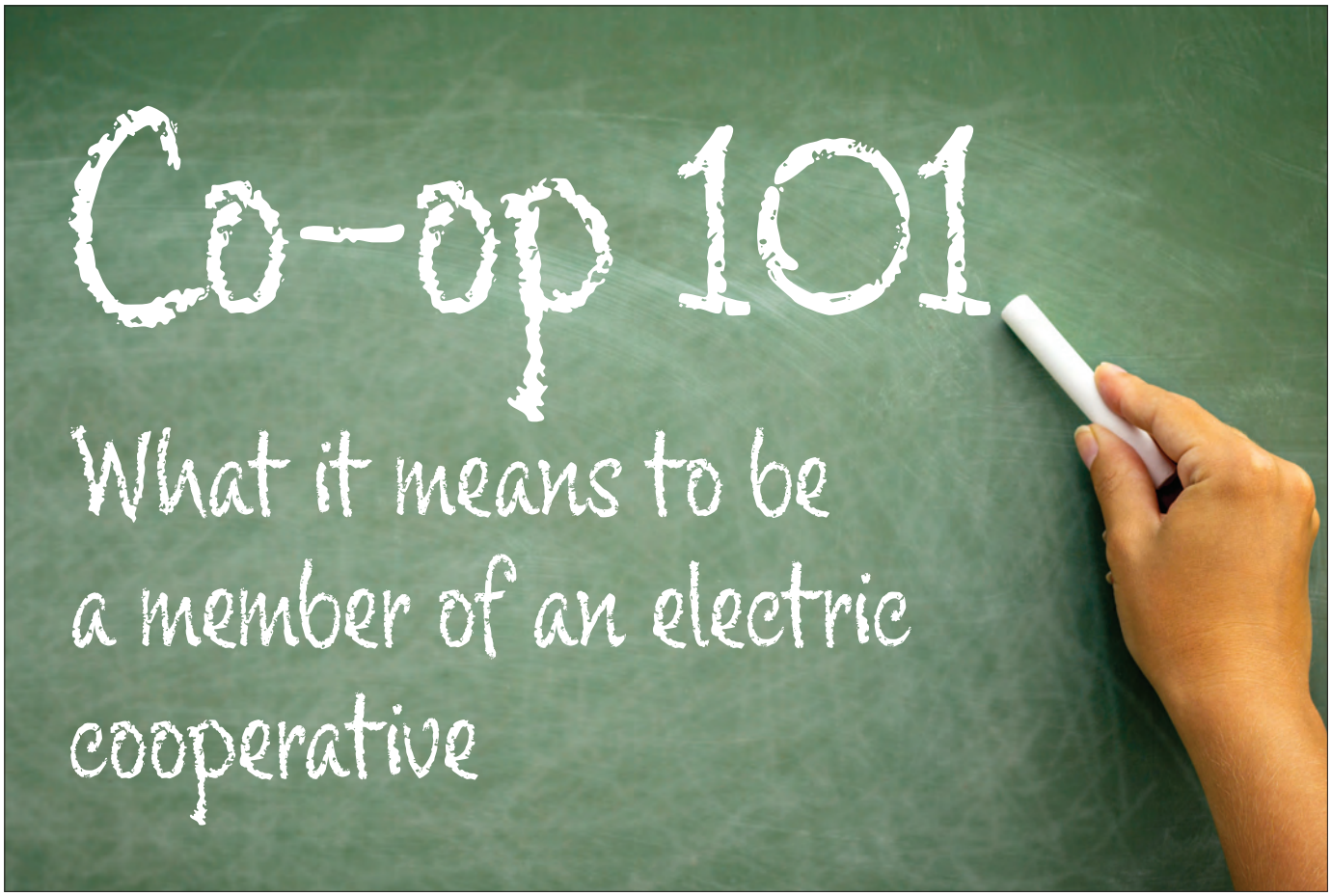
Small rooms may have only one register, but large rooms could have several. Some supply registers may blow copious amounts of warm air, while others blow little at all. Ideally, every room should have return air registers. If you see possible shortcomings with your forced-air system, enlist the help of a certified contractor who knows how to improve ductwork.

Ensure your furnace is running at peak efficiency by scheduling an annual inspection. Check your filter monthly, and replace or clean it as necessary. If you heat your home with radiators, bleed them at the beginning of the season so they flow more efficiently.

Beyond that, you can always warm yourself by wearing heavier clothing, doing some light exercise throughout the day and snuggling with a pet or under a blanket.

By taking some of these small steps, hopefully you will enjoy a more comfortable winter in your older home. ■

This column was co-written by Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen of Collaborative Efficiency. For more information on staying comfortable in winter, visit www.collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips.



THE SEVEN COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES
ONE VOLUNTARY AND OPEN MEMBERSHIP
TWO DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL
THREE MEMBERS' ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION
FOUR AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE **FIVE** EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INFORMATION **SIX** COOPERATION AMONG COOPERATIVES
SEVEN CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY ©

Being part of a cooperative means being part of something special. Your electric cooperative is celebrating National Cooperative Month in October, along with 40,000 other cooperative businesses serving more than 120 million people nationwide.

No matter where Americans choose to live today, most can get electric service—and at a price close to the cost of providing it to them.

But that wasn't always the case. Prior to 1935, life in rural America generally started at sunrise and ended at sunset. That's because nine out of 10 rural homes had no electric service.

While it was technically possible to deliver electricity to rural areas, it was not deemed necessary or economically feasible by the investor-owned utilities of that day. The bottom line is that it was not profitable to the power companies to extend service to sparsely populated country homes.

Rural residents close to a power company's line were required to pay the full cost of connecting their homes to the system. In many cases, that fee was nearly twice the annual farm income.

Once that initial investment was made, rural consumers discovered they would have to pay double the rate of urban customers. In some cases, the charge was as high as 40 cents per kilowatt-hour.

Given such exorbitant prices, the IOUs ensured rural America remained in the dark.

In 1935, President Franklin D. Roosevelt's rural electrification program began to change that practice, transforming the country through federal low-interest Rural Electrification

Administration loans designed to electrify all of America.

But electrifying the country wasn't easy. For years, power companies ignored all but a few heavily populated, easy-to-reach and economically well-off rural areas. That strategy ensured they would maximize their profits.

Ironically, even with access to federal money, most IOUs still were not interested in extending service to rural areas. If rural America was to have access to electricity, rural residents discovered they would have to make it happen themselves.

Hungry for electricity, rural residents journeyed up and down country roads, seeking support for development of electric cooperatives.

Most of the loan recipients were newly formed rural electric cooperatives.

By the end of 1948, more than 40,000 consumers a month were being connected to co-op lines. In 1949, REA-financed co-ops energized 184,000 miles of electric line—nearly 700 miles a working day.

As the lights came on across rural America, farm life was transformed. Farm chores previously done by hand—with the light of a lantern—became easier with electricity. So did household activities such as washing, ironing, cooking and cleaning.

Today, electricity is available to more than 99 percent of the nation's rural residents—mostly through electric co-ops. To perform their mission, electric cooperatives own and maintain 2.5 million miles—42 percent—of the nation's electric distribution lines, covering three-quarters of the nation's land mass. Their assets top $150 billion.

Electric cooperatives provide service in a way far different than IOUs. Unlike profit-motivated companies, rural electric systems are owned and controlled by the people they serve. Rates and policies are set by member-elected boards. Customer service and billing questions are handled locally by neighbors, and money paid to co-ops stays in the community.

Thanks to formation of electric co-ops, at-cost access to electricity is now possible in rural America. Today, nearly 1,000 locally owned co-ops provide power to more than 12 percent of the nation. ■

The Seven Cooperative Principles

The seven core principles and values that guide cooperatives were adopted by the International Cooperative Alliance in 1995. These principles are key reasons why electric co-ops function differently than other electric utilities. As opposed to being for-profit and benefiting shareholders, cooperatives are designed to benefit their members.

Principle 1: Voluntary and Open Membership
Cooperatives are voluntary organizations, open to all people able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

Principle 2: Democratic Member Control
Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members—those who buy the goods or use the services of the cooperative—who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. Members elect a board of directors who represent their interests in making oversight decisions for the co-op.

Principle 3: Members' Economic Participation
Members contribute equally to, and democratically control, the capital of the cooperative. This benefits members in proportion to the business they conduct with the cooperative rather than on the capital invested. In other words, those who use the co-op more see more benefits.

Principle 4: Autonomy and Independence
Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If the co-op enters into agreements with other organizations or raises capital from external sources, it is done so based on terms that ensure democratic control by the members and maintains the cooperative's autonomy.

Principle 5: Education, Training and Information
Cooperatives provide education and training for members, elected representatives, managers and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperative. Members also inform the general public about the nature and benefits of cooperatives.

Principle 6: Cooperation Among Cooperatives
Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

Principle 7: Concern for Community
While focusing on member needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of communities through policies and programs accepted by the members.

The Results are in: Ruralite is Here to Stay

Readership survey shows Ruralite magazine continues to be a household favorite

Michael Shepard is CEO of Ruralite Services Inc. and Efficiency Services Group in Hillsboro, Oregon.

Earlier this year, I let Ruralite readers know an independent research firm was conducting our first full-scale readership survey since 2013. I asked folks to watch their mailbox to see if they had been randomly selected from more than 300,000 Ruralite households to take part. I also urged readers to contact me directly with feedback about their Ruralite edition.

I have to say, anytime I do something like that, I get nervous I'm going to be disappointed by the results—or worse, that people won't care enough to respond.

As it turns out, that anxiety should have been focused on other things. On top of hundreds of responses to the formal survey, many of you took the time to give your feedback about the magazine—and sometimes your utility—directly to me.

Here is some of what we learned:

- Ruralite is extremely well-read. Almost 90 percent of survey respondents are regular readers, having read at least three of the past four editions. The clear majority reads every edition. The average reader spends more than 34 minutes with their nose in each edition. According to our surveyors, both of these figures far exceed the numbers for the nation's leading magazines.
- You deeply appreciate information about your publicly owned utility and energy-related content. These subject areas resonated strongly with 90 percent or more of readers.
- Reader interest in features about local people, issues and events is also high, with more than 90 percent of readers liking these types of articles. Stories about home safety, home improvement and energy efficiency also scored in the 90s.
- Recipes—a perennial favorite of our readers—continued to draw lots of interest, with about 85 percent of readers ranking it as a high-interest content area. Topics also scoring well were travel, events, gardening and family-friendly content.
- There was strong interest in organic and locally sourced foods, and content on hobbies is valued. David LaBelle's photo advice and other musings have a loyal following.

In addition to the time spent reading each edition, our survey company experts—who specialize in publication research and have conducted hundreds of similar studies—were blown away by the across-the-board popularity of Ruralite's regular content. One surveyor said our readers have a "powerful bond with the magazine."

We also learned lots of things about our readers. Almost three-fourths of you are pet owners—and 86 percent of pet owners have dogs and 53 percent have cats. You travel—a lot. Two-thirds of readers made three or more domestic trips in the past year,—well above the national average. About 60 percent of readers have a garden, more than 90 percent are homeowners and nearly half have college degrees.

As you would expect, there is a growing desire to have Ruralite available in digital format, but virtually no sentiment to stop delivering it in print. In fact, more than 92 percent of you said you wanted to continue receiving a printed version of Ruralite.

But statistics tell only part of the story. What I loved most was the email feedback. Without exception, it was positive and supportive. These are direct quotes from some readers:

- "PLEASE continue publishing it. Everything about this magazine makes it uniquely American."
- "... I really enjoy the whole thing actually, and I read it cover to cover."
- "I have to say that Ruralite is my most appreciated monthly magazine."
- "Energy ffficiency, YES! Outdoor Pursuits ... articles and pictures, YES!"

Some readers saw a recent trend toward healthier recipes and praised that trend, while others lobbied for more hobby stories.

What are we going to do with this information? Many things.

We will use your feedback about content to make decisions about how space in our pages is used in the future. It will also have an impact on a forthcoming redesign of the magazine. We will continue to burnish our digital offerings for the growing number of readers who value that delivery model, which includes incorporating video storytelling alongside traditional print. The demographic information and readership preferences will help us provide advertising that readers find relevant and informative.

Mostly, we will try not to screw it up, since you've told us we—and the publicly owned utilities that partner with us to create Ruralite magazine every month—are already doing a good job.

Thank you, and please keep the comments and suggestions coming by dropping us a note anytime at feedback@ruralite.org. ■

A Summer of Fire

The worst fire season in Wasco County history takes a financial and emotional toll

By Drew Myron

Wildfire made history this summer, though it's a record no one wants to celebrate or repeat.

One after another, fires raced across Wasco and Sherman counties, burning hot and fast, moving miles in minutes with a force that consumed wheat fields in their prime, turned houses to ash and took the life of a farmer as he tried to save his neighbor's land.

"This is the worst in Wasco Electric Co-op history," says General Manager Jeff Davis, who has been with the cooperative for more than 36 years. "To see the damage and devastation is disheartening."

Unusually hot weather, driving wind and dry land helped fuel multiple fires in Wasco and Sherman counties in just two months, burning nearly 250,000 acres—about 390 square miles—and taking a huge economic and emotional toll.

The worst of these, in terms of financial and heartbreaking loss, was the Substation Fire in July that started on private land southeast of The Dalles, immediately south of the Celilo Converter Station—a Bonneville Power Administration substation known as Big Eddy—before racing out of control through grass, brush and wheat fields.

With 100-degree days and winds up to 35 mph, the Substation Fire moved swiftly, spreading 18 miles in just one day. Of more than 200 wildfires across Oregon, it was the largest. Four homes and 48 outbuildings were destroyed. The cause of the fire remains under investigation.

The Substation Fire was just the beginning, as one fire after another consumed the vast and rolling landscape.

The Substation Fire spread south toward Grass Valley and east toward Moro. A week later, the Long Hollow Fire broke out southeast of Dufur abutting the Substation Fire. Just days later, the South Valley Fire erupted southwest of Dufur.

A plane drops fire retardant on the Substation Fire.

Photos courtesy of Wasco Electric Cooperative

Protecting our System

As help arrived from across the state, farmers and utility personnel worked around the clock to control the blazes. Farmers are used to fighting their own small fires. Many say the quick, hard work of farmers helped manage the crisis.

Wasco Electric linemen focus on protecting the system when firefighting. The crew is outfitted with two water-pumper rigs, three four-wheeler vehicles with firefighter tanks, and fire-resistant shirts as they help stop power poles from burning.

Crews are trained to save a pole from fire, fix the line, safely restore power and stay out of harm's way, says Operations Manager Casey McCleary.

For many farmers, the immensity of the blaze was a shock.

"I've seen fires, but nothing like this," says Charlie Remington, who lost 500 acres of wheat near Emerson Loop. "It got so big so fast and burned right up to the house."

The house was saved, but power was lost when utility poles toppled across the road.

"Wasco Electric was out there replacing poles as they burned," Charlie says.

Keeping the Power On

Wasco Electric Cooperative crews replaced nearly 200 power poles and miles of line burned and damaged in the multiple blazes throughout the cooperative's service territory. It was a big mission for the co-op's five linemen.

To tackle the task, everyone worked together—from linemen fighting fires to office staff answering calls from concerned members and making meal deliveries to crews in the field. In addition to Wasco Electric crews, Hood River Electric Cooperative and Northern Wasco County PUD pitched in, along with crews from Magnum Power, Sturgeon Electric Co. and Trees LLC, to help replace poles and restore power.

"We take it to heart, keeping the power on, keeping the lines up," says Casey, who has worked at WEC for 35 years. "Everyone works with a sense of service and duty."

For nearly a month, Wasco Electric Co-op linemen fought fires, dug holes, and set power poles and line for 18 hours straight, then went home for a quick rest and returned.

"This is the worst year we've ever had, consistently back to back, just not letting up," lineman Bo Gridley says.

Continues on page 8

A Summer of Fire

Continued from page 5

By late August, the crews were long past firefighting. They were instead battling bees and rattlesnakes as they dug into a routine of pole replacement. It's a slow and long process, affected by soil, location and weather.

The upside? Many of the new poles and lines have been repositioned closer to roads, providing easier access for future maintenance.

A Record Year for Wheat Erased

There's never a good time for a fire, but there is certainly a worse time.

Just as the Substation Fire broke, farmers were preparing to harvest what was expected to be the best wheat crop in decades, and anticipating higher-than-average yields and trading at nearly $6 per bushel. Fields that normally would have cut 60 bushels per acre may have yielded upwards of 80 to 90 bushels per acre, according to Oregon State University Extension agents.

About 100 farms in Wasco County grow soft white wheat, the area's primary crop. The wheat crop value in Wasco and Sherman counties is about $46 million a year, according to the Wasco County Farm Bureau.

Nearly half of the Wasco County crop may have been lost to the fire, according to reports in Capital Press.

While most crops were insured, farmers say the reimbursement will likely pale compared to what they would have earned. A crop takes two years to grow because farmers leave the land fallow to improve soil and reduce erosion.

"Our biggest concern is winter erosion taking the top soil," notes Ryan Bessette, technician for Wasco County Soil and Water Conservation District. "The chance for soil erosion followed by wind erosion is high."

Fires in Wasco and Sherman Counties, Summer 2018

Total estimated acres burned: 249,112

- Substation: 78,425 acres
- Long Hollow: 33,451 acres
- South Valley: 20,026 acres
- Box Car: 100,207 acres
- Jack Knife: 15,676 acres
- Fossil: 486 acres
- Rufus: 400 acres
- Cow Canyon: 200 acres
- Memaloose 2:167 acres
- Memaloose: 74 acres

What's Next?

Looking ahead, farmers are moving forward, picking up the pieces, rebuilding, stringing new fence and planting the next crop. It will all take time, but this community is built with resilient farmers who will continue to do what they do and work on getting back to what is consider normal.

Wasco Electric will continue to focus on restoration of the distribution system: replacing additional burnt power poles, stringing new line and picking up damaged equipment before winter comes.

Still, in this scorched landscape, small signs of normalcy appear. Deer nibble along charred fields, a buck darts across a blackened hill, a litter of cougar kittens tumble through the torched terrain.

In a few months—maybe more—spots of green may emerge in the folds of this scarred but still promising land. ■

Farmers and firefighters help battle the Substation Fire.

Surprise Valley
Ruralite
OCTOBER 2018

Members of Surprise Valley Electrification Corp. gathered September 8 at the Modoc County Fairgrounds to celebrate the co-op's 80th annual meeting.

Annual Meeting PAGE 4 ▪ **October is National Cooperative Month** PAGE 28

Serving Our Members 80 Years—and Beyond

By Jean Bilodeaux

See a collection of annual meeting photos on page 8.

Members in line for lunch gaze upward at the unexpected entertainment as Surprise Valley Electric Lineman Randy Buchanon untangles the flag hanging over the meeting.

Surprise Valley Electric Corp. celebrated its 80th birthday in conjunction with its annual luncheon meeting at the Modoc County Fairgrounds on September 8.

Upon arriving at the meeting, two facing bucket trucks held an American flag and a banner that read, "Surprise Valley Electric Corp. Serving our members 80 years and beyond."

Inside the registration room was a display of photos chronicling SVE's history.

After registering, enjoying the displays and chatting with friends, it was time to go outside, sit under the trees and listen to the music provided by the Lost River Ramblers of Plumas County.

As registrants lined up for lunch served by the Alturas Lions Club, eyes were drawn skyward. Although weighted on the corners, the wind had twisted the flag. Linemen used a long pole to try to undo the tangled mess. They came close to straightening it out, but at the last second a gust of wind bunched the flag into a seemingly worse mess.

After multiple attempts, Lineman Randy Buchanon climbed into a third bucket truck and, skirting the crowd, positioned himself in front of the knotted flag. Randy got into the bucket and extended its arm until he could grab the wildly waving flag.

Ducking the weights attached to the flag's corners, he caught some of the cloth.

A little girl had climbed onto the back of one of the trucks holding the flag. She sat quietly, staring skyward, entranced by the drama high above her.

Asked her name, she proudly replied, "My name is Melody Buchanon and that's my dad working up there."

After the pronouncement, Melody's focus immediately returned to watching her dad work. After several attempts, Randy untangled the flag and attached heavier weights to the flag's corners. The unfurled flag once again flew proudly.

The impromptu activity gave the crowd a chance to see a lineman in action, and especially entertained Melody.

The business meeting followed lunch.

"Eighty years is a long time, and things have changed," SVE Board President Craig Joiner said in his opening comments to members. "Gasoline cost 10 cents a gallon, bread 10 cents a loaf, hamburger 13 cents a pound and electricity was 6 cents a kilowatt-hour."

All but one item—electricity—have significantly increased in price. Today, co-op members pay 8.7 cents per kWh.

Long-term planning is credited with keeping the cost of electricity down.

One project just completed was rebuilding the underground distribution system in the Cal Pines trailer park. Built nearly 50 years ago, the system had become unreliable, with annoying outages and difficult repairs. The main feed was rerouted, and the failing old underground cable was replaced. A transmission line coming out of Valley Falls was moved to combine both the transmission line and the distribution line on the same poles, establishing the power line next to the highway for easy service access for repair crews.

Another cost-saving project completed this year—one the co-op has been working on for three years—is replacement of old meters. Many were 30 to 40 years old, and several were nearly 80 years old. The new electronic meters can be read through a radio signal. The project resulted in reducing line loss, saving the co-op more than $200,000.

In another long-term project started this year, SVE will replace hundreds of old poles. The result will be improved system reliability.

"On behalf of the board of directors, I want to assure members that we are taking the necessary steps to best position the cooperative to meet the challenges of serving our customers for the next 80 years," Joiner said.

Board member Duane McGarva retired after serving for 45 years—more than half the lifetime of the co-op. He was replaced by Kyle Weber, who lives south of Alturas.

After lively door prize drawings, Diane Bouce of Adin won the grand prize of an $800 local shopping spree. ■

Melody Buchanon sits on the back of a bucket truck and watches her father, Randy, work to untangle the flag.

Faces From the Annual Meeting

Diane Bouse of Adin is all smiles after winning an $800 local shopping spree.

Members relax before the business meeting.

Alturas Lions Club members prepare barbecued meat, right, and serve lunch, above, to SVE members.

Surprise Valley Electrification members enjoy music, lunch and conversation.

General Manager Brad Kresge prepares to cut the birthday cake with SVE mascot Willie Wiredhand.

Attendees haul away door prizes.

Ben Frantz Honored for Lifetime of Service

Barrow Utilities and Electric Cooperative Inc. General Manager Ben Frantz was honored with a trio of awards this year for his 19 years of work at the co-op.

William "Bill" McCrorie Distinguished Service Award

The Northwest Public Power Association honored Ben with the William "Bill" McCrorie Distinguished Service Award in May, during its 78th annual meeting in Boise, Idaho.

The award honors individuals who have served the interest of public power and NWPPA in an outstanding manner.

"I have worked with Ben for 18 years and have found him to be a truly inspirational individual who leads by example," said Alaska Power Association Executive Director Crystal Enkvist. "He has dedicated the majority of his life to serving others by providing safe, reliable and affordable electric power to his community, which has one of the harshest, most unforgiving climates on earth. He has served the people of Utqiagvik and the electric utility industry with the highest professional excellence."

BUECI Board President Price E. Brower says Ben exemplifies a commitment to the utility industry that serves as a model for others.

"Ben's hard work and steadfast focus have been invaluable in keeping services at a level comparable with any of the nation's utility cooperatives—a vast accomplishment given the remote nature and unique challenges of providing multi-utility services in rural Alaska."

Above, Ben Frantz speaks after receiving the Mason LaZelle Acheivment Award in August. Left, Ben with his wife, Fredericka, with the LaZelle plaque.

Photos by Mike Teegarden

Mason LaZelle Achievement Award

APA honored Ben with the Mason LaZelle Achievement Award in August, during its 67th annual meeting in Fairbanks.

The Mason LaZelle Achievement Award is the highest honor conferred by the APA. It is bestowed to those who have made outstanding contributions in the interest of electric consumers in Alaska.

Ben was nominated for the award by U.S. Sen. Lisa Murkowski, Alaska State Sen. John Coghill and North Slope Borough Mayor Harry Brower Jr.

In her nomination, Murkowski wrote, "I have had the pleasure of working (with) Ben as he represents Alaska on a national level ... He has spent the majority of his life working tirelessly on behalf of the people he cares deeply about in the Utqiagvik community ... I thank him for all that he has done for the betterment of Alaska and all who call it their home."

NRECA Regional Service Award

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association honored Ben with a Regional Service Award in September at its Region IX annual meeting in Anchorage. The NRECA award recognized Ben's outstanding work at the cooperative, state and regional levels and his many years of distinguished service.

"The North Slope Borough is proud to see the broader utility industry recognize Ben's life work, his service and leadership," Harry Brower Jr. said. ■

Local Native Crafts Fund Alaska Scholarships

Items auctioned send students to Washington, D.C., and help pay for college

BUECI bought and donated two items from local native artists for the Alaska Rural Electric Cooperative Association Educational Foundation. The items were auctioned in August at the Alaska Power Association Annual Meeting in Fairbanks. Scholarships funded by the auction are available to students of cooperative members attending college in Alaska.

The annual ARECA Educational Foundation auction funds the APA Hank Nikkels Scholarship and the APA David P. Hutchens Scholarship. Contributions and participation in the annual auction help ensure future electric utility leaders have an opportunity to further their education in the electric and power industry. Funds also help send students who are dependents of cooperative members to the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. Contact your local cooperative for more information about deadlines and how to apply for cooperative scholarships and youth tour events.

Eagle carving by Thomas Coates.

Seal hunter carving by Herman Ahsoak.

Native Alaskan Artist Thomas Coates

Thomas Coates began carving jewelry and figurines in 1982 in a workshop outside his house in Utqiagvik. Since then, his artwork has evolved to include larger pieces made from ivory, baleen and bone.

Thomas carved a 7-inch piece comprised of an eagle head engraved into the lower jawbone of a walrus. The eagle's mouth is intricately carved with an open beak. The eagle is supported by two baleen dowels from the bowhead whale.

Stories of long ago say the eagle brought the bowhead whale to the Arctic.

This is the first eagle Coates has crafted from walrus jawbone. The intricate details of the feather engraving inlaid with fossilized ivory and baleen eyes make this a collector's piece. The jawbone and baleen supports must be oiled once a year to prevent the jawbone from cracking.

Native Alaskan Artist Herman Ahsoak

Native artist Herman Ahsoak designed a carving of an Inupiaq hunter retrieving a seal with his kayak.

The hunter is made of caribou antler with an inlaid ivory face. The ruff protecting the hunter from the elements is made of polar bear fur. His kayak cover is made from the liver membrane from the bowhead whale. The catch—the seal—is made of caribou antler, and the paddle is made of wood and caribou antler.

This scene is displayed on a polished baleen base.

Herman developed his craft while growing up in Utqiagvik. He is active in traditional hunting and fishing, and is a local whaling captain. He creates his artwork in the traditional room of the Inupiat Heritage Center in Utqiagvik, which has Elders-in-Residence and Artists-in-Residence programs to encourage demonstration and teaching of traditional crafts.

Herman served as a director for Barrow Utilities and Electric Cooperative Inc. from 2010 to 2016.

The materials used to make each piece are the by-products of animals used for subsistence by the Inupiat people from the North Slope Borough. ■

New Rates go into Effect with Healy Unit 2 Back in the Generation Mix

Healy 2 Power Plant (on left) sits adjacent to Healy 1.

In December 2016, GVEA submitted to the Regulatory Commission of Alaska (RCA) a filing requesting approval to reduce GVEA's revenue requirement by 1.3 percent, or approximately $3 million annually. The new rates would more accurately reflect cost-of-service levels between the different customer classes.

In December 2017, the RCA accepted an agreement entered into by GVEA and the Office of the Attorney General, Regulatory Affairs and Public Advocacy (RAPA), which resolved all disputed issues in GVEA's rate filing. A key piece to the agreement was the safe and successful restart of Healy Unit 2, as it is an integral part of GVEA's generation fleet that is tied to the rate filing.

Over the past year, GVEA has worked with industry experts to redesign, retrofit, and restart Healy Unit 2. Recently, Healy Unit 2 successfully met the performance standard agreed to by GVEA and RAPA; therefore, GVEA submitted a notice of compliance and requested that the new rates agreed to in the agreement become effective November 1, 2018.

GVEA understands that this rate change may have an impact on some of its members. Residential members can expect a change to the Customer Charge and Utility Charge. For a more detailed explanation of the changes, please see the accompanying bar graphs on pages 5 and 6. Be assured that GVEA continues to work hard to control costs and safely provide quality electric service. Read more about the Healy Power Station on page 32.

Quarterly Fuel & Purchase Power Charge Declines

The Fuel and Purchased Power (F&PP) component of your bill will not be affected by the rate filing. The F&PP rate is updated on a quarterly basis, utilizing the Commission's regulations. GVEA members are already seeing a savings in fuel costs with Healy Unit 2 back online. The current F&PP rate, effective September 1 through November 30, decreased 5 percent from the previous quarter. We're optimistic that it will continue to decrease and stabilize with Healy Unit 2 back in the generation mix. ■

GVEA
Golden Valley Electric Association
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

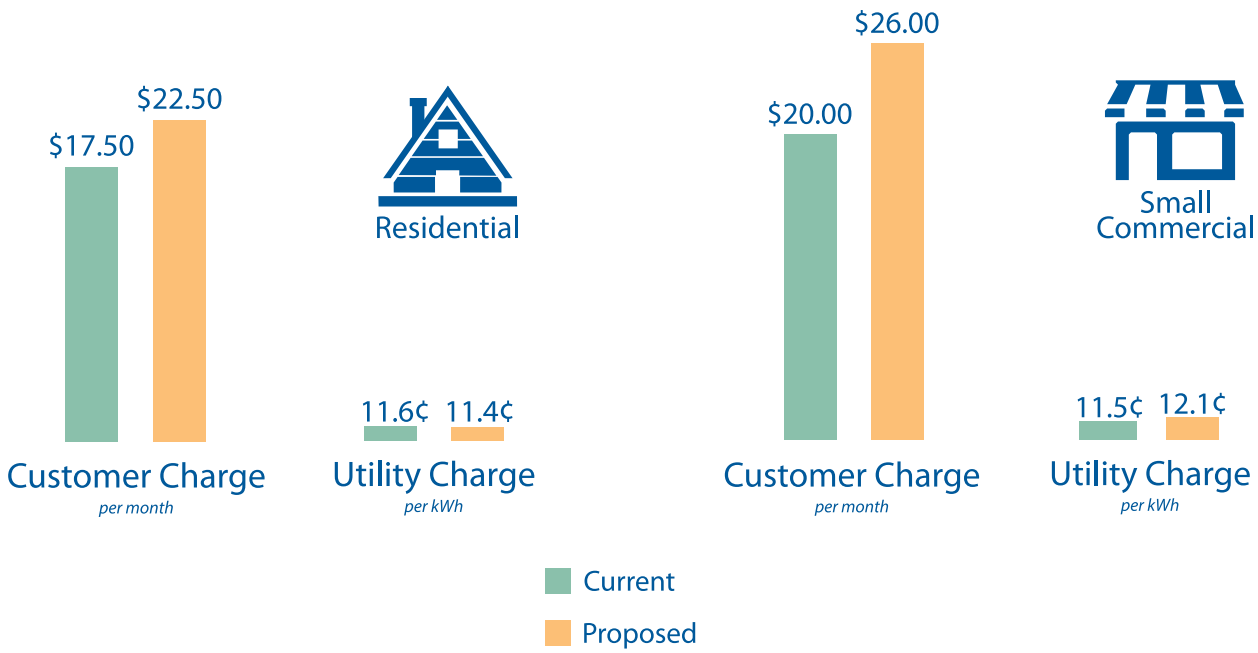
What does this mean for GVEA's members?

Residential (R)

GVEA's Residential members will see their rates increase by about 2.6% on average. This is broken down into two parts: 1) the Customer Charge will increase from $17.50 per month to $22.50 per month. Basically, it will now cost a member 75¢ a day to be connected to GVEA's system plus any kWhs consumed; 2) the Utility Charge will decrease from 11.6¢ per kWh to 11.4¢ per kWh. Residential bills will increase by no more than $5 per month.

Small Commercial (GS-1)

GVEA's Small Commercial members will see their rates increase by about 4.3% on average. The Customer Charge will increase from $20 per month to $26 per month, and the Utility Charge will be increased from 11.5¢ per kWh to 12.1¢ per kWh. The average GS-1 member will see their bill rise by about $14 per month.



Key terms and definitions:

- Customer Charge – A monthly flat fee, which covers a portion of the basic costs of providing electric service. It covers costs for meter reading, billing and customer service.
- Utility Charge – This is a variable monthly charge based on the number of kilowatt-hours (kWh) consumed in that month's billing cycle. This charge covers operational costs such as power plants, substations, power lines, poles, transformers, etc.
- Demand Charge – This is the maximum rate of delivery of electricity during the month, measured in kilowatts and registered as the highest average rate of energy used over any 15-minute period during the month.
- Fuel & Purchased Power Charge – This is not affected by the rate filing and is recalculated on a quarterly basis. This charge is a pass-through charge that directly relates to the price of fuel to generate power and the cost to purchase power from other utilities.

Continued next page

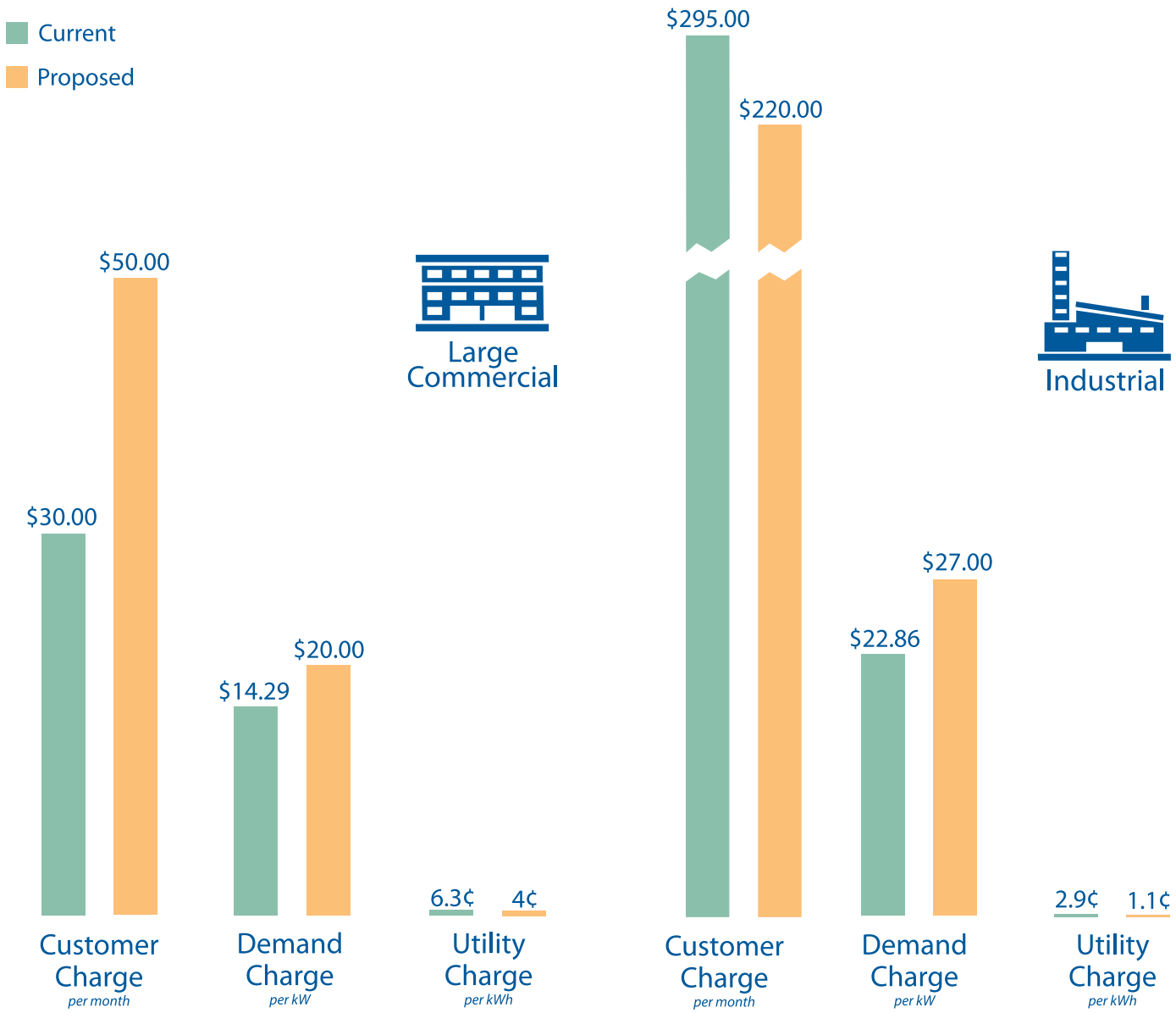
What does this mean for GVEA's members? *Continued*

Large Commercial (GS-2)

Large Commercial members will see their rates decrease by about 3% on average. Three parts of this commercial class will change: 1) the Customer Charge will increase from $30 per month to $50 per month; 2) the Demand Charge will increase from $14.29 per kW to $20 per kW; and 3) the Utility Charge will decrease from 6.3¢ per kWh to 4.0¢ per kWh The average large commercial member will see their bill decrease by about $315 per month.

Industrial (GS-3)

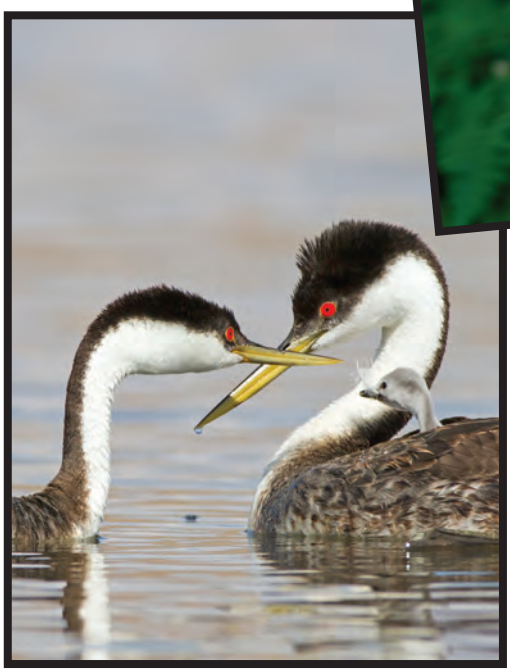
GVEA's Industrial members, or those who take power at transmission levels, will see their rates decrease by about 5.4% on average. This consists of a decrease in the Customer Charge from $295 per month to $220 per month, an increase in the Demand Charge from $22.86 per kW to $27 per kW, and a decrease in the Utility Charge from 2.9¢ per kWh to 1.1¢ per kWh.



We asked professionals from the staff at Ruralite magazine to again judge PSREC's 2018 Cover Photo Contest, and award the top photo entries. We received many stunning entries this year, making judging no easy task.

...and the winners are...

Clockwise from top left: "Windmill Sunrise" by Shellie Goddard; "Owl" by Shellie Goddard; "Stick, Walking with Shadow," by Peter Wilcox; "Dragonfly," by Blake Marsters; "Western Grebe Couple and Chick," by Shellie Goddard; "Leopard Lily," by Bob Marshak.



Thank you to all our participants, and congratulations to this year's winners.

Please Join Us at the Polls

Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative's No. 1 priority is providing our member-owners with safe and reliable electricity at competitive rates. But doing this job requires a lot more than stringing and maintaining power lines throughout our service territory. It requires political engagement. That may seem far removed from our core mission, but it is absolutely essential to serving you, our members.

That is why we are participating in a national program of America's electric cooperatives called Co-ops Vote. The program encourages all cooperative members to participate in national, state and local elections while educating political candidates and elected officials about the important role played by electric cooperatives in their communities.

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association—the service organization representing the nation's electric cooperatives—launched Co-ops Vote in 2016 as a national nonpartisan get-out-the-vote initiative that helped drive rural voter turnout in the 2016 presidential election.

Through this program, electric cooperatives realized they had a unique advantage: As co-ops, the civic virtue of voting is in our DNA. We show Concern for Community—one of the seven cooperative principles—through participation in our democracy.

Cooperatives have another advantage. Elected officials and decision-makers across the political spectrum trust us because of the work the electric cooperative family has put into political engagement. When we all get involved, we can make things happen politically and in our local communities.

Our participation in Co-ops Vote helps ensure rural issues remain part of the national discussion and are supported by our elected officials. But Co-ops Vote is not just for cooperatives. It is for co-op members just like you.

You can participate by registering to vote and committing to cast your ballot on November 6. If you are interested in getting more involved, give us a call or visit www.vote.coop. Learn more about the upcoming elections and access online tools that can help you participate. We look forward to seeing you at the polls on Election Day. ■

MORE

THAN A UTILITY. A PARTNER.

Lassen Municipal Utility District is more than a utility company, we are your friends, neighbors and family. Together, we are powering our community and working toward a brighter future. LMUD invests hundreds of thousands of dollars a year in infrastructure upgrades.

The money you spend when you pay your bill stays local and is invested locally. Our long-range planning includes new substations and more reliable interconnections, allowing us to continue to serve our community with safe, reliable and affordable power.

We are public power.
We are MORE POWERFUL TOGETHER.

Please join us Thursday, October 11, as we join with more than 2,000 publicly owned utilities across the nation and celebrate Public Power Week. We will be serve refreshments in our lobby from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Customers can enter to win a $100 LMUD Energy gift card. Follow us on Facebook, www.facebook.com/lassenmud/ post your comments with the hashtag #PublicPowerWeek2018.

To learn more about public power and its advantages, visit us at www.lmud.org.

PrePaid Electric Service

EREC A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

What is PrePaid Electric Service?

PrePaid is a program offered by Escambia River Electric Co-op that allows members to avoid most deposits and fees, customize their payment schedule, buy energy when convenient and monitor their electricity consumption in a self-managed program.

Is PrePaid the right choice for me?

Use this program to take control of your electric costs and energy use. By monitoring your consumption on a regular basis, you will begin to notice patterns in your day-to-day use. Any variation from this pattern—such as a house guest (increase) or a vacation (decrease)—will become evident as you monitor your account. Monitoring and controlling daily use can help keep those electric costs down. Statistics indicate prepaid electricity programs help lower electric consumption due to increased awareness of your energy use.

How much money should I keep in my PrePaid account?

The PrePaid plan fits YOUR budget. You can buy enough energy to last until payday, or you can buy enough to last several months. Members can make a payment at any time to avoid interruption of service.

How can I check my PrePaid balance?

Log into your online account at www.erec.com or use EREC's mobile app. You can also sign up for email alerts for balance notifications.

What happens when my PrePaid account balance is low?

You will be notified via email or text message when your balance reaches the predetermined amount of $10, which gives you time to make a payment. Notifications continue until the balance is depleted or sufficient payment is made.

What happens when my PrePaid account balance is zero?

- Service is disconnected until a payment is made.
- Service resumes upon receipt of payment that creates a minimum $20 positive account balance.
- If payment is not made within 15 days, the account is considered inactive and closed.

I already have a traditional Escambia River account. Can I switch to PrePaid?

Yes. You can switch to a PrePaid account even if you already have service with Escambia River. However, PrePaid is not an option in all areas due to a lack of service availability.

Will I receive a bill?

No. PrePaid members will not receive a monthly bill. Members can access their account information via Escambia River's website, phone, mobile app or an any Escambia River Member Service Office.

Will my power be disconnected on holidays or weekends?

No. Members will not be disconnected on weekends, co-op holidays or after normal business hours.

Can my water account be signed up for PrePaid?

No. PrePaid is for electric accounts only.

Call (850) 675-4521 for more information or to sign up.

	Billed Monthly	PrePaid
Rate	Same	Same
Membership (one-time)	$5	$5
Connect Fee	$25	$25
Deposit Required	Up to $350	$50
Minimum Initial Prepayment Balance	$0	$20
Late Fee	5% of unpaid balance (up to $10)	$0
Reconnect Fee	$30	$0
After-Hours Reconnect Fee	$50	$0

Glades Electric Cooperative Journeyman Lineman Greg Culbertson uses a hot stick to change out electrical equipment on a distribution line. The crew was working along Grand Concourse in Highlands County.

Move Over for Power Crews

Keep our linemen safe by following the law and giving them the room they need to keep your electricity flowing

Glades Electric Cooperative expends many resources to ensure the safety of its employees. Providing you with reliable electric service is a complicated job that requires special attention to worker safety.

Before each job, crew members make sure everyone understands the work to be done and review procedures to do the job safely. They inspect the equipment they will use and the protective gear they will rely on to protect them from potential dangers while working on the facilities.

The goal is to prepare for every possible situation that could present itself.

However, when the job requires GEC's crew to work beside a roadway, the workers face something that is out of their control: drivers on the road.

That is you and me. As we drive down the road, we become a major unknown.

GEC's line crews are members of the community who take pride in keeping our lights on through all types of conditions. They are ready whenever there is a job to do. They don't wait until it is daylight or it quits raining. If our power is interrupted, these dedicated employees respond and restore service as quickly and safely as possible.

When the power goes out, so do our line crews. While we are warm and dry in our homes, or in our cars driving down the road, the crews are working.

Passage of HB 2087 recognizes the importance of the work of GEC's crews and their safety. Statute RCW 46.61, Rules of the Road, provides that when approaching emergency, law enforcement and utility service vehicles, drivers must reduce their speed or move to a lane away from the emergency or work zone.

A driver who violates these emergency zone driving restrictions or is driving at a speed greater than the posted speed limit will be ticketed at twice the penalty assessed for a standard traffic infraction.

The next time you come across a crew working beside the road, slow down, pass with caution and give the work zone as much space as you can. It is the least we can do for the line crews who do so much for us. ■

Florida's Move Over Law

Slowing down and giving utility crews a little extra space gives workers a cushion of protection. It also is the law. Violating the Move Over law can result in a fine and points on your license. Here is what the law specifies:

- When driving on a roadway with multiple lanes going in the same direction, move out of the lane closest to the stopped vehicle. If you cannot safely move over, slow down to 20 mph below the posted speed limit.
- On a two-lane roadway, slow to 20 mph less than the posted speed limit. If the speed limit is 20 mph or less, slow down to 5 mph.