

# LIVE WIRES



280 East Wood Road  
P.O. Box 129  
Rensselaer, IN 47978

## PHONE NUMBERS AND HOURS

### To contact your REMC

Business telephone: 866-4601

Long distance please use:

1-888-866-REMC (7362)

Emergency phone number: 866-5911

Anytime day or night to report  
an outage or emergency.

E-mail address: [jasperremc@jasperremc.com](mailto:jasperremc@jasperremc.com)

Website: [www.jasperremc.com](http://www.jasperremc.com)

Office hours:

**8 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday-Friday**

## WATTS INSIDE

- Dusk-to-dawn lighting fees to change
- Program deadlines extended
- Operation Round Up grants announced

## HIDDEN ACCOUNT NUMBER

There is a hidden account number within these four pages of *Live Wire*. Be sure to look them over. Maybe you'll spot **your** account number. If you do, just call our office before the last working day in December to claim the \$25 electric bill credit.



**Happy holidays from all  
of us at Jasper County  
REMC!**

**Our office will be closed  
on Dec. 23, 24, and 31  
in honor of the holidays.**

# CO-opNews Information from your electric cooperative

## FROM THE CEO/GENERAL MANAGER

### Changes to greet new year

December is a month which keeps most of us very busy. In addition to being full of tradition, it brings anticipation of the new year. As I look forward to 2011, I see a new beginning for Jasper County REMC – a beginning that marks new ground for us and our members.

As I have discussed throughout the year, Jasper County REMC has been looking at its finances to prepare for the coming years. I reported in July that the REMC would have to look at additional revenues in 2011 to continue the same great level of service to our members. In addition, I have mentioned the process we went through to determine the best way to fulfill those revenues. The decisions have been made and now I will share them with you.

In October, your board of directors voted to make some changes to our retail rate structure which will impact most of our members going forward. The board has made two changes – one to the energy charge and one to the facility charge. There are very good reasons your board has made those changes and I will make every effort to explain them.

#### Energy charge

In the past, Jasper County REMC has sold electricity using a declining block rate structure. When the declining block rate was developed, many of our members had all-electric homes and the co-op rewarded them with a



**Bryan Washburn**  
CEO/General Manager

rate that cost less as you used more kilowatt-hours (kWh). We hoped our members would use at least 800 kWh a month so we could collect the revenues necessary to run the cooperative and ensure all members were paying their fair share.

Our long-range financial plan and our rate study have shown that if a member does

not use at least 800 kWh, his/her particular site is not paying its fair share. As our industry and our energy message have changed over the years, our declining block rate has been a difficult concept for some members. Many

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**Your cooperative has taken a long look at its rate structure, and the rate itself, and feels this is the most fair and equitable way to allocate costs to all of our members.**

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of our members work very hard to reduce their electricity use, yet their block rate per kWh is higher than those who use significantly more power. Our board of directors was

listening and has made some significant changes to address the concerns coming from our industry, our power supplier, our consultants and, most importantly, our membership.

The new rate structure, which will start in March 2011, recognizes that energy should be charged at one level rate whether the member uses 30 kWh per month or 3,000 kWh per month.

#### Facility charge

The other component of our rates which our directors had to address was the monthly facility charge applied to each member's bill. You may be asking, "What IS the facility charge?" It is

*Please turn to next page*

## FROM THE CEO

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the money it takes to maintain the electrical system and run the cooperative.

In the past, our facility charge has been kept very low and the additional cost was recovered in the first rate blocks of use. Our recent cost of service study shows our current \$15 facility charge is simply not enough to run the cooperative. In fact, in order to keep rates at their lowest possible level, we should collect about \$40 per member per month. Our board knows that to jump from \$15 to \$40 would be an unreasonable burden on our members. So, it chose to raise the facility charge from \$15 to \$25. This increase will get us closer to maintaining our long-range financial plan to keep our not-for-profit cooperative efficient and effective.

### The new rates

Now, let me try to put these changes into perspective as it relates to real dollars.

For residential members using between 300 and 1,000 kWh per month, your overall bill will be going down.

After the change, the discount no longer applies to higher use because we will have a level energy rate. If you use over 1,000 kWh per month, your bill will go up.

The average residential member on our lines uses approximately 1,100 kWh a month. Those members will see about \$3 per month added to their bill.

Members with general service accounts will see the same effects as residential users. The lower electricity users will see a moderate decrease but the higher users will see an increase due to the elimination of the declining block discount.

It's important to remember this rate change is due to two conditions. First, is the need for additional revenue to cover the rising costs of materials, equipment, labor, etc. Second, is the need to improve the alignment of costs to charge those who cause the need for additional generation, transmission and distribution infrastructure. Your cooperative has taken a long look at its rate structure, and the rate itself, and believes the new rate system will be the most fair and equitable way to allocate costs to all of our members.

It is difficult to articulate a rate change to over 8,000 members but we will do our best to answer any questions and provide you with the tools to find your own answers. We encourage you to visit our website and utilize our new rate calculator on our home page. You can type in your kWh use, click enter, and see what the new cost will be. If you don't have access to the Internet, call our office and we'll calculate the difference for you.

Jasper County REMC intends to initiate the new rates for use between Feb. 15 and March 15. This will be reflected on your bill mailed March 30. We hope this schedule provides you time to prepare for this rate change and to look at the impact to your electric bill. We will try to make this transition as easy as possible. If you want to learn more about energy efficiency, contact us to schedule a free energy audit. Hidden number 24151-001

I hope you will enjoy a wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year. We stand ready to assist you and we will always be here keeping the lights on for you.

### Visit our new on-line rate calculator



When you visit [www.jasperremc.com](http://www.jasperremc.com) you will see a new rate calculator on the home page. You can input your average kilowatt-hour use per month and see how our new

rates will affect your bill.

We know the new rates will encourage us all to be more energy efficient. Please refer to the Energy Advisor section of our website under the "Products and Services" tab or call our office to learn more about energy efficiency.

### Dusk-to-dawn light fees to change in February

As we mentioned in previous articles, we have a separate rate class for our dusk-to-dawn lighting program. This rate class was also evaluated during the rate study and the results showed that this class will also need a rate change. The comparison is listed below.

	2010 rate	Rate after Feb. 15
100-watt	\$6 per month	\$6 per month (no change)
175-watt MV	\$7.10 per month	\$7.90 per month
400-watt HPS	\$14.20 per month	\$16.50 per month
Transformer charge	\$2.60 per month	\$2.70 per month

### Student opportunities coming for young people in our area!

Watch our website, [www.jasperremc.com](http://www.jasperremc.com), for 2011 Youth Tour, Touchstone Energy Camp and scholarship information and applications.

Jasper County REMC is proud to offer these opportunities for the young people in our communities.

# A Touchstone Energy<sup>®</sup> Cooperative



# Program deadlines extended

All three rebate programs from Jasper County REMC and our power supplier, Wabash Valley Power, which began June 8, have been such a success that they will continue until Wabash Valley Power tells us otherwise.

## Program #1 — Refrigerator and Freezer Recycling Program

*\$35 reward, free pickup, no paperwork, no purchase necessary*

To receive the \$35 reward, members who qualify only have to schedule a pick up time to have their old, working refrigerator removed. To schedule the pick up of a refrigerator or freezer for recycling, call 1-877-395-5535 or visit [www.jasperremc.com](http://www.jasperremc.com). Customers will receive a check from JACO for \$35 within four to six weeks after the collection of the appliance. Units to be recycled must be larger than a “dorm” fridge. No purchase of a new appliance necessary. Offer dates are subject to change without notice.

## Program #2 – Washing Machine Rebate

*\$50 bill credit when you upgrade to an Energy Star® clothes washer.*

To obtain the rebate, you must use an electric water heater in your home and provide the REMC with proof-of-purchase of an Energy

Star-qualified clothes washer, the Energy Guide label and our program form. Please see our website, [www.jasperremc.com](http://www.jasperremc.com), or call our office at 219-866-4601 for further details. Offer can be combined with other state and local rebates. Offer dates are subject to change without notice.

## Program #3 – Heat Pump Rebate

*Get rebates when you upgrade your old electric heating/cooling system.*

This program offers members the opportunity to offset the cost of a new heat pump unit that would replace an existing electric heating/cooling system. And don't forget you may also qualify for the REMC's existing heat pump rebates.

Install a new air source heat pump in your home and WVPA will give you \$125 per ton, up to 10 tons total. If you choose a geothermal heat pump, the amount will be \$150 per ton, again up to 10 tons total.

The WVPA heat pump rebate has extensive eligibility requirements that are above the standard Energy Star criteria. Make sure your contractor has all of the correct information regarding this program BEFORE your equipment is ordered. Call us for the details of this program. Offer dates are subject to change without notice.

# Stay safe this holiday season

An electrical shock or fire could darken a family's festivities and lead to a holiday spent in an emergency room. To help you avoid becoming an emergency room casualty this holiday season, following these simple holiday tips:

- Replace items that have frayed or bare wires and loose connections.
- Use no more than three standard-size sets

of lights per extension cord.

- Use caution when putting up or taking down holiday lights near power lines.
- Don't allow children or pets to play with light strings or electrical decorations.
- Always plug outdoor decorations and lights into circuits protected by GFCI outlets.

## Did you know?

About 12,500 people go to the emergency room each year due to holiday-related incidents including electrical shocks from holiday lights and decorations. — U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

## 'Security blankets' aren't necessarily electric

Electric blankets cause 5,000 fires and 20 deaths each year, mostly because they're old and worn out. Minimize the risk of fire because of a faulty blanket by taking a few precautions.

- Throw your blanket away if the fabric is tattered or has any singe marks, if control or plug connections are loose, or if tie-tapes are damaged or missing.
- Choose a new electric blanket that has a

built-in overheating protection system. Avoid second-hand blankets.

- Unplug your blanket before drifting off to sleep.
- Plug your blanket into an outlet that is not linked to a wall switch. Those switches — typically for turning on lights from across the room — can accidentally turn on the blanket whenever you turn on overhead lights.

## REMC member benefits

Besides low cost, reliable, electric service you can enjoy these benefits:

### REMC/Wabash Valley Power Association Programs Refrigerator/Freezer Recycling Program

- ◆ \$35 reward.
- ◆ Call 877-395-5535 for pick up date and time.

### Washing Machine Rebate

- ◆ \$50 bill credit.
- ◆ Must have electric water heater.
- ◆ Washer must be Energy Star® qualified.

### WVPA Residential Heat Pump Rebates

- ◆ ASHP \$125/ton up to 10 tons.
- ◆ Geothermal \$150/ton up to 10 tons.
- ◆ For replacement of electric heat.
- ◆ Call us for the detailed requirements to qualify for this program **BEFORE** ordering your unit.

### REMC Programs

#### Air-Source Heat Pump Rebate

- ◆ Install an air source heat pump and get a \$200 bill credit from the REMC. Credits are not given for replacement heat pump units.
- ◆ Call us for contractor list and fuel cost comparisons.

#### Geothermal Rebate

- ◆ Install a new geothermal heating and cooling system and get a \$500 cash rebate from the REMC. Rebates are not given for replacement geothermal units.
- ◆ Call us for contractor list and fuel cost comparisons.

#### Operation Round Up

- ◆ Thank you to our members who let us “round up” their bills to help the community.
- ◆ Round Up funds are **not granted to pay utility bills.**
- ◆ **Grant periods are March, June, September, and December.**

#### Free Energy Audit

- ◆ Call us to set up a free energy evaluation of your home.
- ◆ It's never too late, or too early, to have us perform an energy audit. Call us before you build, add on, or remodel.

#### REMC Payment Options

- ◆ On-line payment through [www.jasperremc.com](http://www.jasperremc.com).
- ◆ Drive-up window and lobby open from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. weekdays.
- ◆ Night deposit box open 24 hours, 7 days a week.
- ◆ Drop off to DeMotte State Bank and branches. No late or partial payments accepted at DSB.
- ◆ Credit or debit card accepted.
- ◆ Credit card auto draft available.
- ◆ Invisible Check drafted from your checking or savings account.
- ◆ Budget billing that starts in July after 12 months of electric use.

#### Long-distance Phone Service As Low As 4.9¢! — Available to members and nonmembers.

- ◆ Call toll free 866-241-0392 to sign up.

#### FREE Water Heater Program

- ◆ Free 40- or 50-gallon electric water heater. Discount price on 80-gallon heaters.
- ◆ Free maintenance on member's electric water heater during business hours.
- ◆ Up to \$50 rebate for electrical materials to convert from gas heater to electric.

#### Dusk-to-Dawn Pole Lights

- ◆ A dusk-to-dawn pole light can be installed, serviced, and maintained by the REMC.
- ◆ Ask us about the monthly cost of a dusk-to-dawn light.

#### Critical Account Recognition

- ◆ REMC members who depend on electricity for mandatory medical equipment can be placed on our critical account list with a doctor's request.

#### Presentations—Available to members and nonmembers.

- ◆ Call us to present our safety or energy efficiency demonstration at your next meeting.

## CO-OP NOTES

### REMC will be a toy, food drop-off site for organizations

Jasper County REMC is again serving as a drop-off location for toys collected for the Jasper County Crisis Center. There will be a large donation box in our lobby until Dec. 10 for you to donate new, unwrapped toys that will go to local children in crisis situations.

You can also drop off non-perishable food for area food pantries until Dec. 10



### Operation Round Up® funds available for area organizations

Jasper County Community Fund, Inc. invites you to request Operation Round Up funding for your cause or program during the month of December.



Applications must be submitted by Jan. 3 for review in January by the Fund's board of trustees. Remember, if your organization has submitted a previous request and did not receive funding, you must resubmit your request for consideration.

Operation Round Up funding comes from REMC members who "round up" their power bill each month and contribute the extra change to the Community Fund. The money is then shared with causes and organizations that contribute to the well-being of the community.

The funds are NOT used to pay the cost of electrical bills or support political candidates. Your contributions to Operation Round Up are tax deductible.

Call 219-866-4601 to have your individual, education, or organization application mailed to you, or visit [www.jasperremc.com](http://www.jasperremc.com).

### Round Up tax deduction

Remember to look at your last REMC bill of the year to see your total Operation Round Up contribution for 2010. Your contributions are a charitable donation to the Jasper County REMC Community Fund, Inc./Operation Round Up and are tax deductible.

Approximately 82 percent of our membership participated in Operation Round Up during 2010 and we surpassed the \$275,000 mark for funds issued to your communities.

Thank you!

## OPERATION ROUND UP

# Your spare change benefits many

The Jasper County REMC Community Fund trustees have read and considered all of the applications for funding this quarter. The money is not used to pay electric bills or support political candidates. This October, the Round Up trustees allocated almost \$12,000 toward the following community endeavors:

- Christian Haven will have partial funds to purchase a new dishwasher/sanitizing system that will replace the 25-year-old equipment that it currently uses which is too small to keep up with their food service programs.

- The Pulaski County 4-H Goat Committee will have partial funds for new goat pens to use at the Pulaski County Fair.

- Monnet Elementary School will have the funds it needs to implement a weekly cooking activity for kindergarten and first grade students who are learning how to read, measure and follow directions.

- Tri-County Primary School will have partial funds for a new literacy lab which will improve literacy instruction in classrooms across many grade levels.

- DeMotte United Methodist Church will have funds to start a Compassionate Friends

bereavement group for parents who have lost a child of any age.

- Covenant Christian High School will have partial funds to replace old computer monitors with energy-efficient flat-screen models.

- DeMotte Christian School will be receiving some funds to purchase interactive white boards and software for each classroom.

- West Central High School After Prom will have some Round Up funds to help organize safe activities after prom.

- Rensselaer Pop Warner football will receive funds to use for equipment and uniforms.

- The Center for Workforce Innovations/Rensselaer Adult Learning Center will receive some much-needed funds to help keep the doors open until federal funding is issued. This facility, located across from St. Joseph's College, provides adult education for GED preparation, adult basic education and English language training.

- St. Augustine School is raising money for new energy-efficient windows in the gymnasium. Operation Round Up has issued partial funding toward this project.

Applications that were partially funded are still raising funds for their initiatives. Any other help you can provide to them would be greatly appreciated.



Operation Round Up recipients are, back row from left, Mary DeBoer, Covenant Christian High School; Kimberly Zeilmann, Monnet Elementary; Mary Claussen, Rensselaer Adult Learning Center; Anne Dumas, St. Augustine School; Elaine Hansen, DeMotte United Methodist Church; Janet Nannenga, Christian Haven Inc.; Darla Yaggie, Pulaski 4-H Goat Committee; Becky Glideman, West Central After Prom. Front row, from left, Heather Anderson, Kitty Meyer and Louise Ames from Rensselaer Adult Learning Center.