

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

Web site: www.jasperremc.com

Office hours:

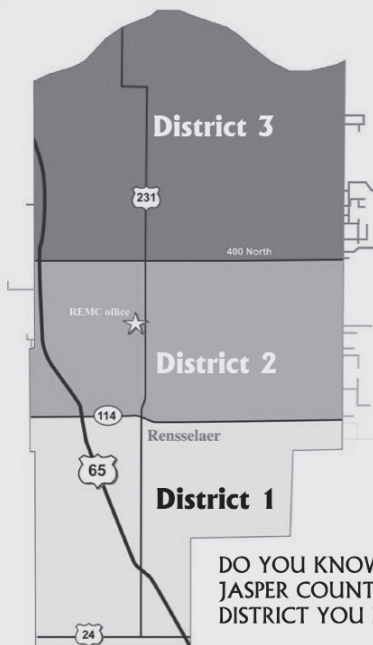
8 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday-Friday

WATTS INSIDE

- Bylaw requirements for director positions
- Recycle your electronics on April 24
- Get ready for the 2010 Census

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 February to claim the \$25 electric bill credit.



DO YOU KNOW WHICH
JASPER COUNTY REMC
DISTRICT YOU LIVE IN?

CO-opNews

Information from your electric cooperative

FROM THE CEO/GENERAL MANAGER

Co-op boards are unique

I am often overwhelmed when I consider all of the things I would like to write about regarding your cooperative. This month is no exception. However, I've decided to highlight one feature that makes a cooperative unique: its board of directors.

The board is a collection of people who come from within the rank and file of the cooperative. These people set the course for the cooperative and are involved in its long range planning.

Jasper County REMC has nine board members. There are three board districts and each board district is represented by three members. Therefore, each district is represented equally. Every year, one board member from each district is elected for a three-year term at the annual meeting in June. This gives continuity so the board will not be composed of all new members at once. Giving continuity to the board is essential in today's ever-changing utility climate.

Being elected at the annual meeting starts a trip that I do not think many members fully understand. Each member of your cooperative board has made a commitment to the membership to be the best he can be. We have policies covering the educational expectations of a board member in his first three years. All board members must become accredited by our national association. The accreditation process requires a series of classes that the director needs to commit the time to attend. These classes center around issues relevant to the utility business such as rates and rate structures, budgeting, policy making, capital credits and understanding the role of the director as it relates to the management.

Jasper County REMC directors are required to profess their roles in front of the membership. Their role is not one of directing the daily operation of the company; they are responsible for hiring the CEO to do that job. They are responsible for ensuring the financial well-being of the cooperative. They must make sure management has presented a viable budget for the cooperative and then ensure that management follows that budget. Their tasks include reviewing existing policies and passing policies that continue to be in the better interest of the cooperative members. While doing all of these things, they must remember the oath they took at the beginning of their term.



Bryan Washburn
CEO/General Manager

They must remember to always put the interests of the cooperative before their own, represent the interests of the members as a whole, not just those from their district, and they must not interfere with management as management conducts the day-to-day business. They must keep cooperative business confidential, especially in those matters that might be sensitive in nature, and they must agree to disagree in a manner that allows for individual directors to maintain their points of view while not carry-

ing grudges.

Your directors are required by the bylaws of the corporation to meet monthly to conduct the business of the REMC. As stated above, this generally includes an overview of the financials, a review of policies, and reports from our power supplier, statewide association, CEO and any other business that might need to come before the board. In addition, occasionally there are committee meetings specific to a certain portion of the business. And lastly, there is weekly reading and research that is required of our directors to keep abreast of our ever-changing business climate. The information consists of weekly updates from our power supplier, our statewide association, the CEO and our national affiliates.

I think an REMC's director's job is often misunderstood because most members do not realize the commitment each board member makes to the cooperative. Being a director at Jasper County REMC requires a lot of time that a lot of people are not willing to spend. Our directors devote countless hours every month to ensuring your cooperative remains a viable part of your community and is committed to superior service to its membership. Our directors are also responsible for the success of a company that has \$21 million of revenue, an electric system with over 1,100 miles of line and 9,000 members. It goes without saying that we are operating in a very dynamic environment. Our board room is 100 percent electronic and our regulatory environment is ever-changing. That's no small task for nine men from northwestern Indiana.

In the coming months, I will continue to discuss the impact of climate legislation with our members. Until next month, remember that here at Jasper County REMC we will be working hard to keep the lights on for you.

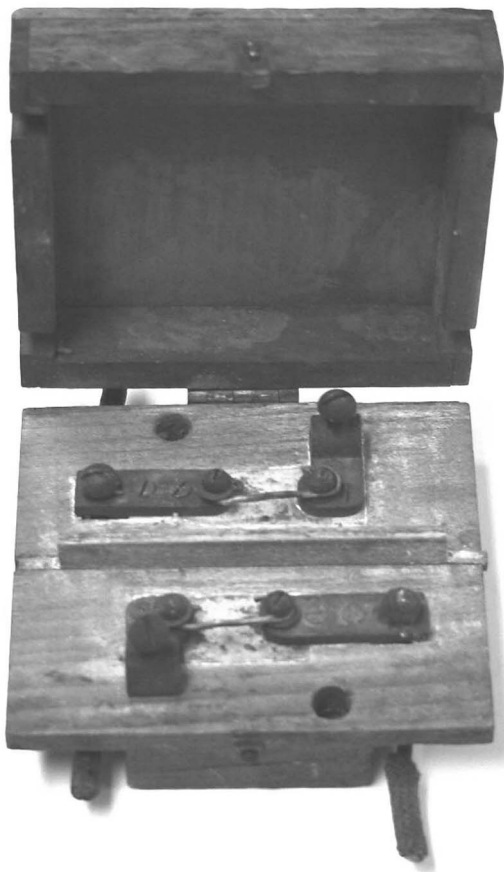
A look into electricity's past

Thank you to one of our members who brought us some early electrical relics. The wooden box shown below is actually an early 1930s "fuse box" with two "fuses" in it that was used with the old Delco-Light Generator.

Each fuse was just a piece of soft wire, almost like solder, that would melt if the circuit got too hot. The 3½-inch by 4-inch box was nailed to the wall and served as what we now call a breaker panel. It was only 72 years ago that a rural household would have to use this small box with two fuses powered by a generator to have lights in the house.

There were some other goodies in the bag as well. We found three different types of wire nuts dated 1926 — 12 years before our co-op was incorporated.

If you have old electrical relics you'd like to donate to the co-op, bring them in. We're always looking for interesting things to display in our lobby or share with you in **Electric Consumer**.



Delco-Light Generator's history

Charles Kettering invented the Delco Light Generator which revolutionized rural life for residents (mostly farmers) who were not yet connected to the nascent electrical grid system. The generator consisted of lead-acid storage batteries which were charged and recharged from a gasoline engine equipped with an electric starter switch.



www.jasperremc.com

Bylaw requirements for REMC director positions

Jasper County REMC is governed by a nine-member board of directors elected by and from the membership. If you're interested in becoming a director, then you'll want to continue reading.

The following is taken from Article 3, Section 4, of Jasper County REMC's bylaws and deals with director nominations.

"It shall be the duty of the board of directors to appoint, not less than thirty (30) days nor more than one hundred twenty (120) days before the date of a meeting of the members at which directors are to be elected, the committee on nominations consisting of not less than three (3) nor more than eleven (11) members with at least one (1) member from each of the (3) districts from which a director shall be elected at the next meeting of the members. With the exception of a retiring director, no officer or member of the board of directors shall be appointed a member of such committee.

"The president of the board of directors and the general manager shall provide the committee on nominations with procedural instructions and any other information that the committee requires for its duties. The committee on nominations shall contact the members whose names are to be placed in nomination and obtain their consent for such action. The

committee on nominations shall nominate at least two (2) qualified members for each directorate position pending election at the next annual meeting of the members. The committee shall prepare and post at the principal office of the Cooperative at least twenty (20) days before the meeting, a list of nominations for the directorate positions. Any thirty (30) or more members may make other nominations in writing over their signature not less than thirty (30) days prior to the annual meeting and the secretary shall post the same at the place where the list of nominations made by the committee is posted. The secretary shall mail to each member at least ten (10) days before the meeting a statement of the number of directors to be elected, the nominees designated by the committee on nominations and separately the nominations made by petition, if any. The members may, at any meeting at which a director or directors shall be removed, as provided in these bylaws, elect a successor or successors thereto without compliance with the foregoing provisions with respect to nominations.

"Notwithstanding anything contained in this section, failure to comply with any of the provisions of this section shall not affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any election of directors."

Programs benefit area youth

The application process is now underway for the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, Touchstone Energy® Camp, and Nesius Memorial Scholarships.

Electric Cooperative Youth Tour

This June, students can join nearly 1,500 students from other states to learn more about our nation's history and electric cooperatives through the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. Jasper County REMC, along with Indiana Statewide Association of RECs, Inc., continues to sponsor this traditional, all-expense paid trip for area youth. To enhance the students' learning experience, sites will be visited such as the Gettysburg National Park, Arlington National Cemetery, the national museums, and other general sightseeing excursions.

The only criteria is the students' parents or legal guardians are Jasper County REMC members and the students must have satisfactorily completed their junior year of high school, with intentions to return for their senior year. The trip will take place June 10-17. **Deadline to turn in applications to REMC for the Youth Tour is Feb. 12.**

Touchstone Energy Camp

Touchstone Energy Camp will be held June 9-12 at YMCA Camp Tecumseh, located in Brookston. The camp is designed to educate boys and girls about cooperatives, electrification and electric safety.

Some of the camp activities, which are funded through local sponsorships and Touchstone Energy include: "How to Build a Co-op Distribution System," "Understanding How a Cooperative Business is Unique," and "The REMC Lineman's Job and Responsibilities." Other camp experiences include horseback riding, games, swimming, and wall climbing.

Camp accommodations, chaperones, food, and expenses will be provided by Jasper County REMC. The student's parents or guardians must be Jasper County REMC members and the child must be between sixth and seventh grade this summer. **Deadline to sign up for this educational and fun experience is Feb. 12.**

Nesius Memorial Scholarships

The Nesius Memorial Scholarship is an opportunity for area high school seniors graduating in 2009. One \$500 academic scholarship will be awarded to a successful candidate from KVHS, RCHS and one from all other high schools in Jasper County REMC's service territory. Candidates must be a son, daughter or legal ward of a Jasper County REMC member. **Deadline to return applications for the Nesius Memorial Scholarship is April 9.**

Applications for all opportunities are posted on our Web site, www.jasperremc.com, under the "Education" tab.

Recycle your electronics April 24

Keep our landfills clean and our environment green! Bring your old TVs and electronics for recycling on April 24. There are two locations to choose from:

- Jasper County Highway Department – DeMotte Annex – behind the Fase Center of State Road 10, DeMotte. Bring your items between 8 a.m. and noon CT.

- Rensselaer Street Department, 820 E. Walnut St., Rensselaer. Bring your items between 8 a.m. and noon. Hidden account 23796-001.

You are limited to three monitors/TVs per vehicle. Please do NOT bring appliances. You can recycle your electronics all year long at the Rensselaer Street Department, Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m.–4 p.m. CT, and on Saturdays from 8 a.m.–12 p.m. CT.

Thank you in advance for participating in this green effort.



Permanent and portable generator safety

Many rely on backup electric generators for emergency power when the electricity goes out. If you are considering purchasing a backup generator, take proper safety steps before operating it in your home or business.

“If installed and operated correctly, use of standby or portable electric generators poses little danger,” said Molly Hall, executive director of Safe Electricity, a public awareness program supported by several electric cooperatives including those in Indiana. “Improper installation or use could be dangerous to you and your family, friends, neighbors and electric utility crews trying to restore service.”

Consult and discuss your purchase options with a reliable vendor, your electric cooperative and contractors. A qualified vendor or electric professional will know existing safety codes and the co-op’s safety requirements. He or she can also help you select the best equipment for your needs and situation.

Properly connecting the generator into the system is critical for safe and effective use. A licensed professional should install a permanent, standby electric generator.

An electric generator wired directly into a building’s electrical system must have a transfer safety switch to prevent electricity from traveling back through the power lines, called “backfeed.”

“Safety for the operators and users of a generating system in the home and utility crews

cannot be overemphasized,” said Hall. “A qualified electrician should be consulted to ensure proper installation and that electrical grounding requirements, circuit overload protections and local codes are met.”

Some homeowners choose smaller, portable generators to power essential electrical equipment during outages.

For safe operation of portable generators:

- Read and follow all operating instructions.
- Make sure the generator is properly grounded.
- Never plug a portable electric generator into a wall outlet or connect directly to a home’s wiring. This can energize utility power lines and injure others.
- Don’t overload the generator with more appliances than the

generator is rated to handle.

- Use shop-type electrical cords designed for heavier outdoor use to connect appliances.
- Many generators are equipped with twist-lock connects to reduce accidental disconnections due to vibrations.
- Always keep the generator outside in a dry, protected area, away from windows or air intakes where deadly exhaust fumes can enter living spaces.
- Turn off the generator and allow it to cool before refueling.
- Before shutting down a generator, turn off and unplug all appliances and equipment being powered by the generator.

Before you operate any standby or backup generator, make sure it has a transfer safety switch or that your power is cut off at the breaker box to prevent backfeed.

Backfeed creates danger for anyone near lines, particularly crews working to restore power.

Whole house generator information needed!

Please call our office if your home has a permanent “whole house” natural gas or propane generator. We’d like to add that information to your account for the safety of our linemen.

REMC member benefits

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

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.**

REMC Payment Options

- ◆ On-line payment through 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.

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.

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.

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.

WildBlue Satellite High-Speed Internet

- ◆ Back by popular demand!
- ◆ You CAN have high-speed Internet at your rural home or business.
- ◆ Visit jasperremc.com for more details or call our office at 219-866-4601.

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.

'Follow' us on Twitter!

Twitter is a free social networking and micro-blogging service that enables its users to send and read messages known as "tweets." Tweets are text-based posts of up to 140 characters displayed on the author's profile page and delivered to the author's subscribers who are known as "followers." Users can send and receive tweets via the Twitter Web site, Short Message Service (SMS) or external applications. While the service itself is free, accessing it through SMS may incur phone service provider fees.

follow us on
twitter



How will the REMC use Twitter?

Jasper County REMC intends to tweet weekly messages with legislative updates, co-op events, student opportunities, Operation Round Up information, energy efficiency tips or electrical safety information. This communication tool will also be used, along with its Web site, to update members on severe storm outages.

How can I 'follow' the REMC on Twitter?

Go to www.twitter.com and click "Sign up now" to start your free access to Twitter. Once you are signed up, you can "follow" Jasper County REMC to receive any information we've posted.

If you don't want to sign up, you can just type in "Jasper County REMC" in the Search box to see our most recent tweets. Click on Willie Wiredhand's head (the co-op's mascot) to see all of our tweets and our profile.

Free water heaters and service

Jasper County REMC offers a **FREE** 40- or 50-gallon electric water heater to replace a gas water heater or unrepairable electric water heater. Builders of new homes on our lines are also entitled to a **FREE** 40- or 50-gallon water heater. Eighty-gallon water heaters are available for a discounted fee of approximately \$250. (Subject to change with market fluctuations.)

If the member is retrofitting from a fossil fuel, an allowance of up to \$50 for the electric circuit and installation is available. Just provide a copy of your receipt for the installation and/or electric materials to qualify for the wiring allowance.

The REMC does not provide installation services.

The free maintenance service on electric water heaters is available during business hours and includes the cost of parts, components and labor to repair the heater. Maintenance is available after hours for a fee to cover the overtime cost. The REMC will not perform any plumbing work. Any plumbing or electrical wiring found to be unsuitable or unsafe will be the customer's responsibility to correct.

Get ready for the 2010 Census

The 2010 Census form will take most households only 10 minutes to complete! This is one of the shortest census forms in U.S. history, but it's the most important.

Census responses should reflect all people living in a residence as of April 1, 2010. Responses should also reflect those people who live in the residence most of the year. In addition, Census forms are available in multiple languages.

Why the Census is important to Indiana

The 2010 Census will help communities receive more than \$400 billion in federal funds each year for things like:

- Hospitals
- Job training centers
- Schools
- Senior centers
- Bridges, tunnels and other-public works projects
- Emergency services

Your privacy is protected

- Data you provide to the U.S. Census Bureau through the 2010 Census Form is private.
- Data is not shared with federal, state or local government agencies or law enforcement.
- Name and addresses collected as a part of the Census are used to verify that each resident is counted only once.

Census facts

- Census forms should start arriving in mid-to late-March.
- You can fill it out early.
- You can fill out and mail the form as soon as you receive it – you don't need to wait for Census Day!
- Census Day is April 1.
- Visit www.census.indiana.edu for more information.

How does the Census impact Indiana's rural and agricultural communities?

- The 10-year Census count will show us how (and how much) the rural and agricultural areas of our state are changing, where people are coming from or where they moved to, and more.
- The size of an area's population determines how much federal and state money is received in our communities.
- County extension offices, co-ops, federal agricultural assistance programs, and others use Census information when applying for grants, determining levels of disaster relief funding, and how to target their services.

2010 Census jobs available

The U.S. Census Bureau is recruiting temporary, part-time census takers for the 2010 Census. These short-term jobs offer good pay, flexible hours, paid training, and reimbursement for authorized work-related expenses, such as mileage incurred while conducting census work. And best of all, census takers work in their own communities.

Census taker jobs are excellent for people who want to work part-time, those who are between jobs, or just about anyone who wants to earn extra money while performing an important service for their community. Census takers will help locate households and conduct brief personal interviews with residents. Most positions require a valid driver's license and use of a vehicle.

Bilingual speakers are encouraged to apply.

All Census takers must be able to speak English. However, people who have bilingual skills

are needed in communities where a large number of residents primarily speak other languages. If you have the appropriate language skills and cultural knowledge to communicate well in your community, you're encouraged to apply.

Apply today by contacting your local Census office listed below or by calling 1-866-861-2010.

Local Census Offices

Gary
Cleveland Street
Merrillville, IN 46410
Phone: 219-484-2560
Census takers start at \$13.25/hour

Lafayette
Elmwood Avenue
Lafayette, IN 47904
Phone: 765-237-3420
Census takers start at \$13.25/hour

Energy Assistance Program ends March 15

Participants in the Energy Assistance Program (EAP) are reminded the moratorium on disconnection for nonpayment ends Monday, March 15.

Accounts assisted by EAP must be

brought up to date before then or they will be disconnected on Wednesday, March 16. If you have questions about your account, please call our office as soon as possible.