

LIVE WIRE



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

Website: www.jasperremc.com

Office hours:

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

WATTS INSIDE

- New card offers value and savings
- Ask the energy advisor
- Bylaw requirements for REMC directors

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 April to claim the \$25 electric bill credit.



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

Use caution in work zones!

Drive with extra caution when you see construction or utility vehicles. Obey flaggers and be alert to all signs. Help our construction and utility workers get home safely EVERY NIGHT. — www.workzonesafety.org

CO-opNews Information from your electric cooperative

FROM THE CEO/GENERAL MANAGER

Introducing a new benefit of being a cooperative member

In this month's column, I want to talk about something I have referred to before – the difference between the cooperative business model and any other business model. This distinct difference is the reason I can introduce a new benefit to our cooperative members this month.

The major difference between being a cooperative member and being a customer of any other business is you belong to an organization committed to enhancing its members' lives. We work very hard at Jasper County REMC to provide a quality service at an economical price. As a cooperative, we are not driven to make a profit. We work very hard to provide a high level of service at the most affordable price possible. We serve in many ways, not just keeping the lights on.

We offer several services our members take advantage of every day. We provide energy audits to help our members stretch their energy dollars and an electric water heater program to furnish or repair the heaters.

We assist our members by providing rebates that make buying energy efficient appliances easier. One of our rebates includes a "ransom" for old and inefficient refrigerators and freezers. Another rebate program encourages installation of a heat pump heating and cooling system.

And now, I'm pleased to introduce a discount program each and every Jasper County REMC member can utilize – your very own Co-op Connections Card.

You are automatically eligible for this card because you are a Jasper County REMC member. This card, as opposed to many others, is designed to offer our members discounts on products and services both locally and nationally. We have entered into an agreement with our national branding company, Touchstone Energy®, to provide this opportunity to our members. This program offers discounts that you would not have access to otherwise.

Touchstone Energy has been able to secure agreements with national organizations such as Walmart, Target, Barnes & Noble and many



Bryan Washburn
CEO/General Manager

I'm pleased to introduce a discount program each Jasper County REMC member will be able to utilize – your very own Co-op Connections Card.

other national chains. The greatest advantage to our members is the discount on prescription drugs.

Touchstone Energy has reached agreements with many pharmacy chains that include discounts from 10 to 60 percent off many prescriptions. The pharmacy savings alone are staggering and have now surpassed the \$20 million mark nationally. The best part – the cost savings from the card equals more money in your wallet! This program is coming to you in April at no cost and is just one of the many benefits of cooperative membership.

You should see your Co-op Connections Card in your mailbox in early April. When you receive the card, feel free to look up the participating businesses through the link on our website, www.jasperremc.com. For more information, turn to page 8M.

We will continue recruiting local businesses into the program so we can provide you savings at the places you like to shop. This benefit comes to you because you are a member of your local electric cooperative. In addition to the many programs that I mentioned earlier, this program will hopefully enhance your life while helping you save money.

In future columns I will continue discussing the changes coming to our industry and how those changes will impact your rates in the coming years. Until then, remember that we at Jasper County REMC continue to work hard to enhance the quality of life for our members and are working hard to keep the lights on for you.



CO-OP NOTES

Relay for Life event announced

Join the Kilowatts to Kill Cancer Team for our first Relay for Life event this year.

Pork Chop Lunch

When: Sunday, April 17

Time: 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

Where: Jasper County REMC Warehouse, 280 E. Wood Road, Rensselaer

Ticket: \$7

Meal includes grilled pork chop, parsley potatoes, green beans, salad, bread/butter, dessert, coffee or drink.

Carry outs will be available and additional pork chops will be available for \$3.

Plan to join us as well for our Relay Motorcycle Ride for a Cure on Sept. 17. Look for more information in future editions of **Electric Consumer**.



**Visit us at the
Earth Day booth!
April 16
Brookside Park
Rensselaer
9 a.m.-1 p.m. (CT)**



Nesius Memorial Scholarships

The Nesius Memorial Scholarship is an opportunity for area high school seniors graduating in 2011. 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 8.**

Update your account info

As our annual meeting approaches, please make sure your account information is correct. **If YOU intend to vote at the annual meeting, YOUR name needs to be on the account.** In the past, there have been rare instances where one spouse has come to the annual meeting to vote, only to find his/her name is not on the account. Call us if you need both spouses' names on the account or if the name on the account needs updating. We want to ensure your eligibility to vote by making sure the names on your membership are current.

It is also important to let us know if your phone number changes. We need accurate information to contact you regarding your service.

The Co-op Connections Card offers you value and savings

We at Jasper County REMC are always looking for ways to provide value to our members and to our community, especially during tough economic times. Our new Co-op Connections Card is a money-saving tool we're now proud to offer our members.

Your card will be mailed to you in a special mailing in early April. We will continue to recruit businesses in our area, but our surrounding electric cooperatives offer the program and have recruited businesses in the Lafayette area; White County, including the Monticello area; the Valparaiso area; and other areas of Lake and Porter counties.

Look for the logo on the doors and cash registers of the businesses you frequent to see if they offer savings to our members. Since this is a NATION-WIDE program, you can get discounts at participating businesses whether you shop in Rensselaer, Valparaiso, Lafayette, or when you're on vacation.

We hope local businesses participating in the Co-op Connections program benefit from increased traffic from Jasper County REMC members. Businesses can sign up for the program at no cost. For a complete list of all participating businesses and discounts in our area, simply log on to our website (jasperremc.com) and follow the Co-op Connections Card link.

The card also gives you access to online savings at more than 95 national retailers like Barnes & Noble, Hertz rental cars, Best Western hotels and ProFlowers. You can check out these great national discounts at www.connections.coop.

Did we mention the huge number of coupons? You can also find many valuable coupons on

Pharmacy discount offers big savings for cardholders

One of the most valuable features of the Co-op Connections Card is the pharmacy discount. While it is not insurance, the discount can mean savings of 10 to 60 percent on prescription drugs. The logo and information on the back of your card is recognized at more than 60,000 national, regional and local pharmacies.

The pharmacy discount has been widely used by members of Touchstone Energy Co-ops across the country, resulting in combined savings of nearly \$20 million.

Want to find out more? Log on to www.locateproviders.com to search for pharmacies in our area honoring the card.

national products from links at www.connections.coop.

As a Touchstone Energy Cooperative, Jasper County REMC strives to serve our members according to four core values: integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community. Our Co-op Connections Card is one of the ways we live up to those values.

We're eager to answer any questions you have about the card and how to take advantage of the discounts it provides. Log onto www.jasperremc.com and click on the card for more information. Co-op Connections Cards are exclusively for Jasper REMC members, not the general public.

Recycle your electronics April 9

Keep our landfills clean and our environment green! Bring your old TVs and electronics for recycling on April 9. There are two locations from which to choose:

- 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.

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. Hidden account 24398-007



Ask the energy advisor

Q: How much will it cost to run some light bulbs to keep my chickens warm?

A: The first thing you need to know is that watts are watts. Whether it's a compact florescent bulb, a flood light, a "heat light," a halogen bulb, or an incandescent bulb, watts are watts in the calculation.

Quite a few of our members have called throughout the years wondering why their bill is higher than the previous month. Sometimes, the member admits he/she is using light bulbs as a heat source to keep animals warm.

We usually hear, "Well it can't be **that** expensive to use a floodlight to keep my chickens/puppies/kittens/rabbits warm!"

Here's the calculation we're going to use to determine just how much it does cost:

Watts x number of bulbs = watts/hour

Watts/hour x number of hours/day bulbs are on = watt hours

Watt hours x .001 = kilowatt-hours (kWh)

kWh x number days in bill cycle = total kWh

Total kWh x .095/kWh = \$/month

\$/month (does not include tax or energy tracker)



Now, let's look at the calculation that convinced our friend, "This is what it costs to keep your chickens happy."

250 watts x 5 bulbs = 1,250 watts/hour

1,250 watts/hour x 24 hours/day = 30,000 watt hours

30,000 x .001 = 30 kWh

30 kWh x 30 days in bill cycle = 900 kWh

900 kWh x .095/kWh = \$85.50/month

So, our friend had to decide if his chicken coop was worth \$85.50 per month, plus the tax and energy tracker, on the electric bill. In the end, he decided his hobby was worth the expense and still has happy chickens laying lots of eggs for his family and friends.

REMC deploys 'smarter' switches

Jasper County REMC has partnered with its power supplier, Wabash Valley Power (WVPA), to revitalize the existing load management switch program.

Many of our members have old load management switches on their water heaters and air-conditioning units. These switches were installed over 25 years ago and contain outdated one-way technology.

These switches still work, but switch technology has changed drastically in recent years due to smart grid initiatives and the need for our industry to control peak loads to maintain energy costs.

Randy Morris, technical and staff advisor at Jasper County REMC, stated, "The new switches have two-way communication technology that transmits through the new meters we have been installing since 2007.

"In this day and age, 'smart grid technology' is a term used regularly in the media. Rest assured that Jasper County REMC has been using smart grid technology for over 25 years," Morris continued, "Our cooperative has always had forward-thinking directors and leadership. We have been in front of many trends in our industry and are about to do it again with the two-way load management switches."

We have tested the switches and have been pleased with the data we have gathered and the performance of the equipment. Now it's time to deploy them.

The program will start this summer with the installation of 50 new water heater switches in our members' homes. If you have one of our free water heaters with an old switch on it, you will receive a letter requesting your participation in the program. We hope you will do us the favor of helping the co-op control our energy costs by letting us manage the energy your free water heater is using. We look forward to your participation in this important cost-saving program.



Jasper County REMC will deploy new, "smarter" load management switches, like the one shown above, this summer on 50 water heaters of participating members.



Little changes add up to big savings!

Find out how at togetherwesave.com.

The details of paying online

There are two primary differences between paying your REMC bill online through our website and paying online through your bank.

1. When you pay online at www.jasperremc.com your payment is immediate. Your payment registers on our account database immediately after you hit the submit button.

2. When you pay online through your bank, your payment could take up to five or even seven days to get to the REMC because of the bank's processing system. This means you may incur late penalties or fees because we didn't get your payment on time. If you choose to pay online through the bank, please pay your bill five to seven days in advance to make sure late fees are not charged to your REMC account.

When you set up your account to pay through our website, the information you input has to match the information in our REMC account database: name, address, phone, etc. Please call us if you need assistance setting up your account.

Paying online at www.jasperremc.com is easy and immediate.

Meter access is important

Please make sure Jasper County REMC employees have the required meter access.

Remove any scrap, vehicles, wood or other debris from in front of your meter. If your meter is in a fenced area, we will need access and will ask you to remove any dogs from the area while we work.

We will continue changing the meters throughout 2011. Thank you for your cooperation!



See us at these April events!

April 2

Jasper County Home Builders Association's Home & Garden Expo at DeMotte Elementary School — Booths and "Ask the Expert" seminars all day

April 9

Countywide Electronics Recycling Day

April 16

Earth Day Event at Brookside Park, Rensselaer, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. — Booths, giveaways, activities

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.
- ◆ 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.

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.”

Updating memberships of deceased

If the membership at your address is held in the name of a deceased person, please call our office to find out how to update the account. It is imperative at this time that we have accurate updated records. Here are some reasons why:

Bills going to deceased members

As an example: Grandpa and Grandma have passed away. You are living in their house and Grandpa's name is still on the account. You need to get the account put into your name.

The FTC requires we only talk to the person whose name is on the account. We will be glad to guide you through the simple process to update the account information.

Capital credit agent's appointment forms

In the event capital credits are returned, we need to know to whom to send Grandpa's check. His heirs must sign the form and have each signature notarized. The form will indicate one of the heirs as the “agent.” The agent will receive Grandpa's capital credits and be responsible for the distribution of the money. We would be glad to mail you the forms.

Annual meeting ballots

This updated information on our deceased members also has a lot to do with our annual meeting. We don't want to send voting ballots to people who can't use them.

Again, we apologize for any inconvenience, but updating our records is an integral part of our cooperative business practices.

Use caution this spring when on the farm

Nationwide, an average of 64 agricultural workers are electrocuted and hundreds more injured in farm electrical accidents each year. Farm workers can avoid tragic accidents by being aware while performing farm activities — especially those that take place near power lines.

Know the measurements of the equipment you operate and remember the 10 foot, 360 degree rule — keep equipment below, to the side and above power lines.

If your equipment comes in contact with power lines, it's almost always best to stay in the cab

and call for help. If you have to leave the cab, the proper action is to jump — not step — with both feet hitting the ground at the same time, then shuffle away with both feet together.

Once you are safely away from the equipment, STAY AWAY! Warn others who may be nearby to stay away and wait until the electric co-op arrives to make sure power to the line is cut off.

Pole guy wires are grounded to the neutral. But, when one of the guy wires is broken, it can cause an electric current disruption which makes neutral wires anything but harmless.