

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

Website: www.jasperremc.com

Office hours:

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

WATTS INSIDE

- Water heater program in transition
- Fair results announced
- REMC now on social media sites

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 September to claim the \$25 electric bill credit.

Which substation feeds your meter?

Look for the "Location" box on your bill. If your "Location" starts with:

- A** — Asphaltum Substation
- C** — Carpenter Substation
- D** — Kersey Substation
- F** — Fair Oaks Substation
- M** — Moody Substation
- P** — Parr Substation
- R** — Rensselaer Substation
- S** — Sutton Substation
- W** — Wheatfield Substation

CO-opNews Information from your electric cooperative

FROM THE CEO/GENERAL MANAGER

Credits to be issued in November

This month I'm putting some teeth into the subject of what being a cooperative is all about. I want to discuss a topic that proves there is an important difference between REMCs and all other power suppliers. Cooperatives must adhere to certain principles including one that states our members have an economic stake in the cooperative. This is why I'd like to discuss capital credits and how they relate to the cooperative business model.

As a cooperative, our main purpose is to serve our membership in the most economical manner possible. Should we have any margins, they become the members' equity in the organization. Although the equity is always there, it is not always disbursed back to the member in the form of cash. The margins are often retained to help finance new construction projects, maintain our existing facilities and to meet our other financial obligations. Jasper County REMC has returned margins to members in the past, but we have not done so for the past 12 years.

Although some might confuse capital credits with dividends, they are definitely not the same.

With dividends, the stockholder does not necessarily have to be a participating member of the organization. Anyone who wants to invest in the organization can purchase stocks. Therefore, the investor's only interest in the organization is that it makes a profit. The higher the profits, the greater the dividend, and thus, the more money the stockholder receives.

That concept does not fit the cooperative business model. If we increase our "profits," we return them in the form of capital credits to our membership. However, with the co-op



Bryan Washburn
CEO/General Manager

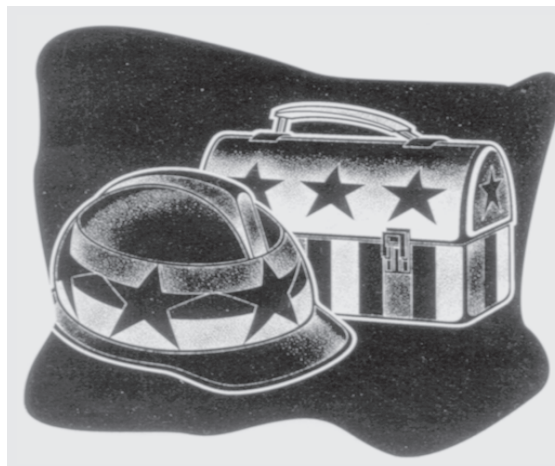
philosophy, it makes better sense to concentrate on keeping members' costs as low as possible to begin with rather than focus on making a profit.

This year, after careful evaluation of the financial health of Jasper County REMC, the board of directors has determined we are able to pay back capital credits to our members. Jasper County REMC will be returning \$300,000 to our members in the next few months. This will help to repay the capital credits that are owed to our mem-

bers who were on the lines from 1965 to 1978. We will be allocating the portion of the capital credits designated as cash margins. Margins associated with borrowing activities, rather than cash, have been reinvested in the organization and remain as patronage still owed to our members. These margins will be retired at a later date.

The payment of capital credits is a by-product of the many good decisions our board is making not only on the co-op's behalf, but the members' behalf as well. It represents that your cooperative is in good financial shape. It also indicates your directors are making sound business decisions in paying our debts, i.e. distributing the members' equity that we owe. Your directors are making decisions that are in line with what, and how, a cooperative should act.

We should have our disbursements out in November, so be looking for that check. If you are an heir to someone who was a member between 1965 to 1978 be sure to contact our office to find out how you can collect capital credits that might be owed to the deceased. Lastly, please remember that we at Jasper County REMC will be here keeping the lights on for you.



The directors and employees of Jasper County REMC wish you a happy Labor Day!

In honor of the holiday, our office will be closed on Monday, Sept. 5

Water heater switches save the co-op — and you — money

Please call Jasper County REMC at 219-866-4601 if we can install a new load management switch on your water heater.

The new switches will help the co-op keep costs low for everyone. The more switches we can deploy, the more money we will all save. Here's how the switch program works:

1. Power supplier sees the power supply getting stressed by unusually high energy use.
2. Power supplier activates load management switches for a short period of time to reduce energy use.
3. Member's water heater is turned off for a short period of time.
4. Power supplier sees grid recover and turns off switches.
5. Member's water heater is turned back on.
6. Whole membership avoids higher energy costs.

Consequences of not using load management switches:

1. Power supplier sees the power supply getting stressed by unusually high energy use.
2. Power supplier needs to purchase additional power unexpectedly to supply demand at member homes.
3. Cost of unexpected power purchase is significantly higher than the normal contract purchase.
4. Higher cost of unexpected power purchase is passed along to members.

International Year of Cooperatives is in 2012

The United Nations General Assembly has proclaimed 2012 the International Year of Cooperatives. UN members and relevant stakeholders are encouraged to promote cooperatives, raise public awareness of cooperative contributions and promote the formation and growth of co-ops during the year-long celebration, themed "Cooperative Enterprises Build a Better World."

Internationally, over 800 million people, including you, are cooperative members.



Water heater program in transition

As you know, Jasper County REMC offers a **FREE** water heater program with **FREE** parts and service during business hours. But, as many things change in life, we are revising this program to keep up with our commitment to follow "best industry practices." You have asked us to keep power costs as low as possible and changing this program will help us do just that.

We are working toward installing new load management switches on all of the electric water heaters we've distributed over the years. At some point in the future, we will not provide free parts and labor on electric water heaters that do not have a new load management switch attached. We will, however, work on the unit if you let us install the switch at the time of repair. The program will also still include service and parts for your electric water heater that you did not get from us as long as you let us install the switch.

The program will still offer free 40- and 50-gallon water heaters to replace unrepairable heaters, to install in new construction and to replace natural gas or propane heaters. Eighty-gallon heaters are available for a cost of \$250,

At some point in the future, we will not provide free parts and labor on electric water heaters that do not have a new load management switch attached.

which is subject to change depending upon market fluctuations.

An allowance of up to \$50 for the electric materials and installation of the free heater is provided if you are replacing a natural gas or propane water heater.

The REMC will not install the water heaters or perform any plumbing work during a repair. Any plumbing or electrical wiring found to be unsuitable or unsafe will be the customer's responsibility to correct. Hidden account 16843-002

Call us if you need a water heater switch installed. There is no cost to you for the switch or switch installation.

CO-OP NOTES

Motorcycle mystery ride for a cure is Sept. 17

It's finally time to ride again with the Kilowatt to Kill Cancer Relay for Life team on Sept. 17!

We had nearly 60 bikes last year and look forward to even more this year as word spreads about this fantastic motorcycle cruise to fight cancer. Bring your friends and family on this scenic ride.

Riders start leaving in staggered groups from the Jasper County REMC warehouse, 280 E. Wood Road, Rensselaer, at 10 a.m. CST. Each group will be given directions to follow.

The ride will take place from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. CST with designated stops along the way. Cost is \$25 per bike. Riders return to the Rensselaer American Legion for food and great prizes.

All proceeds will support the American Cancer Society.



Join the Kilowatt to Kill Cancer Relay for Life team on a scenic ride to raise funds for the American Cancer Society. This year's ride is scheduled for Sept. 17.

Join your REMC at these fun-filled local events

Join Jasper County REMC as we participate in these local events.

Sept. 10

Enjoy the entertainment at the Little Cousin Jasper Festival on the Rensselaer Courthouse Square sponsored by Jasper County REMC. American Idol contestant and area resident Amanda Overmyer will be on stage Saturday evening singing her energetic blues/southern rock music. There will also be performances by other bands over the weekend.



Amanda Overmyer

Sept. 18

The REMC is also a corporate sponsor of the Wheatfield Chamber Sandhill Crane Festival and Car Show in downtown Wheatfield. We'll have a booth in the park and a line truck at the car show for the kids to see.

Come and sign our petition to legislators to help keep electric rates as low as possible. We need as many signatures as we can gather to help make an impact on our decision-makers in Washington, D.C.

We will also have a new drawing this year! Show your Co-op Connections Card and be eligible to win a \$50 Visa gift card.

We hope to see you at each of these events!

Fair results announced

Our “one day only” at the Jasper County Fair was a success due to the great participation from our membership. Many people heard or read we would only be there on Monday, so they came to sign up for the bill credit drawing and to sign our federal legislative petition.

Jasper County REMC is also a supporter of the 4-H Electric Program. During the fair, participants had their projects judged. The winners were:

Division 1 – circuit board kit

Champion: Ivy Allen

Reserve champion: Camden Chapman

Division 2 – magnetic shake light

Champion: Cody Norris

Reserve champion: Matthew Smundin

Division 3 – extension or trouble light cord

Champion: Eddie Jefferson

Reserve champion: Allison Arnold

Division 4 – lamps, other projects

Champion: Evan Brandenburg

Reserve champion: Bryce Nesius

Advanced electric projects

Champion: Travis Rascoe

Reserve champion: Austin Moore

Advanced electronics projects

Champion: Abraham Moore

Overall

Grand champion: Abraham Moore

Reserve grand champion: Travis Rascoe

There is also a category at the fair for Farm Toy Scenes. In an effort to get kids to pay more attention to power lines, we gave a Matchbox® line truck for the “best power lines” in each division. The kids really did a good job on their power lines this year.

Some of the scenes depicted damage from



The 4-H Electric judges debate over the overall grand champion project and decided to give the honor to Abraham Moore's advanced electronics project which can control barn curtains at a hog farm.

tornadoes, including downed power lines. It was obvious that the storms in June made quite an impact on the students in our county. The judges spent quite a bit of time deciding who should get the special REMC prizes. The winners were Cole Dunlap, Eddie Jefferson and Travis Yates.

Applications accepted this month for Operation Round Up

The Jasper County Community Fund, Inc. invites you to request Operation Round Up® funding for an individual, cause or program during the month of September.



All applications must be submitted by Oct. 1 for review by the Fund's board of trustees. Remember, if your organization has submitted a previous request and did not receive funding, you must re-submit your request for consideration. The next funding request period will be in December.

Operation Round Up funding comes from REMC members who “round up” their power bills and contribute the extra change to the Community Fund. The money is then shared with individuals, causes and organizations that contribute to the well-being of a family or the community.

You can find the applications on our website, www.jasperremc.com, or call 219-866-4601 to have your individual, education, or organization application mailed to you. Funds are NOT used to pay utility bills or support political candidates. Individuals are encouraged to apply.

Dusk-to-dawn lights offered

Jasper County REMC offers dusk-to-dawn high-pressure sodium lights for a monthly fee. The monthly fee covers the cost of installation of the lights on an existing transformer pole, maintenance, and replacement parts.

100-watt high-pressure sodium fixture –

We offer 100-watt high-pressure sodium dusk-to-dawn lights for residential street and yard lighting. They are available to any member where 120-volt service exists ahead of the meter loop. The monthly fee of \$6/month will be listed on your electric bill.

400-watt high-pressure sodium fixture –

We also offer 400-watt high-pressure sodium dusk-to-dawn lights. They are available to any member where 120-volt service exists ahead of the meter loop. Due to the large coverage area of the 400-watt light, they are primarily recommended for commercial or farming operations. The monthly fee of \$16.50/month will be listed on your electric bill.

Please contact us if you are interested in additional information and installation of a dusk-to-dawn light.

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.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Stay safe around appliances

The Electrical Safety Foundation International offers the following safety tips for small appliances and tools.

Small appliances

- To make sure appliances are in good condition, look for breaks in power cords, plugs or connectors.
- Unplug any appliance that has given you an electrical shock and do not use it until it has been checked and repaired by a qualified technician.
- Keep appliance cords as short as possible to avoid accidents such as tripping or knocking the appliance over.
- Remember, electricity and water don't mix. Keep all electrical cords and products such as radios, TVs, hairdryers and curling irons away from water in a sink or tub.
- Never reach into water to get an appliance that has fallen in without being sure the appliance is unplugged or the circuit is shut off.
- Be sure you have ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) protection anywhere electricity and water are within six feet of each other, such as in your kitchen, bathroom, garage and outdoors, to protect against electric shock.
- Take any damaged electrical appliance or tool to an authorized repair center, or cut the cord, safely dispose of the item, and purchase a new one.
- Don't allow anything on top of an electric blanket while it is in use. This includes other blankets or comforters and even pets sleeping on top of the blanket. Do not use electric blankets on children.
- Never go to sleep with a heating pad that is turned on. It can burn you. Newer heating pads have an automatic cut off switch.
- Make certain all small appliances and tools are approved by an independent testing laboratory, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL), ETL-SEMKO (ETL) or Canadian Standards Association (CSA).

Power tool safety

- Check to make sure power tools have a three-prong plug or double-insulated cords, and consider replacing old tools that have neither.
- Consider using a portable GFCI when using power tools.
- Replace guards that have been removed from power tools.
- There have been many recalls of power tools due to problems with the safety guard sticking. Be sure your model has not been recalled, as this hazard poses a serious risk of injury. Check online at www.recalls.gov.

**Winter is on its way!
Have you weatherized your
home to save energy and
lower your electric bill?**

'Like' us or 'follow' us

REMC now uses social media to provide news to you

by Stephanie Johnson

In the few years I have been at Jasper County REMC, I have seen changes in technology, changes in procedures and changes in our programs.

As the person in charge of communications at the co-op, it is my job to figure out how the membership wants information about the co-op. I know many of you enjoy reading printed publications, like *Electric Consumer*. On the flip side, I know many of you also spend a lot of time on the Internet either through your computer or your phone. Let me tell you, it's a lot for a communicator to keep up with.

First, I should already correct myself. Phones are not just phones anymore. They are hand-held devices. See, just in the course of one paragraph, change has already occurred.

As the co-op communicator, I have been issued one of these hand-held devices so I can post an update on the co-op's website from anywhere. I can access the co-op's general e-mail to see if you have sent us a message that requires our attention. I can access my REMC desktop computer from miles away so I can e-mail a press release to the media about an ice storm, tornado damage or heat wave. All from my phone, I mean, hand-held device.

As I get further into the digital communication world, I have balked at the concept of posting information on a public digital venue on the co-op's behalf. OK, in layman's terms I balked at social media. But, I always have to do what's best for the membership, so we have now embraced the social media sites of Facebook and Twitter.

If you are not an Internet user, you will get much the same information in *Electric Consumer* and through our local radio stations. If you are looking at your daughter-in-law who is glued to her hand-held device while you read this publication, she's the one we'll be communicating with through digital media.



Jasper County REMC is now using the social media sites of Facebook and Twitter.

One thing we learn early on as communicators, is that everyone likes to be communicated with in a way that works for them. For you, it might be the newsletter. For your son, it might be e-mails. For your daughter-in-law, it might be Facebook postings or "tweets" from Twitter. For your grandkids, it might be texting.

For many of our members, you listen to the radio and hear what we have to say. We even get a good response to the bill stuffers we occasionally send. With almost 8,000 members who have an average of two people per household, we will use as many methods as possible to reach as many of you as we can.

So, as communicators often do, I have written a long article to tell you simply — we now have a Facebook page and Twitter account where we will be posting messages from the co-op. If you are not the social media type, please let those who are know that we're doing this. That would be the old-fashioned way of marketing — "word-of-mouth." I hope it still works.

I've come up with a calendar of topics to post and hope any of our members who enjoy social media updates will "like" us and "follow" us. You can also e-mail us at jasperremc@jasperremc.com if you would like to get an e-mail from our CEO a few times a year.

We'll do our best to keep up with the changes in how people communicate so we can keep you informed in a way that works for you.

Stephanie Johnson is the member services representative for Jasper County REMC.

Keep your dryer's filter clean for your safety

Your dryer's lint filter might not be "clean" just because you remove the lint.

Try this on your dryer lint filter. Take the filter over to the sink and run hot water over it. Did the hot water just sit on top of the mesh? This is most likely because ingredients in your dryer sheets cause a film over the mesh. You can't SEE the film, but it's there. The film can prevent air moving through the filter and contribute to

burning out the heating unit. If your heating unit burns up, there could be a fire in your home.

The best way to keep your dryer working for a very long time (and to keep your utility bill lower) is to take the filter out and wash it with hot soapy water and an old toothbrush at least every six months.

This simple routine could help your dryer last longer, improve the energy efficiency of your dryer and improve fire safety in your home.

If you have a 'smart' phone ...

Download a QR (Quick Response) Reader app to capture our contact info.

Watch for our box codes in newspaper ads and in the *Electric Consumer* to jump to energy saving videos.

