



Rural HIGHLIGHTS

Local News from Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative

PCA Credit will lower Electric Bills



Mel Repscher,
Board Chairman



David Stuva,
President/CEO

At the Dec. 21, 2017 RECC Board Meeting, the Directors approved the 2018 Operating Budget, which included lower wholesale power costs. The Power Cost Adjustment (PCA) will go from a "charge" of \$.0085 per KWH to a "credit" of \$.006 per KWH.

"In addition to lower power costs and stable rates, the Board will also have an opportunity to build equity by retaining higher margins

and retire past Capital Credit Equity," said Mel Repscher, Board Chairman.

"A member who uses 1,000 KWHs per month will save \$174 a year compared to what they would have paid in 2017. A member who uses 5,000 KWHs per month will save \$870 a year compared to what they would have paid in 2017," said President/CEO David Stuva.

The lower cost per KWH begins Jan. 1, 2018 and will be reflected on the February 2018 electric bills. The PCA decrease will appear as a line item on the electric bill and is automatically deducted from the bill calculations. Members will still pay the "Total Amount Due" shown on their bills.

RECC began a new 10-year and five-month Wholesale Power Supply Contract with NextEra Energy Power Marketing on Jan. 1, 2018. NextEra Energy sells electricity to companies and businesses including utilities, retail electricity providers, power cooperatives, municipal electric providers and large industrial customers. NextEra is the world's largest generator of renewable energy from the wind and the sun, and its nuclear fleet is the third largest in the country.



CURRENT BILL INFORMATION	\$ AMOUNT
FACILITY CHARGE	35.00
ENERGY CHARGE 1000 @ 0.124000	124.00
*** TOTAL KWH CHG 1000	159.00
POWER COST ADJ	8.50
ILL PUB UTIL REV TAX	3.20
*TOTAL CHARGED TO CREDIT CARD 12/21/17	170.70
TOTAL DUE NOW / NET BILL	170.70
GROSS AMOUNT DUE AFTER 12/26/2017	179.24
POWER COST ADJUSTMENT PER KWH	0.0085000

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Please call if you have any questions!**

CURRENT BILL INFORMATION	\$ AMOUNT
FACILITY CHARGE	35.00
ENERGY CHARGE 1000 @ 0.124000	124.00
*** TOTAL KWH CHG 1000	159.00
POWER COST ADJ	-6.00
ILL PUB UTIL REV TAX	3.20
*** TOTAL AMOUNT DUE	156.20
TOTAL DUE NOW / NET BILL	156.20
GROSS AMOUNT DUE AFTER 01/26/2018	164.01
POWER COST ADJUSTMENT PER KWH	-0.006000

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On the left is an actual bill for a home that consumed 1,000 KWHs in December 2017. The total is \$170.70. The bill on the right also shows 1,000 KWHs, but they were used in January 2018. The total here is \$156.20. Removing the .0085 PCA and adding a negative .006 PCA saved this member \$14.50. This member will save \$174 in one year if their use is consistently around 1,000 KWHs.

Touchstone Energy® Classroom Empowerment Grants

RECC sponsored the Touchstone Energy® Classroom Empowerment Grants again this year. With the assistance of the CoBank



Sharing Success Program, we were able to obtain matching funds and turn two \$1,000 grants into two \$2,000 grants. The higher grant amounts turned out to be quite popular, which led to greater participation among area schools. We received several more applications this year.

The classroom grants were designed for local area teachers to carry out

education enhancement projects that were not included in their school budgets. Grant applicants were limited to grades K-8 with emphasis on science and technology. Consideration was also given for how each project related to Touchstone Energy's four core values of integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community.

CoBank's Sharing Success Matching Grant Program was designed to celebrate the vital role that RECC plays in our community. The only stipulation

was the minimum grant amount was \$1,000, so we altered our format from four \$500 grants to two \$1,000 grants. This small change allowed us to receive an additional \$2,000 in matching grants that will now be shared in our community. CoBank states, "Partnering with RECC to support the causes and organizations we care about most is a great way to make a positive impact and fulfill our mission of service to rural America."



RECC awards \$2,000 grant to Waverly Elementary School

Teacher and librarian Michelle Wagner submitted the first winning grant application. She chose to focus on creating makerspaces and STEM learning activities. Makerspaces is a hands-on activity approach, and STEM is an education curriculum that focuses heavily on the subjects of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. STEM categories are integrated so that elements of each subject are applied to the others.



Becky Grossner presents a check to Michelle Wagner. On the left is Waverly Principal Tammy Hermes and to the right is Board Vice-Chairman Chris Wilcox.

Michelle summarizes, "Makerspaces and STEM center activities provide students opportunities to be innovators that will be leaders in science careers. Innovators will lead us in other areas of society, for they are the people who will think up new ideas and implement them."

"The grant money provides the initial boost to create makerspaces, reading, writing and STEM learning centers in our school that will continue in the years to come. Students are essentially responsible for their own learning as they take ownership of research and where it leads them in the learning process."

RECC awards \$2,000 to Ball Elementary School

Debora Lee submitted the second winning grant application. Her grant request also represents fellow kindergarten teachers Roxanne Gardner, Danielle Snedigar, Tracey Lex and Joanne Carter. Their grant will provide hands-on science related activities for 115 students. The grant will provide each of the five teachers with their very own set of learning kits.

The majority of grant money will be spent on these explorative learning aids. Purchased kits include: Scientific Classification Center, Master Marble Set, Specimens Sorting Center and a Seasons & Weather Theme Box. The new activities will be used throughout the school year and will benefit future kindergarten classes since they are not consumable.



Sandy Lex delivers a grant check to Ball Elementary kindergarten teachers and students.

RECC Employees select Pawnee Food Pantry for their annual donations

RECC employees collected \$475 in cash and checks for the Pawnee Food Pantry. President/CEO David Stuva agreed that RECC would match their donations. The pantry was grateful to receive the \$950 charitable donation

and said it would really help their efforts this year. RECC employees have made similar donations in the past. This has become a tradition that we would like to see continue for many more years.



Director Clayton Bloome stands with employees Sandy Lex and Aubrie Megginson as donations are presented to Nancy Oliver and Marilyn Fitzpatrick from the Pawnee Food Pantry.

Dalton Brown becomes RECC's newest Apprentice Lineman

Dalton was employed as an Apprentice Lineman with J.F. Electric. He worked on constructing the new 345kv transmission line in central Illinois for the Ameren Illinois Rivers Project. Dalton also spent four years as a construction worker for Steel Pro Structures where he helped construct commercial and residential buildings throughout central Illinois.

Dalton completed his training at Lincoln Land Community College and received the Electrical Distribution Lineman Maintenance Certificate of Achievement. He also graduated from a three-week pole climbing school in Medway, Ohio required by ALBAT. The program involved using various climbing techniques and fall restraint devices used in the field as well as line distribution and maintenance courses, pole top rescue, bucket rescue and electrical math courses.

Dalton is a 2012 graduate of Auburn High School and currently lives in Divernon.



President/CEO David Stuva welcomes Dalton Brown to RECC family.

LED Security Light Update

RECC's linemen have been installing security lights as fast as they can get them from the distributor. We have been receiving shipments anywhere from 300, 100 or even 25 LEDs at a time. The lights don't sit in the warehouse for long. Over 1,000 new LED security lights have been installed at this time.



Collection of old 100-watt HPS lights.



New security lights prepped and ready to be loaded on bucket trucks.



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Board meeting reports.

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Rural Electric Youth Day/Youth to Washington Contest



High school juniors are invited each year to apply for great trips to Springfield and Washington, D.C.! Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative sponsors area students for the popular Rural Electric Youth Day in Springfield and the week-long Youth to Washington tour.

The 2018 Youth Day program will be held April 18, 2018 in Springfield, and the Youth to Washington Tour will be June 8-15, 2018. Any junior attending a high school in RECC's service area is eligible for these expense-paid programs. Information packets were sent to local schools in January, and students can request application kits directly from the cooperative. The application includes a summary of the student's school and civic activities and accomplishments, and a brief essay question pertaining to the rural electric program.

Applications must be returned to RECC by March 14, and the 10 students selected for the Illinois Youth Day program will be notified so they can

arrange their school schedules around the trip. Transportation will be provided from Auburn to Springfield.

After the day's activities in Springfield, the students will have individual interviews to select two winners for the trip to Washington, D.C. They will be judged on their written application, personal poise and confidence, and demonstrated understanding of the rural electric program. The two winners will travel by bus from Springfield to Washington this summer in one of the best-recognized youth programs in the nation's capital.

Tell your child, grandchild, neighbor or friend about these two programs sponsored by your electric cooperative, and encourage them to apply. They can call our office at 217-438-6197 to ask for an application packet or email a request to recc@recc.coop. Don't let them miss this chance to meet new friends, learn about our government and co-ops, and have fun!