

A PUBLICATION  
OF YOUR  
ELECTRIC  
COOPERATIVE

# Powerlines

FEBRUARY  
2018



## In this issue

Why Bills Go Up When Temps  
Go Down **P.2**

Youth Programs **P.3**

Right-Of-Way Clearing **P.4**

REMC Builds Osprey Nest  
Stand **P.4**

## Love on the LINE

LINEMEN CARRY THE HEARTS OF LOVED ONES ON THE JOB

Parke County REMC lineworkers don't work alone on our power lines. Whether they are climbing poles, restoring power, or clearing tree limbs to prevent future outages, they are never far from the hearts of the families who love them.

At this time of year, stores seem flooded with hearts, candy, and cards professing true love. But to be honest those sentiments pale in comparison to the bonds of love I see every time a storm sweeps through our area.

If the lights go out, our lineworkers' families send their loved ones out into the elements. When other electric cooperatives are in trouble after devastating hurricanes, tornadoes, fires, and floods, our lineworkers travel to bring the lights back on for complete strangers. Each time these brave men leave home to help those in need, their families are left behind, praying for a safe return.

Working with high-voltage electricity, lineworkers find themselves in life and death situations on a regular basis. That's why Parke County REMC focuses on safety first. We know the folks

who love our lineworkers appreciate the time we take to make sure our employees get home safe every night.

Marrying into this profession isn't easy. Lineworkers are often on call, and must be ready to respond at a moment's notice if our

community needs them. This makes children's sporting events and family get-togethers hard to pull off sometimes. But the bold men who keep your power flowing do so because they know without their commitment, many of the things we've come to expect—cold food, lights, entertainment—wouldn't be possible. By devoting their lives to working on utility lines, they connect all of us to a better way of life.

This Valentine's Day, please take a moment to thank the families who support and love the men who brave the elements and work long hours to keep power flowing to our homes each day. Thank you for putting your love on the line—we're committed to making sure the men you love return home safe.

## Parke County REMC

Your Touchstone Energy®  
Cooperative 

Physical Address:  
119 West High Street  
Rockville, IN 47872

Bill Mailing Address:  
P.O. Box 269  
Covington, IN 47932

Email:  
info@pcremc.com

Telephone:  
765-569-3133  
800-537-3913  
765-569-3360 (Fax)

Office Hours:  
Monday-Friday  
7:30 am to 4:30 pm

# Why Your Bill Usually Goes Up as Temperatures Go Down



**Chadd Jenkins**  
CEO/General Manager

Every year, Parke County REMC receives calls from our members with concerns about their bills and/or meters. We get most of these calls during the winter months, and they come from members who feel their electric bills are incorrect because they are higher than usual.

## Temperature drastically affects energy use

One thing to consider as you look at your electric bills this month, is that during the past month we experienced much lower than average temperatures for an extended period. Let's look at just how much colder temperatures affect your electric bill:

On Dec. 27, 2016, the high temperature was 53 degrees. If a member wanted their home to stay 68 degrees inside, their heating system only had to make up a difference of 15 degrees. That's pretty easy for today's HVAC equipment and only cost \$6.76 for the day.

This year was another story, as Dec. 27, 2017 was only 6 degrees! So home heating systems had to work very hard to make up a 62 degree difference from outside to inside. That means a daily electric cost of \$17.76 or nearly three times as much as last year!

You can see by the graph at the bottom of the page, how the temperature during the week of Dec. 27-Jan.3 compared to the same week a year ago. During that week a year ago, average daily use was 38 kWh, the average low temperature was 32° and average high was 42.5° Fast forward to just a few weeks ago, for the week of Dec. 27, 2017-Jan.3, 2018. The average daily use was 64 kWh, the average low temp was 1° and average high temp was 11°.

That means this year, home heating systems were consuming much more electricity to make up for the cold temps outside. Higher energy consumption results in a much higher bill for the member.

## Comfort comes at a cost

Even if the winter is not particularly harsh, we all use more electricity in winter because we want to be warm and comfortable—we turn on heaters and electric blankets and stay inside more. And while we are inside more, the TV is on, the lights are on, the kids are inside using game systems and other electronics, the refrigerator is open for snacks and so on. In other words, we ALL use more electricity during the winter, which in turn makes our electric bill go up.

## Let us help you

We do realize that it is unpleasant to see a high bill. So when our members see a large increase in their electric use, we try to help them determine the cause of the increase. While low

temperatures are a natural cause of higher energy bills, there are some times when we can help our members find problems in their homes that are causing them to use more electricity than normal. As a good rule of thumb, the main thing to look for is any appliance or equipment that uses electricity to produce heat. These appliances are your largest energy users.

## Space heaters are not efficient

Members should also keep in mind that electric space heaters are VERY high users of electricity. A small heater can quickly add an additional \$100 or more per month to your electric bill if used continuously. Another thing that can drive up energy use is electric heat tape used to prevent frozen water pipes. One scenario we have seen is a previous homeowner has installed heat tape on water and sewer pipes, but the current homeowner or renter is not aware that the heat tape is there. Be sure to check water and sewer lines under the house or under sinks for wires that you are unfamiliar with and make sure you are only using heat tape as needed.

## Contact our Energy Advisor

Take the time to try and understand your energy use. Our Energy Advisor is available to come to your home to look for ways to help improve the efficiency of your home and in turn, help you save money as you cut back on your electric consumption. We are here to help you. Please call 800-537-3913 and ask for Jeremy Montgomery to schedule a visit to your home.

## EXAMPLE FOR AVERAGE MEMBER USE

## LAST YEAR vs. THIS YEAR

DAILY ELECTRIC BILL  
AND TEMPERATURE

DEC. 27, 2016 through JAN. 3, 2018

DEC. 27, 2017 through JAN. 3, 2018



# Deadlines *for Student Programs*

## APPLY BY THE FOLLOWING DATES:

**March 1**

*Youth Tour to D. C.  
Touchstone Energy Camp*

**April 4**

*Scholarships*

Contact Parke County REMC  
or visit [www.pcremc.com](http://www.pcremc.com) for  
more information.



June  
7-14



## YOUTH TOUR TO WASHINGTON D.C.

Students who will be high school seniors in the fall of 2018 can apply for this trip of a lifetime to our nation's Capital. The Indiana delegation will meet in Indianapolis, travel to Gettysburg, PA, the Flight 93 9/11 Memorial, then head to Washington D.C. for a week of sight seeing and tours.



June  
6-9

## TOUCHSTONE ENERGY CAMP

Apply now for this fun and unique camp experience for students who will be entering 7th grade in the fall of 2018. Students will experience zip lining, swimming, horseback riding, archery, along with learning about electric safety and electric co-ops.



## COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

High school seniors whose parents or guardians are Parke County REMC members can apply for a \$1,000 college scholarship.



# Clearing for Reliability

There are many ways that Parke County REMC provides you with safe, reliable electric service. One of the most common—and crucial—ways is referred to as right-of-way maintenance (or vegetation management).

A Right-Of-Way (ROW) refers to a strip of land underneath or around power lines that your electric cooperative has the right and responsibility to maintain and clear. Trees must grow at a distance far enough from conductors where they will not cause harm to individuals or disruption to electrical service. Specifications can vary, but a general guideline of maintaining a safe ROW is 15 feet of clearance on either side of the primary conductors and 20 feet of overhead clearance above the highest wire on the pole.

Clearing the ROW is critical to keeping our members' lights on. An average of 45 percent of power interruptions occur when trees, shrubs or bushes grow too close to power lines.

If a tree encroaches on this safe distance, our tree service (Parke Professional Services) will trim back branches and brush using chainsaws,

bucket trucks, tree climbers, brush chippers and mowers. Chemical control methods can also be used as a way to support the growth of low growing plant species that will outcompete the tall trees growing beneath power lines.

ROW clearing also keeps your family safe by ensuring that tree branches do not become energized due to close contact with a downed power line. Power lines can carry up to 34,500 volts, and an energized tree branch is incredibly dangerous—even deadly. Be mindful when around trees close to power lines, and make sure your children know that climbing trees near power lines is extremely dangerous.

ROW clearing is also critical to ensuring that we provide members with affordable electricity. Staying ahead of the game keeps us from having to come out after a storm to restore power due to fallen trees.

Remember to contact Parke County REMC if you decide to trim or remove trees near any power service or line. And never trim a tree in the right-of-way zone on your own.



ROW clearing just makes sense. Visit our website, [www.pcremc.com](http://www.pcremc.com) to find out more about our vegetation management program and to receive information about how to keep the ROW in your service territory clear.

## REMC Builds and Installs Osprey Nest Stand

### COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY

*A few months ago, Roger Dieckmeyer from the Lake Holiday Conservancy contacted Parke County REMC to inquire if the co-op would be willing to donate and set a pole for an Osprey nesting habitat. REMC line Superintendent Tophel Secuskie worked out the details and completed the project along with the help of Kevin Ratcliff, Justin Koger, Chris Bosley, Jared Paxton and Adam Younce from our operations department.*

