

# WHITEWATER VALLEY REMC Powerlines

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION FOR THE MEMBERS OF WHITEWATER VALLEY REMC

*Comments from your CEO*

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

## BPL PILOT PROJECT

### IN THIS ISSUE

- Home Cooling Tips: Do Attic Fans Really Help? ..... p2
- Outages by Cause..... p3
- Summer Safety Sense ..... p3
- Home Cooling Tips: New Air Conditioner Standards Save Energy..... p4

As mentioned in the annual report, Whitewater Valley REMC is exploring offering additional high-speed Internet access to members. In 2005, we were able to provide high-speed satellite Internet access through WildBlue. Approximately 125 members were connected before capacity issues required us to suspend installations. Currently, the cooperative is working with another internet company to provide additional high-speed Internet through broadband over power lines (BPL).



**Boyd Huff, CEO**

to all residences and businesses served by Whitewater Valley REMC.

We are excited about this project and will keep all members informed as this important effort proceeds.

As always please give us a call at 1-800-529-5557, if you

have any questions or suggestions about our services, you can also contact me at bhuff@wwvremc.com, or by mail at the address at the bottom right.



Approximately 10% of our members were surveyed to measure interest in obtaining high-speed Internet access before moving forward with a BPL pilot program. The response was good and about 70% of those who completed the survey said they were extremely interested.

The pilot program is scheduled to start this fall at one of our centrally-located substations. The success of the program will be evaluated before total deployment

#### Congratulations to Dan Hollenberg of Modoc, winner of a \$50 bill credit

Members of the BPL survey group who submitted survey information were entered in a drawing for a \$50 bill credit. Congratulations to Mr. Hollenberg and thank you to all members who sent in their surveys. The information you provided was invaluable in our decision to begin this BPL pilot program.

#### Liberty Office Hours:

7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday  
Closed Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays

#### To Report an Outage or Emergency:

- Call 765.458.5171 or 1.800.529.5557  
24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Be ready to provide the following information:**
  - The name and account number under which your electric service is listed
  - Map location number
  - Your phone number—needed to call back or confirm power restoration
  - The type of problem you are experiencing —flickering lights, complete power outage, etc.

## Energy Assistance Cooling Program

Community Action of East Central Indiana, Inc. has announced that they will be distributing fans as part of the Cooling Program of the Energy Assistance Program. Fans will be available as of June 2nd in Fayette, Wayne and Union Counties. This Program will run until all fans have been distributed. For households where there is a senior, disabled member, or a child age 5 years old or under at the time of application, a one time amount of \$50 can be applied to the electric utility rather than receiving fans. Funds are extremely limited and will be available on a first come, first serve basis for this Program.

*Continued on page 2*

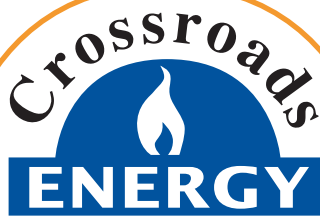
**We appreciate your call and will work promptly to assist you.**



**WHITEWATER VALLEY**  
RURAL ELECTRIC MEMBERSHIP CORPORATION  
101 Brownsville Avenue  
P.O. Box 349  
Liberty, IN 47353  
Phone: 765.458.5171  
1.800.529.5557  
E-mail: info@wwvremc.com

President & CEO - Boyd Huff  
Powerlines Editor - Sandy Cason

**For up-to-date information, visit us on the web at [www.wwvremc.com](http://www.wwvremc.com).**



## ATTENTION

### REMC members heating with propane\*

Why continue to pay those high prices from your current propane provider that changes every time they show up to deliver propane? This summer make the switch to Crossroads Energy, the benefits may surprise you.\*

- **Budget friendly:** You can pay for your propane at a fixed price per gallon. This fixed price offsets the volatility of propane costs experienced the past few years. We can also set up your propane account on a budget-billing program.
- **Metered service:** We read your propane meter when we read your electric meter, then bill you for the usage on one convenient bill.
- **Complete installation service:** We set up and install a 500 gallon LP gas tank, meter, regulator and copper (if needed).

Now taking applications for 2007 installations.\*\*

Call now to get a stable price locked in for the 2006-2007 heating season!

\*Minimum use for heating season required.  
\*\*Subject to credit eligibility.

## Home Cooling Tips: Do Attic Fans Really Help?

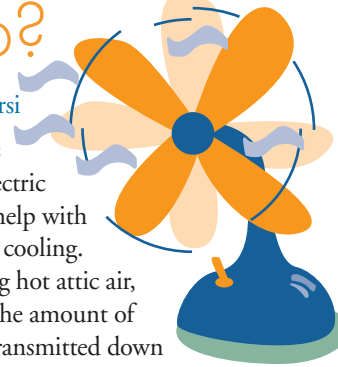
By Chris Dorsi

Many homes have large electric attic fans to help with summertime cooling. By exhausting hot attic air, they reduce the amount of heat that is transmitted down through the ceiling into your home. If you use air conditioning, this will tend to reduce the length of time that your air conditioner runs, and so reduce its operating cost. But in many houses, two other simple measures – insulation and ventilation – are more effective and cheaper in the long run than attic fans.

Attic insulation is still one the best ways to keep your home comfortable in both summer and winter. A thick blanket of attic insulation—12 to 16 inches in temperate areas, and 16 to 20 inches up north—will effectively stop attic heat from moving down into your home. In winter, attic insulation works by slowing heat flow out of your home and up into your attic.

“Attic insulation is still one the best ways to keep your home comfortable in both summer and winter”

Attic ventilation takes advantage of simple passive attic vents to remove heat from your attic in summer as well as removing moisture in winter. Attic vents should be distributed around your attic so heat or moisture don't accumulate in the corners, and they should be split with some high and some low in the attic to encourage natural circulation. If installed properly, they will remove almost as much heat from your attic as a powered fan.



Check your attic insulation and ventilation, or have a contractor do so, and add more if needed. These simple measures will last as long as your home and will improve your comfort year round. They'll also reduce the cost of running an air conditioner or attic fan. Best of all, these two energy-savers don't use a bit of electricity and they are perfectly quiet. [The hidden account number is 715300]

Chris Dorsi is co-author of Residential Energy - Cost Savings and Comfort for Existing Buildings. [www.srmi.biz](http://www.srmi.biz)

(Continued from cover)

### Energy Assistance Cooling Program

If you are interested in receiving assistance through this program, you will need to apply at one of the locations listed below:

1845 West Main Street  
Richmond, IN  
Monday - Friday, 8am – 5pm

2A N Market St.  
Liberty, IN  
Tuesdays, 8am – 12pm  
or on Thursdays, 1pm – 5pm

3039 N Thirty Court  
Connersville, IN  
Mondays, Wednesdays,  
and Fridays, 8am – 5pm

The program is open to households that took part in the winter Energy Assistance Program. For households that did not participate this past winter, eligibility will be based on the entire households income being at or below 150% of the HHS Poverty Guidelines shown below.

Any questions regarding the Energy Assistance Program should be directed to Community Action of East Central Indiana Inc., (765) 966-7733.

#### HHS Poverty Guidelines

Household Size	Income (per household)
1 person	\$14,700
2 persons	\$19,800
3 persons	\$24,900
4 persons	\$30,000
5 persons	\$35,100

More Persons: add \$5,100 for each additional household member

# Summer Safety Sense

It's hard to think of summer without also thinking of fun. Whitewater Valley REMC and the Electrical Safety Foundation are here to remind you that whether enjoying outdoor activities, hitting the road on vacation, or relaxing with a good book, take a little time to review summer safety with your family and friends.

Top electrical hazards during the summer are often related to storms. Lightning strikes, power outages and electrical hazards in the aftermath of storms are often the causes of death and injury during summer months. Let's all keep the following in mind:

## Water + Electricity = Danger

Water and electricity don't mix. To reduce electrical hazards, here's some safety advice for folks who love swimming and boating:

- Sailboats often have masts of 30 feet or more, which are dangerous when they come into contact with overhead power lines. Stay at least 10 feet away from overhead power lines.
- Use outlet covers on outdoor receptacles near swimming pools. Keep cords and electrical devices away from pools. Never handle electrical items when you are wet.
- Use a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) to help prevent electrocutions and electrical shock injuries. Portable GFCIs require no tools to install and are available at prices ranging from \$12 to \$30.
- Electrical devices such as circuit breakers, fuses, GFCIs, receptacles, plugs and switches can malfunction when water and silt get inside. Replace those that have been submerged.
- Do not allow power cord connections to become wet.
- Outdoors, dangers such as power lines in contact with water can pose electrical hazards.
- Indoors, submerged outlets or electrical cords may be energizing the water, a potential lethal trap.
- When using a wet-dry vacuum cleaner or a pressure washer, be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions to avoid electric shock.

## Safety During and After Storms

Take care when stepping into a flooded area, and be aware that submerged outlets or electrical cords may energize the water, posing a potential lethal trap.

Do not use electrical appliances that have been wet. Water can damage the motors in electrical appliances such as furnaces, freezers, refrigerators, washing machines, and dryers. Electrical parts can become grounded and pose an electric shock hazard, or overheat and cause a fire. A qualified service repair dealer should recondition electrical equipment that has been wet. Certain equipment will require complete replacement, while a trained professional can recondition other devices.

Downed power lines can carry an electric current strong enough to cause serious injury or death. Electricity wants to move from a high voltage zone to a low voltage zone—and it could do that through your body. The following tips can help you stay safe around downed lines:

- If you see a downed power line, move away from the line and anything touching it.
- The proper way to move away from the line is to shuffle away with small steps, keeping your feet together and on the ground at all times. This will minimize the potential for a strong electric shock.
- If you see someone who is in direct or indirect contact with a downed line, do not touch the person. You could become the next victim. Call 911 instead.
- Do not attempt to move a downed power line or anything in contact with the line by using another object such as a broom or stick. Even non-conductive materials like wood or cloth, if slightly wet, can conduct electricity and then electrocute you.
- Be careful not to put your feet near water where a downed power line is located.

## OUTAGES BY CAUSE

April - May - 2006

### For Your Information

Cause	# Outages	%
Lightning	41	22.40
Equipment	34	18.58
Trees	28	15.30
Animals	22	12.02
Member	21	11.48
Unknown	11	6.01
Corrosion	8	4.37
Construction	7	3.83
Vehicle Accidents	6	3.28
Contamination	3	1.64
Electrical Overload	2	1.09
<b>Total</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>100</b>

- Do not drive over downed lines.
- If you are in your car and it is in contact with the downed line, stay in your car. Honk your horn for help and tell others to stay away from your vehicle.
- If you must leave your car because it's on fire, jump out of the vehicle with both feet together and avoid contact with the live car and the ground at the same time. This way you avoid being the path of electricity from the car to the earth. Shuffle away from the car.

## Portable Generators

Take special care with portable electric generators, which can provide a good source of power, but if improperly installed or operated, can become deadly.

Do not connect generators directly to household wiring. Power from generators can backfeed along power lines and electrocute anyone coming in contact with them, including lineworkers making repairs. A qualified, licensed electrician should install your generator to ensure that it meets local electrical codes. ●

Source: Electrical Safety Foundation

# Home Cooling Tips: New Air Conditioner Standards Save Energy

By Chris Dorsi

The U.S. Department of Energy has recently enacted a new set of standards for air conditioners that will help reduce the cost of cooling. This upgrade is just the latest in a series of improvements to air conditioning equipment. Today's systems are up to 50 percent more efficient than the equipment available a generation ago.

The efficiency of central air conditioners is rated by the Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio (SEER). The higher the SEER number, the less electricity the equipment

will use to cool your home. Federal standards require manufacturers to provide equipment that meets a minimum SEER rating, and for many years that minimum was SEER 10. As of January 2006, the minimum rating is now SEER 13. Buyers of this new equipment will benefit from a 30 percent increase in efficiency, and they will see a corresponding decrease in their summer electric bill.

“...a total savings to consumers of approximately \$1 billion by 2020”

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, the change to SEER 13 will save 4.2 quadrillion BTUs of energy between 2006 and 2030. As a point of perspective, this is equivalent to the annual energy use of 26 million U.S. households, with a total savings to consumers of approximately \$1 billion by 2020.

The new SEER 13 equipment is more expensive to purchase, but studies show that the average U.S. family should recoup their investment within three and a half years. For more information about efficient air conditioners, go to the ENERGY STAR website:

[www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov).

Chris Dorsi is co-author of Residential Energy - Cost Savings and Comfort for Existing Buildings. [www.srmi.biz](http://www.srmi.biz) •



## Find the Hidden Account Number!

No one has found their hidden account number from the June Powerlines. Keep reading your *Powerlines* each month or browsing our website—the next hidden account number could be yours!

## July Due Dates

During July the due dates for payment of your electric bills are July 3, 10, 19, 26.

Remember, we recommend that you allow three to five business days for the mail to reach the payment processing center. That way, you'll never run the risk of being late.

## Payment Options

**US Mail:** Send your payment to:  
Whitewater Valley REMC  
P.O. Box 3199  
Martinsville, IN 46151-3168

**Internet:** Log-on at [www.wvremc.com](http://www.wvremc.com)

**Liberty Office:** In person or in the drop box

**Automatic Withdrawal:** Simply request a form and submit it to our office

**FCN or Franklin County National Bank:**

In person or in the drop box  
(Please bring your payment stub with you)

**Union County National Bank**

**Richmond Branch:** In person or in the drop box  
(Please bring your payment stub with you)

If you would like more information about payment options, call 765-458-5171 or 1-800-529-5557.

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