



POWERLINES

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION FOR THE MEMBERS OF WHITEWATER VALLEY REMC

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Strategic Initiatives Update



MARY JO THOMAS,
CEO

We are well into the last quarter of the year. This means inventory, budgets, capital credits (patronage) refunds, and a review of our strategic initiatives. Here are the strategic initiatives staff developed based on the planning session held with the WWVREMC Board of Directors in August 2020 and a progress report for each in 2022.

- **Continue promoting a Culture of Safety to be a leader in employee and public safety.**

WWVREMC held three safety training sessions for first responders in 2022. Employees also continued the safety demonstrations to students at local Ag Days and community events. Plans to offer the safety demonstrations in the classroom are being discussed with local schools so that everyone can learn how to be safe around electricity. This is possible because 100% of employees participate in the Commitment to Zero safety program.

- **Develop a detailed facilities plan to address current needs for safety, security, space, and storage.**

The facilities committee comprised of board members and employees continue to meet to keep the project moving forward. With both the land purchase finalized and the necessary demolition on the land completed, the project has moved into the budget process. Needs for the new facility to serve the membership are being analyzed and balanced with financial metrics and potential costs to the membership.

- **Develop a strategic approach to vegetation management to meet the cooperatives short and long-term goals.**

As I have previously reported, vegetation management is a considerable expense to our budget. We continue to investigate all options to keep the management and health of our distribution system and service to our members a top priority.

- **Develop technology initiatives that address staffing, utilization, communication, and training.**

This initiative allowed us to further define our goals and prioritize our staffing needs. More emphasis was put to GIS, and we also hired an intern who worked this past summer with our technology administrator. Our employees have logged over 1,900 hours of education and training this year and two employees working on continuing education earned their bachelor's degrees in their field of study.

- **Develop a detailed succession plan that addresses short-term, long-term, and role-appropriate strategies.**

We continue to promote job shadow options to employees wishing to gain knowledge in other departments or positions from their current duties. Cross-training is ongoing and is a valuable tool to fill gaps for those unexpected and unplanned worker needs. We also encourage employees to learn new skills and become more aware of opportunities that may open up within the cooperative as long-time employees look to retirement.

- **Assess and implement strategies to encourage electric vehicle adoption, including employee and member education, rate structures, and public charging.**

Our power supplier, Hoosier Energy, assists us with EV programs and provides the cooperative with a Chevy Bolt to drive a few weeks each year. The Chevy Bolt is at WWVREMC this month so you may see cooperative employees out and about in the EV.

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Deadline for Incentive Program Approaches

Bill Credit Winners

November Due Dates

The due dates for payment of electric bills are **November 19** and **26**.

The cooperative continues to offer EV Level 2 chargers to members at no cost. Data from the chargers will help WWVREMC better understand charging needs of EV owners and will help us in the future design of rates and the structure of the electric distribution system.

- **Develop fair and uniform policies for encouraging and accommodating broadband vendors to serve WWVREMC members.**

This initiative may have taken the most unexpected turn and used the most resources from the cooperative since my last update. Several broadband vendors have begun expansion of their services into the WWVREMC service territory. While this is good news for our members and anyone in the area looking for high-speed internet, it did require many employee hours to work out the processes and procedures necessary for fiber companies to attach their equipment to WWVREMC facilities.

The government relations staff at our statewide organization, legal representatives, and our engineering and operations staff worked together to develop new guidelines. These guidelines will protect the investment WWVREMC has made in its distribution facilities and make sure vendors wishing to build onto ours follow the guidelines for rate fairness and the safety of all.

It's almost the end of 2022 so what's next? The staff and board recently met for our biennial strategic planning session to review the initiatives set forth in 2020. During the day and a half meeting, we worked together to adjust some of our current initiatives while adding new goals to our list to work on over the next two-to-three-year period. We will move some of the current initiatives to standard operating procedures while others that are still being developed will remain in our strategic plan. This session format was a bit different than previous sessions and included more visioning of what our cooperative may look like ten years from now. And although instinctively we want to get to that place sooner rather than later, we will strategically move in that direction over time knowing that current events may shift or change those directions.

I will share new initiatives once we have those mapped out.

As always, I am thankful for this team of members, board members, and employees working together, shoulder to shoulder, for the good of our cooperative and community. Have a safe and happy Thanksgiving.

OFFICE CLOSINGS

Our office will be closed in November for the following holidays:



Friday,
Nov. 11 for
Veterans Day



Thursday and Friday,
Nov. 24 and 25 for
Thanksgiving

FALL SAFETY WORD SEARCH

Fall is finally here! The leaves are changing, the weather is cooler and the holidays are just around the corner. But Fall also brings greater risks of home fires and electrical hazards.

Read the safety tips below, then find and circle the **bolded** words in the puzzle.



Adults should always stay in the **kitchen** while food is **cooking**.

Smoke alarms should be tested monthly to ensure they're working properly.
Batteries should be replaced every year or right away if the alarm starts to chirp.

Candles should never be left burning when someone isn't in the room.

Keep flammable items away from the **stove**, **toaster** and other cooking **appliances**.

S	M	R	A	L	A	E	K	O	M	S	E	C	A	W
S	M	C	K	J	P	M	H	G	X	V	O	B	P	S
X	E	K	A	H	O	R	I	E	O	O	M	Z	P	C
R	B	I	X	T	F	O	A	T	K	H	C	U	L	N
P	O	Y	R	Y	U	G	S	I	T	G	X	M	I	K
K	E	G	K	E	L	L	N	L	V	F	H	K	A	C
T	I	W	U	D	T	G	R	I	C	D	S	H	N	H
S	W	T	D	Q	Q	T	M	E	K	Z	E	V	C	O
M	Q	Y	C	E	R	W	A	Z	X	S	L	K	E	Q
P	D	M	L	H	P	Z	X	B	E	W	D	N	S	Q
C	H	T	B	K	E	W	U	R	I	S	N	W	W	H
A	K	R	S	C	G	N	W	U	L	R	A	R	X	A
T	O	A	S	T	E	R	O	K	F	P	C	G	D	X
O	R	N	B	U	W	J	G	D	K	E	X	V	C	L
E	I	A	U	F	Q	Y	L	U	H	F	H	F	Z	D

Operation Round Up® Fall Membership Campaign Continues

Our annual Operation Round Up membership drive continues. Sign up now through the end of December and be entered for a chance to win prizes. Submit your pledge before December 31, 2022, to be eligible for prizes. Winners will be selected from all entries and announced on Facebook Live at the end of the campaign.

PARTICIPATION IS EASY Operation Round Up is a great way to help your community. If you are not a participant, simply sign-up, and WWVREMC will automatically 'round-up' your monthly electric bill to help organizations within the cooperative service territory. You may also elect to contribute a one-time donation of a specified amount or contribute a specified amount to the fund monthly. Since the program began in 2003, donations have resulted in over \$622,500 being awarded to organizations throughout our communities, showing how much our members care about making a difference. While Operation Round Up is a voluntary program, the more support received from our members, the more lives will be changed!

Complete the form below, checking the appropriate box and fill in the amount of your donation where applicable. Forms with checks can be mailed back to us at Whitewater Valley REMC, P.O. Box 349, Liberty, IN 47353. New participants can also email their form to info@wwvremc.com or simply call us to sign up.

Yes! I want to help our community. Sign me up for Operation Round-Up®

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Account Number: _____

- ☐ New participant, round-up my monthly bill.
- ☐ In addition to my round up, I want to contribute \$_____ each month to Operation Round Up®.
(fill in the additional dollar amount to be added to monthly electric bill)
- ☐ I want to make a one-time contribution. My check is enclosed.



Pictured above is Wende Shipley, operations and engineering coordinator, posing with St. Michael School Librarian, Alicia Sacksteder, and students.

GRANT RECIPIENT HIGHLIGHT ST. MICHAEL SCHOOL

St. Michael School was recently awarded a grant of \$750.00 from the Whitewater Valley REMC Community Trust, Inc. The grant will assist in providing funds to install posts and fabric to create shade for their playground. The hidden account # is 1538000.



Each month we hide an account number in the Powerlines. Did you find it?

NO SEPTEMBER WINNER

Keep reading your Powerlines each month because the next hidden account number could be yours!



DEADLINE FOR INCENTIVE PROGRAM APPROACHES

The 2022 residential rebate program will end on December 31, 2022.

Rebates for equipment installed between January 1, 2022, and December 31, 2022, are available.

Members should submit their requests for rebates on equipment that qualifies under the WWVREMC 2022 Incentive Program no later than December 28, 2022, to ensure reimbursement. Members can submit two rebates per calendar year.

We plan to offer another year of incentives for 2023. Please be on the lookout for future publications of the newsletter and our website.

Payment Options

US Mail

Whitewater Valley REMC, P.O. Box 350
Liberty, IN 47353

SmartHub

Log-on at wwwremc.com.

Pay-by-Phone

Call 844-827-4759. Set up your PIN. Follow prompts.

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. Bring payment stub.

VanillaDirect

Visit vanilladirect.com for payment locations and details.



For more information about payment options, please call us:

765-458-5171 or 1-800-529-5557

New Website Coming Soon!

WWVREMC is developing a new website, scheduled to launch in December 2022! We'll share more details over the coming weeks.

Bill Credit Winners

Our monthly drawing for five \$20 bill credits from all voting members of the 2022 annual meeting continues. Here are the winners.

NOVEMBER

Jeannine Winters, Greens Fork

Robert L. House, Richmond

Charles Wise Jr., Richmond

Charles Bane, Centerville

Dennis Centers, Milton

Helpful Information

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 1-800-776-0493, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Login to your SmartHub account and report your outage.

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.



101 Brownsville Avenue, P.O. Box 349, Liberty, IN 47353

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