



Electric rates to increase

At PEC, we realize a rate increase is never welcome news. No one wants to pay more than they have to for electric service, and PEC does not want to charge more than necessary. Being able to keep rates low has always been a source of pride for our organization. But beginning with meters read on and after April 1, 2008, our members will see an increase in their electric bills.

The Tennessee Valley Authority board approved a \$500 million rate adjustment to help fund new power generation and energy-efficiency initiatives needed to meet the growing power demand in the Tennessee Valley and to recover increases in rising fuel and purchased power costs. PEC will also implement a small increase of less than 1 percent to offset higher operating costs.

This rate adjustment will affect everyone in the seven-state area served by TVA. All across America, electric utilities are feeling the economic pressure caused by increased fuel costs.

So what effect will this increase have on you as a customer of PEC? An average residential bill with a usage of 1,300 kilowatt-hours (kwh) will increase approximately \$9 per month.

Even with this increase, TVA and PEC electric rates are still well below the national average of 10.70 cents per kwh.

TVA met three all-time winter records for electricity consumption in the Valley since Jan. 1. Last summer,



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TVA met 13 all-time summer records for power demand during a record-breaking August heat wave. The extreme drought conditions across the Tennessee Valley in 2007 reduced the lowest-priced power, hydroelectricity, by two-thirds. When power demand is at its peak, TVA often pays four or five times above normal costs for additional

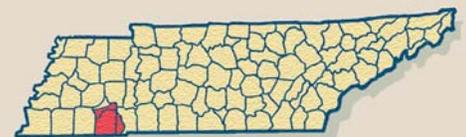
power from other energy suppliers. TVA generates the power PEC distributes and sends the cooperative a bill each month for all its members' use, just as PEC sends its members a monthly bill. The largest expenditure we have at PEC is for TVA electricity purchased for our residential, commercial and industrial customers.

PEC members can take steps to help save energy and money on their power bills by completing an online energy audit at energyright.com or by calling the office and requesting the audit be mailed to them. In addition, members who complete the audit will receive a free energy-efficiency kit to help them get started saving.

Our members can rest assured that the PEC board of directors and employees will continue to make every effort to provide electricity at the lowest possible cost, because we work for you.

Pickwick Electric Cooperative

Serving members in all of McNairy County and portions of Chester, Hardeman and Hardin counties in Tennessee and Alcorn and Tishomingo counties in Mississippi



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These five pages contain local

news and information

for members of Pickwick

Electric Cooperative.



Communicating Leadership in America

Young leaders meet in Pigeon Forge

Joseph and Ashley Sparks of Bethel Springs participated in the Young Leaders Conference Feb. 1-2 at the MainStay Suites in Pigeon Forge. They joined more than 250 others for the annual conference designed to bring young people together and develop leadership so they can go back to their communities and educate others on the importance of cooperatives and agricultural issues.

“This conference is all about education, and we hope participants learn how cooperatives impact our daily lives,” said Greg Anderson, general manager of Bledsoe Telephone Cooperative and president of the Tennessee Council of Cooperatives (TCC). “We often take for granted larger, well-known cooperatives such as Land O’ Lakes and Ocean Spray, but the prosperity we know today is due to cooperatives formed years ago.”

TCC, which co-sponsors the conference with the Tennessee Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers, is comprised of a variety of cooperatives across the state, including dairy cooperatives, farm credit banks, farm supply cooperatives, telephone and electric cooperatives, tobacco cooperatives and the Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation (TFBF).

Young Farmers and Ranchers is an organization within the TFBF for men and women ages 18 to 35 with an interest in agriculture. Its purpose is to develop agricultural leaders and address issues facing agriculture.

“We hope attendees walk away from the Young Leaders Conference with knowledge of current agricultural issues that have an impact on them,” said Ben Moore, a row-crop and livestock farmer from Weakley County who serves as chairman of the Young Farmers and Ranchers. “Through this conference, participants gain leadership experience they can utilize in their counties, churches or agricultural or civic organizations to become better leaders for their communities and state.”



Joseph and Ashley Sparks attended the 2008 Young Leaders Conference in Pigeon Forge.

Participants are selected and sponsored by TCC members or TFBF’s Young Farmers and Ranchers. Joseph and Ashley Sparks were sponsored by Pickwick Electric Cooperative.

The conference gave the Sparkses the opportunity to attend sessions and workshops addressing areas of interest to young farmers and cooperative members. Topics included the Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program, cooperative education, a Tennessee legislative update and Young Farmers and

Ranchers contest information.

During the first general session, attendees played a “Jeopardy”-style game with subjects such as TFBF, state government, cooperatives and agricultural issues. University of Tennessee President John Peterson spoke on the future of energy production, and Stefphanie Gambrell, American Farm Bureau Federation domestic policy economist, provided information about the U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Bill and outlined its benefits to farmers.

U.S. Rep. David Davis of Johnson City also addressed the group, stressing the importance of the conference’s theme, “Communicating Leadership in America.”

“We need to stay involved, stand up and be heard and take part in government,” said Davis.

Attendees also had the opportunity to tour the Apple Barn and Old Mill in Pigeon Forge and browse through an accompanying trade show that offered more information about the sponsoring organizations.

The ultimate purpose of the conference was summed up by Frank Jennings, president of Middle Tennessee Electric Membership Corporation.

“We continue to strive to carry out our cooperative philosophy,” he said. “And that is to educate our people.”



Severe weather tips

The warm spring air and moderating temperatures are a welcome relief from the cold winds of winter. But, as the thermometer begins to rise, it brings deadly thunderstorms and, when conditions are right, tornadoes.

When disasters such as tornadoes, flooding or damaging thunderstorms strike, McNairy County is set to implement its emergency response plan.

Rudy Moore is McNairy County's Emergency Management director, and his job is to coordinate the plans and operations of the various components of the emergency management system. These components consist of the civil defense, emergency medical service, fire and police, electric and other utilities, volunteers and other groups that work with the management of emergencies and disasters. Moore works with organizations to prepare each for disasters and helps coordinate response and recovery.

Moore offers the following precautions as protection against lightning and thunderstorms:

- Listen to a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather radio, commercial radio or television for the latest weather forecasts.
- Check on the elderly, handicapped or those who may have trouble taking shelter.
- If you can hear thunder, you are close enough to the storm to be struck by lightning; seek shelter immediately.
- Move to a sturdy building or car. Do not take shelter in small sheds, under isolated trees or in convertible automobiles.
- If lightning is occurring and a sturdy shelter is not available, get inside a hard-top automobile and keep the windows closed.
- Power lines and metal pipes can conduct electricity. Unplug appliances. Avoid using the telephone or any electrical appliances.
- Report downed power lines to your electric cooperative immediately. Do not go near downed power lines or attempt to remove anything in contact with them.
- Avoid taking a bath or shower during a storm.



Rudy Moore
McNairy County Emergency
Management Director

- Turn off the air conditioner or heat pump. Power surges from lightning can damage compressors.

Moore says that should you be caught out in a storm and no shelter is nearby, use these tips:

- Go to a low-lying spot away from trees, poles and metal objects. Make sure the place you pick is not subject to flooding.
- If you are in the woods, take shelter under shorter trees.
- If you feel your skin tingle or your hair stand on end, squat low to the ground on the balls of your feet. Place your hands on your knees with your head between them.
- Make yourself the smallest target possible and minimize your contact with the ground.
- If you are boating or swimming, get to land and find shelter immediately.

Moore suggests that every family be prepared for all hazards that could affect their area. They can do this by developing a "family disaster plan" that includes a disaster supply kit. This kit should include a three-day supply of water (one gallon per person per day) and nonperishable foods; one change of clothing and footwear per person; one blanket or sleeping bag per person; a first-aid kit, including prescription medicines; emergency tools, including a battery-powered weather radio and a portable radio, flashlight and plenty of extra batteries; an extra set of car keys and a credit card or cash; sanitation items including disinfectant, toilet paper, plastic garbage bags and a plastic bucket with a tight lid; and special items for infant, elderly or disabled family members. You should also keep any important documents in a waterproof container.

If a member of your family requires life-support equipment such as a respirator, make sure your utility knows about these needs and have a backup source of power ready if the power does go out. Keep your backup generator in good condition and test it periodically.

Remember, the best defense against storms is to learn all you can about them, stay abreast of the latest weather bulletins and be prepared to move to safety should one develop.



Pickwick Electric Cooperative pays its share of taxes

Like most property owners in Tennessee, Pickwick Electric Cooperative also pays taxes. Since PEC provides electric service to counties and towns located within its service area, the cooperative is required to pay ad valorem taxes in each location.

Providing dependable electric service requires large investments in materials and equipment. Although the property on which cooperative poles are located belongs to our members, we do own the poles, wires, transformers and other related equipment. These are what our taxes are based on.

Last year the cooperative paid \$568,955.94 in taxes. These local taxes are based on assessments by the Public Service Commission and are paid to McNairy, Chester, Hardeman and Hardin counties and to the towns of Adamsville, Bethel Springs and Selmer.

Below is the amount of ad valorem taxes paid to each county and town:



Steve King, right, presents a check in the amount of \$402,286 to Stanley Mitchell, McNairy County trustee, for PEC's county ad valorem taxes. PEC is the largest taxpayer in the county.

Chester County.....	\$9,330.00
Hardeman County.....	205.00
Hardin County.....	92,582.00
McNairy County.....	402,286.00
Adamsville.....	9,356.09
Bethel Springs.....	1,300.85
Selmer.....	53,896.00
Total Taxes Paid.....	\$568,955.94

Thinking of installing a pool? Think electrical safety

Spring is prime time for installing swimming pools. So if you're considering adding a pool this year, make sure you choose your site carefully. Make sure there aren't any power lines located overhead or underground. When installing a pool, consider these key points:

- Make sure overhead electrical lines do not pass over the pool. In fact, it's best to keep your pool at least 25 feet away from lines in all directions.
- Allow at least 18 feet of clearance between overhead power lines and a diving



board, deck, slide, or observation area.

- Never build an in-ground pool or set up an above-ground pool over underground electrical cables. Pools and pool decking should be installed at least 5 feet away from all underground utility lines.
- Except for specially designed lighting fixtures, don't put electrical fixtures or receptacles within 5 feet of a pool. Any electrical wiring that is within 20 feet of a swimming pool should have protection from a ground fault circuit interrupter.



We're talking electricity

Louie the Lightning Bug safety program

Each year, elementary school students throughout Pickwick Electric Cooperative's service area are taught how to be safe around electricity through the Louie the Lightning Bug program as well as a high-voltage demonstration. Kevin Roy, PEC's electrification advisor, was this year's instructor.

Here are some of the items Roy discussed in the safety programs:

- Before climbing a tree, check for power lines. Never climb a tree if power lines are nearby or run through it. When pruning trees, watch where you place your ladder. If in doubt whether you can trim your tree safely, call PEC.
- Before flying kites or model airplanes, check to see where the power lines are. Never try to remove kites from power lines. Do not use metallic string or anything metallic when constructing your kite. Always fly kites in clear weather, in open fields, away from power lines.
- Antennas and power lines don't mix. Choose a location where assembly, carrying and installation can be done safely. Make sure your antenna is secure and located on the side of the house where it will not fall on a power line. If your antenna is in a dangerous location, PEC will remove it at no charge.
- If you are on the scene where someone has received an electric shock, call 911 immediately. Never touch someone while they are being shocked. You will simply get shocked as well.
- There are many areas inside the home that could potentially pose danger. Never use an electric appliance in areas that are damp or wet such as swimming pools, bathrooms and kitchens. Unplug small kitchen appliances when they are not in use. Don't run extension cords under rugs or carpeting and never use extension cords that are frayed or worn. Babies and young children don't understand the danger of tampering with electric sockets. Use snap-in plastic covers when outlets are not in use.

At the end of the programs, question-and-answer sessions followed, and all students received a Louie the Lightning Bug coloring book with stickers.

If your school or club is interested in a safety program, call Kevin Roy at 646-3825, Beverly Lambert at 646-3786 or Bobby Barnes at 646-3764.



Kevin Roy, PEC electrification advisor, explains some safety rules to Selmer Elementary School third-graders.



Selmer Elementary students participate in a question-and-answer session.



Selmer Elementary students try on electrical safety gloves used by PEC line crews.