

# REA Energy Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives  
serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey



Gary Grindle  
President & CEO

**REA Energy Cooperative, Inc.**  
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**Ebensburg District Office**  
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Ebensburg, PA 15931  
814-472-8570

Website: [www.reaenergy.com](http://www.reaenergy.com)  
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#### Staff

##### Barry Baker

Indiana Operations Manager

##### Chad Carrick

Chief Operating Officer

##### Shane Cribbs

Network & Systems Manager

##### Dave Daugherty

Safety Supervisor

##### Jeff Dishong

Ebensburg Operations Supervisor

##### Chris Masterson

Reliability Supervisor

##### Patrick McAndrew

Manager of Engineering

##### Brendan Short

Right-of-Way/Forestry Supervisor

##### Chris Weller

Load Management Supervisor

#### Outages & Emergencies

1-800-332-7273

724-463-7273

#### Office Hours

Indiana Office: 7 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Ebensburg Office:

7 - 11 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Monday - Friday

Stacy Patterson, CCC  
Local Pages Editor

## Guest Column



# Beware of phone and online scams

By Stacy Patterson, CCC, *Communications Coordinator*

**RECENTLY** some REA Energy members received phone calls from a false number portraying itself as if the call was coming from the cooperative.

The callers presented themselves as REA Energy employees to the unsuspecting members after they were led to believe they were in danger of having their power disconnected. The phone number that came up on Caller ID was 1-800-472-1559.

While the cooperative does make calls to a customer if their account is past due, the Caller ID will appear as 724-349-4800. When a member calls in to the cooperative, a member services representative will identify themselves by their first name and may ask for the last four digits of the caller's Social Security number, account number or the service's address for verification.

According to a recent survey of adults ages 40 and older, 40 percent of people do not recognize the warning signs of a financial scam.


Scams work when people forget an important axiom: What seems too good to be true almost always is. Three of the most common scams include:

- ▶ **Online "phishing."** An email you receive from what looks like a known, trustworthy website asks you to respond with confidential information such as a credit card number, banking number, personal identification number (PIN) or Social Security number. Clicking links in the email can also install malware, or malicious software, on your computer.
- ▶ **Phone or in-person solicitations.** Callers or visitors may make attractive

offers that guarantee you will receive large amounts of money — after you provide sensitive information or pay an up-front fee. Others pose as government officials demanding payments (sometimes with false Caller IDs).

- ▶ **Investment offers.** Promises of unusually high investment returns with little to no risk should always raise a red flag.

How can you protect yourself? Be diligent in keeping personal and financial information private, and maintain a sense of skepticism when conducting business with new contacts. Here are a few guidelines to keep in mind:

- ▶ **Tread carefully online.** Never send personal information electronically unless you're making a purchase from a website you trust or opening a secure online account with an institution you've chosen to contact.
  - ▶ **Establish who you're dealing with.** Before sharing personal information or making a payment, get a salesperson's name, company name, physical address (not a P.O. Box), and phone number.
  - ▶ **Be cautious about certain methods of payment.** Wiring money is equivalent to sending cash — and it's often untraceable. Likewise, revealing that a scammer's check is bad can take weeks. Make purchases with a credit card that allows you to dispute fraudulent charges.
- For more tips and information on financial fraud, visit: [ftc.gov](http://ftc.gov) (FTC help line: 877-FTC-HELP); [finra.org](http://finra.org) (investment fraud); or [ncoa.org](http://ncoa.org) (scams targeting seniors). 

# Springing into retirement

By Stacy Patterson, CCC,  
Communications Coordinator

**JANUARY 15, 2016.** Most people thought of it as just another day. However, for one REA Energy employee, it was the end of her career at the cooperative and the beginning of the next chapter of her life.

Isabel Stile retired from REA Energy after nearly 18 years of service. She began her duties on April 6, 1998,. During her tenure at REA Energy she has worked as a telephone operator and at the front counter at the Indiana Office, which is the position she held at retirement.

Isabel states that what she enjoyed most about her employment at REA was working with her co-workers. She also enjoyed interacting with the members and filing.

When asked what she will miss about her job, she stated that it would be the love and care that others showed to her and helping out when needed. One thing she won't miss is getting up at 5 a.m. and traveling on icy roads to come to work.



**ALL SMILES:** Isabel Stile, member services representative, is looking forward to spending more time with her family as she enjoys her retirement after 17 years of service to REA Energy.

In her retirement years, Isabel is looking forward to spending more time with her children and grandchildren, and doing a lot of hunting and fishing.

Best wishes in your retirement years, Isabel, and thank you for all of your dedicated years of service from the entire REA Energy family. 🌟

## REA's safety internship program

Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) student Ken Williams started in the position of safety intern on Jan. 4.

Some of his duties will include: evaluating the hazard communication standard, developing an all-inclusive company inspection program and participating in various safety-related activities.

Ken is a senior at IUP majoring in environmental, health and safety science.

In his spare time, Ken enjoys Pittsburgh sports, golfing, working on engines and fitness.



**INTERNSHIP PROGRAM:** REA Energy Safety Intern Ken Williams begins work at REA Energy Cooperative.

## Statement of non-discrimination

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), or at any USDA office, or call 866-632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax to 202-690-7442 or email at [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

# Be prepared for winter storms

**WHEN** winter temperatures drop and storms hit, it can be challenging to stay safe and warm. Winter storm severity varies depending on where you live, but nearly all Americans are affected by extreme winter storms at some point. REA Energy cares about your safety, and we want you to be prepared.

Heavy snow and ice can lead to downed power lines, leaving co-op members without power. During extremely low temperatures, this can be dangerous. During a power outage, our crews will continue to work as quickly and safely as possible to restore power, but there are a few things you can do to prepare yourself.

► **Stay warm** — Plan to use a safe alternate heating source, such as a fireplace or wood-burning stove during a power outage. These are great options to keep you and your loved ones warm, but exercise caution when using them, and never leave the heating source unattended. If you are using gasoline-, propane- or natural

gas-burning devices to stay warm, never use them indoors. Remember that fuel- and wood-burning sources of heat should always be properly ventilated. Always read the manufacturer's directions before using.

► **Stay fed** — The Centers for Disease Control recommends having several days' supply of food that does not need to be cooked. Crackers, cereal, canned goods and bread are good options. Five gallons of water per person should also be available in the event of an extended power outage.

► **Stay safe** — When an outage occurs, it usually means power lines are down. It is best not to travel during winter storms, but if you must, take a survival kit along, and do not travel alone. If you encounter downed lines, always assume they are live. Stay as far away from the downed lines as possible, and report the situation to our dispatchers by calling 800-332-7273 if possible.

Winter weather can be unpredictable and dangerous, and planning ahead can



Source: Cooperative.com

often be the difference between life and death. REA Energy Cooperative, Inc. is ready for what Mother Nature has in store, and we want you to be ready, too. For more winter safety tips, visit [www.ready.gov/winter-weather](http://www.ready.gov/winter-weather). 🚨

## ID theft monitoring, resolution starting at just \$5/month with Co-op Connections

Thieves want to steal your identity. Don't let them get away with it. ID Sanctuary provides the proactive tools and recovery assistance you need to quickly respond to an identity or fraud crisis.

With ID Sanctuary, you can rely on immediate, personalized attention from a fraud specialist whenever you need it. Fraud specialists are armed with the knowledge to help reduce the risk of identity theft and provide unlimited resolution assistance should you fall victim – giving you emotional support and peace of mind.

Protect your identity for just \$5/month for an individual or \$8/month for the whole family. Visit [www.connections.coop](http://www.connections.coop) to sign up.

This ID theft monitoring and resolution benefit provides you the proactive tools and recovery assistance needed to quickly respond to an identity or fraud crisis. Benefit from essential identity theft protection and resolution services, educational tips and resources, plus a fraud and credit-monitoring bundle including your credit score and a credit report.

REA Energy now offers the option to have outage information and updates sent to your cellular device via text message. To sign up and receive the texts, you must have provided your cell number to the cooperative. If you would like to add your cell number to your account, please call 724-349-4800 or 800-211-5667. If you already have your cell listed on your account, visit [www.reaenergy.com](http://www.reaenergy.com) and follow the link or text REA to 85700.

**Don't forget to stop by REA Energy's booth at the Indiana-Armstrong Builders Association Home Show at the S & T Bank Arena March 18-20. Members who visit the booth will receive a free gift.**



**REA Energy will be closed Friday, March 25, 2016, in observance of Good Friday**



## 2015 REA Energy Services winner



Garry Lockard of Cherry Tree was chosen as the winner in REA Energy Services 2015 contest. Customers whose REA Energy Services job or product was \$500 or more were entered into a drawing for a prize valued up to \$500. Shown in the photo are, from left: Chad Carrick, chief operating officer, Garry Lockard, and Gary Grindle, president & CEO. Congratulations, Garry, and thank you for choosing REA Energy Services.

In 2016, those whose REA Energy Services product or service is \$500 or more will be entered to win a prize. **Stop by REA Energy Service's booth at the Indiana-Armstrong Builders Association Home Show in the S & T Bank Arena March 18-20 to learn more about all of the products and services we offer.**



REA Energy Services offers the following products and services:

Electrical Contracting • Heating and Air Conditioning

Geothermal Heat Pumps • Backup Generators

Home Heat Loss Estimates • Portable Generators

Tree Trimming and Removal • Water Heater Service Program

### 2016 area meetings

In 2016, there will be area meetings held in March for Directorate Districts 3 and 4. Members residing in the districts listed above can expect to receive their invitation in the mail in March.

**District 3** includes the following townships in Indiana County: Blacklick, Brush Valley, Buffington, Center and Young.

**District 4** includes the following townships in Cambria County: Cambria, Jackson and Munster. It also includes East Wheatfield and West Wheatfield townships in Indiana County.

If you live in any of the townships mentioned above, you may receive an invitation in the mail soon.

### Right-of-way management/facility construction news

REA Energy contractors will be completing tree-trimming work in the following areas during February:

- ▶ Contractor crews from Asplundh Tree Expert Co. will be trimming the rights-of-way of the Brown's Crossroads Metering Point, in addition to emergency maintenance areas.

Notification of work will be made using our automated phone system to members in the areas affected.

Contractors will perform all right-of-way work per REA Energy specifications. If you have any questions, call 724-349-4800, or you can view the specifications online at: [www.reaenergy.com](http://www.reaenergy.com). All crews will carry cards and have magnets on their vehicles identifying them as REA Energy contractors.

## Your Board of Directors



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