

# REA Energy Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives  
serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey



Gary Grindle  
President & CEO

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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

##### Renee Spalla

Supervisor of Consumer Services

##### 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



## New software, new possibilities

By Chad Carrick, Chief Operating Officer

IN RECENT editions of *Penn Lines*, REA Energy announced that consumers will notice changes to the look and format of their electric bills beginning in late July. It has been a long time since we changed our bill format. This change in our bill format is necessary to accommodate the change to a new software system.

It has been many years since we switched our software or operating system. Our current system is upward of 30 years old and is showing its age, especially when it comes to offering our consumers benefits such as online payments or mobile apps.

### An Enterprise System

If you are wondering what an “Enterprise System” (ES) is — I can tell you it has nothing to do with Star Trek. An ES is a fully integrated software system that replaces a lot of our older systems that don’t work well with each other. What this means for REA is only needing to enter information once and having that information updated throughout the system instantaneously. Employees currently have to enter information several times, which can result in inefficiencies and data entry errors.

The ES system we chose is from a cooperative called Southeast Data Cooperative (SEDC). We specifically chose SEDC because this vendor is a cooperative with over 250 cooperative members. SEDC understands the needs of REA Energy, but more importantly the needs of our members.

### New offerings

For years our consumers have asked for the ability to pay their bills electronically or online. Implementing SEDC will allow us to soon offer e-bill and mobile app bill payments. These offerings will not be mandatory, but they will offer a convenient way for consumers to pay their bills while helping the environment by reducing paper.

Additionally, consumers will soon be able to manage their account information themselves through a web portal. For example, if a member wants to add or change a phone number, he/she can just log into his/her account and update the information. Another way members can manage their accounts is by accessing the electric consumption history at their house or business.

### Conversion status

By the time you read this article, REA will have already implemented a new accounting and finance system, and will be starting the new billing system. After we are confident the new billing system is accurate, we will begin offering the online and mobile app to our consumers.

We thank you in advance for your patience during this conversion, and we are working to make the transition as smooth as possible. If you notice any inaccuracies or have any questions in regard to your new bill, call the office at 724-349-4800 or 800-211-5667. If you would like to learn more about SEDC, visit [www.sedata.com](http://www.sedata.com). 

## Do we have your current contact information for outage purposes?

SUMMER storms can cause power outages. These storms can contain lightning with the potential to knock out electrical power. REA Energy offers different options for members to report a loss of power to your residence. In order to ensure accurate reporting of your outage, there are several steps to follow:

- ▶ Call REA Energy's outage reporting system at 724-463-7273 or 800-332-7273 from a working telephone number. Our outage reporting system recognizes the first two contact numbers listed with your account. **If you have recently changed your telephone number or want to change your contact numbers, please contact the cooperative.**
  - ▶ There is an option to leave a message if you are unable to call from either of the two contact numbers we have on file. After leaving a message, if you do not receive a call back from an REA representative within 15 minutes, please call the outage telephone number again. Please note that when the cooperative calls back, the caller ID may show up as "Unknown."
  - ▶ If your power is restored and goes back off again, please call and report an outage again. We may think the problem was fixed the first time and not be aware that you have another loss of power.
  - ▶ Even if you notice your neighbors do not have power, please call in and report your outage. The more members who call in their outage, the better our Outage Management System (OMS) predicts the location of outage problems. This enables us to get our crews to the location more accurately to restore power faster.
- REA Energy now offers the option to have outage information and updates sent to your cellular device via text message (*message and data rates may apply*). To sign up and receive the texts you must have provided your cell number to the cooperative. If you

would like to provide the cooperative with your cell number and join the program, please call 724-349-4800 or 800-211-5667. If we already have your cellular number on file, you can visit REA Energy's website to sign up.

In the event of larger outages, updates will be posted on the cooperative's Facebook page. To join, visit [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com), search for REA Energy Cooperative, Inc. and "Like" the page. **\*\*Please note that REA Energy's Facebook page is not monitored 24 hours a day. Please DO NOT report a power outage via Facebook.\*\*** Use one of the other options listed above.

### How power is restored

While restoration of power can be a complicated process, REA has a plan to turn the lights back on in a quick and efficient manner.

There is a certain order that must be followed when restoring electric power. Electricity comes from the substation, and then the first line feeds into the second, the second into the third and so forth until the end of the line is reached. When performing repairs, the same order must be followed. It would be worthless to repair a service line to a house if the distribution lines were not working yet.

Transmission lines (see No. 1 in chart at right) rarely fail, but in the event they do, they must be repaired first before other parts of the system can operate

Repairing problems at a substation (2) is REA's top priority. Sometimes power is lost to the substations supplied by transmission lines. If the lines are the co-op's property, then we can fix them; if not, then we have to wait until another utility company repairs them. The substations are readied for power before the transmission line is energized.

Next on the repair list are three-phase main distribution lines (3). They are the main "artery" in transmitting

power. The power has to go through these to reach consumers.

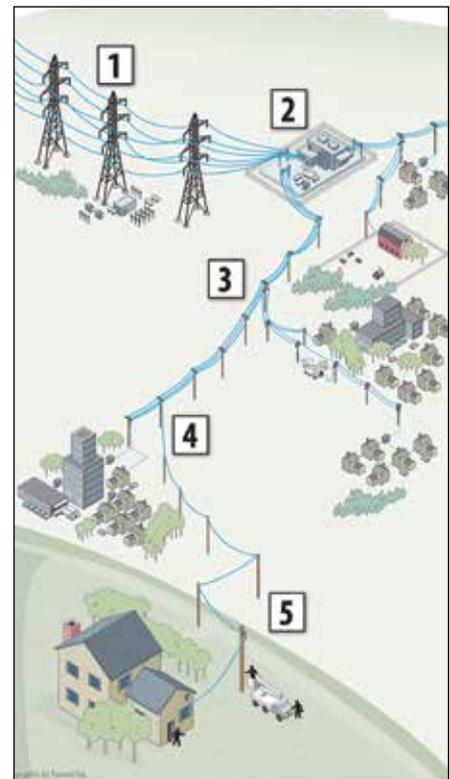
In an outage, some members will receive power when the substation or three-phase lines are re-energized. Sometimes, however, the damage is more extensive and major work will need to be done to a single-phase distribution (4) or tap lines (5).

A tap line comes off the main line. It may feed a single home or many homes. Tap lines with the most consumers on them will be repaired first.

Individual services will be repaired last.

Sometimes a tree or branch may rip wires from the home, and the homeowner will need to contact an electrician to re-establish a safe wiring connection. REA Energy Services can perform this work.

As the restoration process continues, REA Energy appreciates your patience as an affected consumer during an outage. REA Energy recognizes the inconvenience experienced by all affected members. REA Energy, with its dedicated employees, works 24 hours a day to restore and maintain power to all consumers. ☀



## New look to your bill coming

Within the next couple of months, your monthly electric bill will look a little different. Even though your bill format is changing some, your rates have stayed the same.

1. All account numbers will now have a three-digit number at the end of it. Example: 1-23456-20-001. Members with multiple accounts will now have one primary account number with sequential three-digit numbers at the end. Example: 1-23456-20-001 and 1-23456-20-002.
2. Your account summary shows the charges for the current month, along with previous charges and payments. Sales taxes and outside yard light charges are also shown if applicable. Your bill is shown based on the net amount, but by paying early, you can take advantage of the discount rate, which is shown at the bottom of the bill. In this section, it will show the amount for Operation Round-Up if you are signed up to have it automatically deducted.
3. You will now be able to pay your bill by credit card. We accept MasterCard, VISA and Discover.
4. Your bill will now include the address where your service is located, in addition to your mailing address. If either address is different than what we have printed on the bill, there is an area on the back of the bill to make changes.
5. Your bill will include a graph of electric use. The energy bar graph in this section displays up to 12 months of use history.
6. In addition to being able to pay by cash, check, money order and ACH draft, members will now have the option to pay by auto credit card draft, E-Check and online.
7. The payment portion of your bill will still include your meter and account numbers; discount, net and penalty rates all included. There is now a line for you to include a donation to Operation Round-Up if you choose.

### Thank you!

We will be keeping you updated with any changes through *Penn Lines* and our website, [www.reaenergy.com](http://www.reaenergy.com). Thank you for your patience and understanding through this new and exciting process. If you have any questions, feel free to call the office at 724-349-4800 or 800-211-5667 or email us at [reaenergy@reaenergy.com](mailto:reaenergy@reaenergy.com). ☀

## Help save money by doing the 'Electric Shift'

This summer, we are asking members to be mindful of their use of electricity by shifting electric consumption to the morning or later evening hours. By shifting your electric consumption to the morning or evening, you can help to keep wholesale power costs as low as possible, especially during the hottest days of summer.

### Doing the 'Electric Shift' is simple!

During the hot and humid weekdays, shift your electric consumption to before 1 p.m. and after 6 p.m. by doing these simple steps:

- ▶ Set your air conditioners at 78 degrees or use fans instead.
- ▶ Close your curtains and blinds to keep things cooler inside your home.
- ▶ Operate washers, dryers, dishwashers, stoves, and other major appliances in the early morning or evening, but not during the middle of the day.
- ▶ Limit the number of times you open your refrigerator and freezer, as well as your exterior doors.
- ▶ Instead of using your oven, fire up the grill or use your microwave.
- ▶ Turn off non-essential lights and appliances, such as DVD and VCR players.
- ▶ Run pool pumps at night.
- ▶ Use energy-efficient lightbulbs, such as compact florescent or LED lights.

By working together, we can help keep power costs and consumer retail prices low now and into the future. So remember to do the "Electric Shift"

during the hot days of summer. Another way you can help is by joining our load management water heater, dual fuel and ETS heater programs. Call today to join at 724-349-4800.



## REA's safety internship program

Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) student William Jarvie started in the position of safety intern on May 9.

Some of his duties will include assisting in reviewing and improving of safety policies and procedures such as hazard communications, hearing conservation, fire protection and loss control.

William is a senior at IUP majoring in safety science. He lives in Penn Run. His interests include hiking, working out and playing video games.

# Important annual meeting news!

The 2016 annual meeting will be held at the Kovalchick Convention Complex located at 711 Pratt Drive, Indiana, Pa., on Thursday, Sept. 29, 2016. Come and learn more about your cooperative! All members who attend the meeting will receive a gift and will be eligible for door prizes. Doors open at 4:30 p.m., and entertainment begins at 5 p.m., followed by the business meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Please keep this annual meeting information in mind on Sept. 29:

- NO voting for directors will be held at the meeting.
- Only members residing in Districts 3 and 4 will receive election information for their district.
- Attendance gifts and door prizes for members will be given at the meeting; an admittance card will be mailed.
- Parking will be available in the lot behind the complex and in the lot to the left of the complex. REA employees will be present in each lot. A van will be available for transportation to the building from the parking lots.

*REA Energy Cooperative, Inc. Annual Meeting  
Sept. 29, 2016, Kovalchick Convention  
Complex, 711 Pratt Drive, Indiana, Pa.*

## *Preliminary Agenda*

- 5-6 p.m. • Entertainment
- 6:30 p.m. • Call to Order and Determination of Quorum
- Reading of Notices
- Action on 2015 Minutes
- Election Results
- Chairman's Report
- President & CEO's Report
- Unfinished Business
- New Business
- Questions & Answers
- Adjournment
- Awarding of Prizes

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

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

- ▶ Contractor crews from Asplundh Tree Expert Co. will be trimming the rights-of-way of the Cherryhill, Tanoma and Senate substation areas, in addition to emergency maintenance areas.
- ▶ Contractor crews from Asplundh Tree Expert Co. will be performing herbicide vegetation management work within the Amsbry, Brown's Crossroads, Cherryhill, Clyde, Curry Run, Laurel, Senate, Shadowood, Smithport, St. Augustine, Tanoma and Washington substation and metering point areas, 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.

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