



**Jay County  
REMC**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

484 S 200 W  
P.O. Box 904, Portland, IN 47371

## PHONE NUMBERS & HOURS

Local.....260-726-7121  
Toll Free.....800-835-7362  
Fax.....260-726-6240  
E-mail.....remc@JayREMC.com  
Website.....[www.JayREMC.com](http://www.JayREMC.com)

### To report an outage or emergency

Call 260-726-7121 or  
800-TEL-REMC (835-7362)

### 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Be ready to provide the following information:

1. Name under which the electric service is listed. 2. Map location number. 3. Your phone number in case we need to call you back. 4. The type of problem you are experiencing, e.g., flickering lights, complete power outage, etc. 5. Hang up when all information has been recorded – other members may be trying to contact the REMC, too.

**Office hours: 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.  
Monday-Friday**

## GO-OP NOTES

### \$50 bill credit drawing winner

The \$50 drawing winner for the month of October was John Loper of Portland. Read **Electric Consumer** for your chance to win a \$50 bill credit.

## CALL BEFORE YOU DIG!



Diggy Piggy says every time you dig without first calling the national 811 "Call Before You Dig" hotline, you are putting yourself in extreme risk.

You could hit 120/240 volt underground electric lines. It is required by Indiana state law to call at least two days before you dig any depth. Call 811 or Jay County REMC and a crew will come out and mark underground electric lines. Taking this required precaution will make digging safe and will prevent you from causing interruption in your service. If you plan to dig, be sure to call 811 so you don't have to call 911.



**Have a safe and  
happy 2012!**

# co-opNews

Information from your electric cooperative

## Director petitions available

The Jay County REMC annual meeting is scheduled for March 24 at Jay County High School. Directors' seats up for re-election are Districts 3, 5, 6 and 7.

District 3, represented by Richard Paxson, covers all of the area in Penn and Knox townships in Jay County, the consumers that are in Nottingham Township in Wells County, and the consumers in Harrison and Jackson townships in Blackford County. The area is bounded on the north by Wells County Road 1150 S., on the east by Jay County Road 550 W. and 500 W. intersecting at Jay County Road 300 N., on the south by Jay County Road 300 S. and the Jay-Randolph county line intersecting with State Road 1, and on the west by Blackford County Road 800 E.

District 5 is represented by Michael Ninde. District 5 encompasses the area in Jay County bounded on the north by the Jay-Adams county line, on the east by the Indiana-Ohio state line, on the south by Jay County Road 50 N. and 100 N. intersecting at Jay County Road 700 E., and on the west by U.S. 27.

Harold Smith represents District 6. It covers all the area in Niles Township in Delaware County served north of Dunkirk on the Jay-Blackford

county line to Jay County Road 300 S., then east to State Road 1, then south to the Jay-Randolph county line, then back west to the Jay-Delaware county line in a westerly direction along Delaware County Road 800 N.

District 7 is represented by Tom Zimmerman. It covers all the area in Jay County bounded on the north by Jay County Road 50 N. and 100 N. intersecting at Jay County Road 700 E. and Jay County 100 N. and State Road 26 intersecting at U.S. 27, on the east by the Indiana-Ohio state line, on the south by Jay County Road 400 S. and on the west by Jay County 200 W.

To qualify, you must take electric service at your primary residence in the district being contested in order to be an eligible candidate.

Interested parties must pick up a petition at Jay County REMC after Dec. 1 and return the petition by Jan. 10. Any qualified member of the Jay County REMC may run for a seat on the board of directors by getting 15 Jay County REMC members to sign a petition of support. A member who signs the petition does not have to live in the district up for election.

If you have any questions please feel free to call the REMC at 1-800-835-7362 or 260-726-7121.

## Tree trimming is a year-round project

Tree trimming is a vital aspect of line maintenance for all utility companies, including Jay County REMC. Trimming trees prevents power outages by keeping limbs from falling into power lines during high winds and ice.

Trees are beautiful and important to our environment, but when they come into contact with power lines, bad things can happen. Branches can snap power lines or cause short circuits that make lights blink or cause a power outage.

That's why our crews work hard to make sure trees don't interfere with power lines. We encourage members to be careful where they plant trees. Consider how large the tree will become when fully grown. Don't plant it in an area where it might grow into a power line. Or, choose a species that won't grow tall or wide enough to threaten power lines. A nursery owner or your county's extension agent can recommend trees that will add the beauty you want without presenting a problem.

If a tree has grown to the point of endangering a power line, we can arrange to have it trimmed back to a safe distance (or in very dangerous situations, removed). National standards for electrical safety require branches within 15 feet of electrical equipment be removed so crews can safely access power lines when needed.

We know homeowners are proud of their trees and don't want to see them damaged. But a tree

that gets too close to a power line can endanger both the homeowner and REMC personnel.

Jay County REMC wants to keep the lights on and our members and their families safe. For that reason, Jay County REMC and Trees Are Us trim trees throughout the year.

If you have a tree that is near or in a power line and needs to be cut down or trimmed, contact Jay County REMC at 260-726-7121 or 1-800-835-7362. Don't try trimming trees yourself, "leaf" that to the professionals.



Photo courtesy of Benton REA, Prosser, Wash.

**Tree trimming is an important part of the process to keep your power flowing properly.**

## Space heaters create hazards at home and at work

While space heaters are usually small devices, using them incorrectly at home or in the workplace can create big risks. That's why Jay County REMC recommends homeowners and employers develop an understanding of the potential danger and take steps to keep problems from occurring.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, space heaters cause less than a third of home heating fires, but they're responsible for nearly four out of five heating-related fire deaths.

Space heaters tend to be small and portable, making them very convenient to use. Unfortunately, their small size and convenience leads many people to underestimate the hazards surrounding them. They concentrate a tremendous amount of heat. If the heater comes in contact with combustible materials, it can start a fire. If people or pets touch the heater, they can be burned.

If you need to use a space heater, you can protect yourself and those around you by following a few basic safety tips:

- Always put space heaters on level floors made from a hard surface. Don't put them on carpeting, rugs, countertops, or furniture. Choose a location where people are unlikely to walk, so they won't trip over the heater.
- Keep the space heater at least three feet from any materials that can burn, including curtains and drapes, upholstery, bedding, clothing, paper, cardboard, aerosol cans, and flammable liquids.
- If you're using an electric space heater, plug it directly into a wall socket. Plugging it into a power strip or an extension cord can cause dangerous overheating.
- Don't put any objects on top of or next to a space heater.
- Make sure that small children and pets cannot get close to the heater.
- Do not leave the heater on while you are asleep, when you leave your home or workplace, or when you're in another part of the building.
- Be sure that the space heater has a switch that will shut the device off if it tips over.
- If the space heater is not working correctly, or if it is missing knobs, feet, or other parts, either replace it or bring it to a professional for repairs. Do not attempt to repair it yourself.
- If your heater runs on liquid fuel, be sure to use the right kind. Putting gas in a space heater designed to run on kerosene is extremely dangerous and could lead to an explosion. In addition, heaters using liquid fuels or propane cannot be used in confined spaces and must be vented properly to protect you from carbon monoxide gas.

Most of all, make sure your space heater has been approved by a recognized agency such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL). That way, you can be confident it has been tested thoroughly for safety. If you plan to use it at work, be sure it has been approved for commercial use.

Finally, remember that space heaters tend to be costly to operate, and there may be more affordable ways to improve the comfort of a particular room or work area.

# Keeping Safe & Warm

## What You Should Know About Electric Blankets

Electric blankets can be a great way to get that extra warmth, as long as you remember to use them safely and correctly. To minimize the potential fire or injury, choose and inspect your electric blanket carefully by following these tips:

Verify that your blanket has been tested and approved by an independent safety agency.

If the blanket is torn, has a damaged control or frayed cord, or is more than 10 years old, replace it with a new one.

If you see any spots that are dark or appear to be burn marks, or if it appears that wires inside the blanket have moved out of position or have broken, replace it.

Unplug the blanket immediately if you smell smoke.

Always follow the manufacturer's recommendations for care of your electric blanket. Machine washing your blanket can cause agitation and damage the wire inside.

When you store an electric blanket, either roll it carefully or try to minimize the number of folds so you don't damage the internal wiring.

Electric blankets shouldn't be covered by other blankets, comforters, or even pets, because the additional covering may cause overheating. For the same reason, they should never be tucked into mattresses or bed frames.

Never use an electric blanket that's wet, and don't try to dry a blanket by turning the heat on.

Blankets should not be plugged into switched outlets, because you could turn the heat on without realizing it.

To prevent unsafe heating levels, heating pads and electric blankets should not be used at the same time.



**Jay County REMC**

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative



## \$50 monthly bill credit drawing

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ACCOUNT NO.: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NO.: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: To be eligible for the drawing, your coupon and payment must be in the office by 4:30 p.m. on the last working day of the month.

## SIDELINES

**Jan. 21: Portland Lions Club Sausage and Pancake Breakfast.** Lions Club Civic Center. 7 a.m. to noon. Tickets are \$6. Kids under five are free. For more information, contact 260-729-2321. Proceeds benefit the United Way of Jay County.

On page 10 B, register to win a family pack of tickets to the breakfast courtesy of Jay County REMC member and Lions Club President Josh Gibson.

# Ring in the new year at Arm's Auto Body

Ring in the new year will not only mark the beginning of 2012, it will also mark the first birthday for Arm's Auto Body under new ownership. Jay County REMC member Mike Blowers acquired Arm's Auto Body, located at 801 N. Wayne Street in Portland, from Tom Armstrong on Jan. 1, 2011.

Around 30 years ago, when he was in high school, Blowers bought an old pickup truck that needed work. He did not have everything he needed to repair the truck and knew Tom Armstrong was a respected body man in the area. He sought his help in making the repairs to his '65 Chevy truck.

Blowers not only worked on his own vehicles with Armstrong, he took a welding class and an auto mechanics class at Jay County High School. Under the direction of Jay County REMC member John Mann, he was able to learn the proper way to weld and repair cars.

One of his favorite projects was stripping down and welding panels on a '66 Oldsmobile. Looking back at those days, he wishes he had kept the vehicles. Of course, what man does not say "I used to have an old (fill in the blank). I loved that car! Why did I ever get rid of it?"

Thanks to his two mentors, he was inspired to attend Ivy Tech in Fort Wayne where he earned a degree in auto body and welding. Following graduation, he started working for Milligan Chevrolet. From the Chevrolet dealer, he joined the team at Arm's Auto Body. When Armstrong decided to retire, Blowers envisioned the perfect opportunity to become a small business owner. He was very pleased when longtime employee Jeff Rowles decided to stay with the business.

Whether your car is old or new, Blowers can take care of the necessary repairs. The majority of his work comes from insurance claims. In the fall, there is an increase in the number of accidents involving deer. Then he slides into the winter months with vehicles sliding on ice or snow.

"We do the best we can to make our customers happy and make their cars look like they were never wrecked," said Blowers. "When it comes to repairing a car, I do not put any part on a car

that I would not put on my mother's car."

Regardless of what caused the accidents, Blowers' biggest concern is not about the car, it is about the safety of the driver and his/her passengers. He wants to make sure you are OK first and foremost.

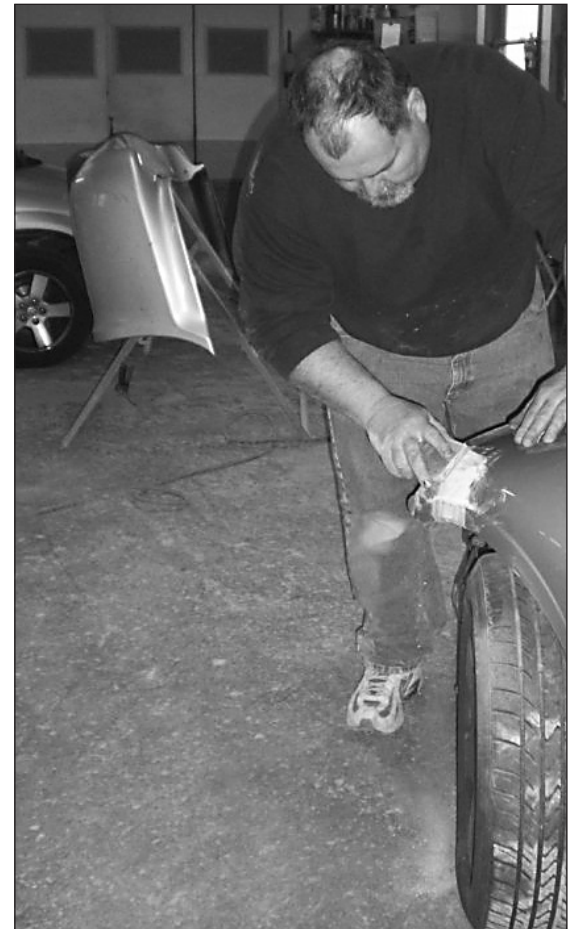
Ring in the New Year is all about reflection of years past as well as looking forward to the future. Blowers can remember when he first started working on cars. At that time, there were seven or eight guys in the area that did body work. As we ring in 2012, he believes there are only three or four guys who now have body shops. A lot has changed since the time Blowers began working on cars. Cars are very sophisticated or more complicated, depending on how you look at it, than they were 30 years ago.

Today your car can talk to you, give directions, navigate a parking place, play movies or even keep your seat toasty warm. Not all changes are bad. Regardless of your car's capabilities, make or model, Arm's Auto Body can restore your car to its glory days. Blowers may not return to his glory days on the playing field as a linebacker for the Jay County Patriots, but he does return to play piano for his church. Now that is diverse: a football player, a pianist and a mechanic.

Being diverse has been a buzzword for many years. Blowers will be the first to tell you that working on cars is no longer as simple as owning a wrench and having a garage.

There are times it would be great to have X-ray vision, because you never know what you are going to find when you look under the hood or remove the bumper. Diagnostic equipment for cars can cost thousands of dollars. Paint can cost up to \$200 for one pint. For that reason, Blowers is glad to know people who have the diverse skills and equipment to help restore your car to "good as new" status. While he does the majority of the work, Blowers does subcontract transmission and glass repairs.

Blowers approaches each repair job with enthusiasm. With each new day comes a new challenge, making it exciting for him to go to work. He hopes his two sons, one studying engineering at Purdue University and the other a student at



**Mike Blowers, owner of Arm's Auto Body, sands a fender at his Portland shop. The business celebrated its first anniversary under his ownership on Jan. 1. Contact him today for all of your auto body needs.**

Jay County High School, will find a career that is challenging and enjoyable — just like he did when he became a new business owner.

If you ring in the new year with an unfortunate fender bender, give Jay County REMC member Mike Blowers a call at 260-726-7343, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. He will make your car look new again.

Happy New Year!

## Win a \$50 gas card courtesy of Arm's Auto Body.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Account # \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Mail entry to Jay County REMC, P.O. Box 904, Portland, IN 47371; phone 800-835-7362, extension 225; drop off your entry at the REMC office; or e-mail to [denneyc@jayremc.com](mailto:denneyc@jayremc.com). **The drawing will be held Jan. 31 at 4:30 p.m.**



**Arm's Auto Body is the place to bring your vehicle for repair in the Portland area.**

# Different seasons make the meter spin

by Cindy Denney

As the children's song says "The wheels on the bus go round and round." Different seasons make your meter go round and round, too. The more your meter spins, the more your electric bill goes up.

Mother Nature, of course, divides the seasons into four parts — spring, summer, fall and winter. The REMC divides its seasons into halves: heating and cooling. November through April is the heating season and May through October is the cooling season.

Now, for a short science lesson: A measurement designed to reflect the demand for energy needed to heat a home is a heating degree day or HDD. It is derived from the measurement of outside air temperature to the desired indoor temperature. The base temperature for the heating degree day is typically 65 F. Why 65 F? That is the established temperature the home can be without turning on the heat or the air conditioning.

The higher the heating degree day is, the higher the electric bill will be that day. For example, if the outdoor temperature is 20 F the heating degree day would be 45 F because that is the difference between 65 and 20. This means your heating system has to raise the temperature 45 degrees to reach the base temperature of 65 F. Now, if you want your house to be 72 F then your heating system has to work even harder to raise the indoor temperature the extra seven degrees for a total of 52 heating degree days.

A similar measurement, cooling degree day (CDD), reflects the amount of energy needed to cool a home. If it is 80 F outside, your air conditioner has to work to lower the indoor temperature to 65 F, making the cooling degree day 15. If your thermostat is set at 70 F then the CDD is 10. Typically, the cooling season is less expensive than the heating season.

It would be nice if your heating/cooling system got the house to the desired temperature and it

would stay that way forever. Unfortunately, that is not how it works.

I compare everything using my kids as an example. They always want to leave the house feeling as comfortable as if they were indoors. We may want them to stay inside the house, but we know eventually they must go outdoors. To keep them warm, we insulate them with winter coats, snow boots, gloves and mittens. And, of course, the wonderful words of wisdom: "Close the door. We aren't heating the great outdoors." or my personal favorite, "Were you born in a barn?" come into play when they return from their outdoor excursion.

In the summer, we want to insulate them from the harmful rays of the sun by making sure they are covered from head to toe with sunscreen with a SPF rating of 30 or more. My favorite warm weather shout outs to the kids were "Close the window, we have the air on." or "In or out, make up your mind."

Your heating/cooling system only has one thing on its mind — to make sure the temperature you set on your thermostat is maintained. Thus, the more the warmth or coolness that leaves the house, the harder the heating/cooling system works to replace the escaping warmth or coolness. How can we prevent this from happening? Just like we

do for our kids, we insulate. The better insulated the home, the better the heating/cooling system will work to keep our homes comfortable.

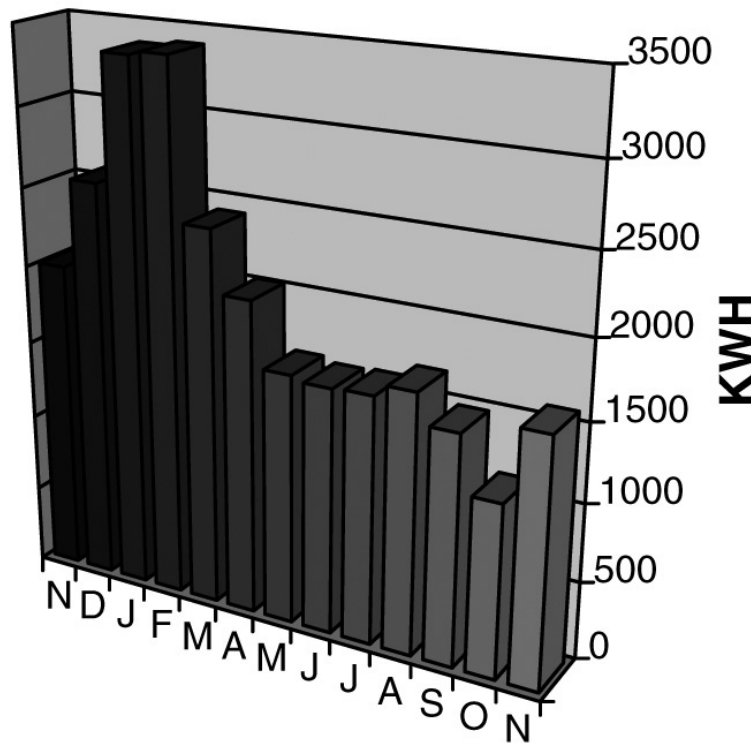
As you can see, the different seasons do make the meter go round and round. The graph below conveys the amount of electricity used by the Denney family from November 2010 to November 2011.

The graph shows that in the months of December and January we used more than 3,000 kWh. For the majority of households, the winter months will use more energy because the heating system runs continually.

The graph also indicates the lowest electric bill was in October with less than 1,000 kWh. October is considered to be a non-heating or cooling season, meaning that the heating/cooling system would not be operating. Looking at the use graph, I am thankful for budget billing.

If you are interested in budget billing, call 800-835-7362 and ask for Missy. The meter will still go round and round, but the amount you pay monthly will stay the same until your true-up month. Missy will gladly explain everything when you call to inquire about our budget billing or auto pay programs.

*Cindy Denney is director of marketing and customer services for Jay County REMC.*



This graph shows the energy use of the Denney family for the time period of November 2010-November 2011. The numbers indicate that the family, like most, used the highest amount of energy during the colder months of December through February.

**Win a family pack of six tickets to the Jan. 21 Portland Lions Club Sausage and Pancake Breakfast from Jay County REMC member and Portland Lions Club President Josh Gibson.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Account # \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Mail entry to Jay County REMC, P.O. Box 904, Portland, IN 47371; phone 800-835-7362, extension 225; drop off your entry at the REMC office; or e-mail to [denneyc@jayremc.com](mailto:denneyc@jayremc.com). **The drawing will be held Jan. 18 at 4:30 p.m.**

## Tax credits save money and lower taxes

Did you replace windows, add insulation or install a new heat pump in 2011? If so, you may be eligible to receive a tax credit. The tax incentives passed in the federal Energy Policy Act of 2005 were designed to promote wise energy use, help lower energy bills, and help reduce tax bills.

The new energy law provides valuable federal tax credits for consumers who made certain, speci-

fied energy efficiency upgrades to their homes or purchased an fuel-efficient hybrid-electric vehicle.

Energy savings are highly dependent on location, type of equipment and amount of use. For more information, visit the Department of Energy's website at [www.eere.energy.gov](http://www.eere.energy.gov) or the Alliance to Save Energy's website at [www.ase.org](http://www.ase.org).