



RuralHILIGHTS

Local News from Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative

Dual Meter installations streamlined



Home of Joe and Robin Kindernay

For the first time in recent history, RECC will not have a residential electrician on staff. While this may seem out of the ordinary, the fact is that RECC was one of the last cooperatives in Illinois to offer electrical services on the member's side of the meter. In the early years, our electricians wired houses, farms and grain bins, but in the last several years, the focus has been on Dual Meter and Peak Switch installations. As an added benefit, RECC electricians were also able to do warranty repair work on Marathon water heaters and install commercial-grade surge suppressors inside a member's home. Occasionally, our electrician would even track down that hard-to-find electrical short that had been running up the member's bill. There was value in having an in-house electrician, but the need has diminished, and there are good electricians that can be found locally.

Last month the Kindernays built a new home outside of Auburn. They installed a heat pump that qualified for the dual meter rate. In the past, they would have contacted RECC to install their Dual Meter and paid an installation fee of \$100. But now, their electrician Paul Goeckner was able to install all the metering equipment while wiring the



Joe Kindernay, new RECC member

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Dual Meter installations streamlined

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house. RECC supplied him with the meter base, coil and cable along with detailed instructions. After completion, we inspected the wiring and installed the actual kilowatt meter.

The installation went well. This was the first Dual Meter not installed by a cooperative employee since 1985. RECC's former electrician, Jeff Lancaster, had installed more than 1,200 Dual Meters, but Jeff was promoted to Manager of Member Services when Dana Smith retired. If an electrician is qualified to wire an entire house, he is certainly qualified to add a second meter and a few more wires.



Dual Meter installed next to Trane heat pump

RECC's Renewable Energy Policies

The maximum size of eligible renewable systems that can be connected under RECC's Net Metering Policy is 10 KW. The total capacity of all wind, solar or other renewable systems that can be connected to the cooperative's lines is 2 percent of our annual peak demand (512 KW).

RECC's Net Metering Policy and Interconnection Policy is available at www.recc.coop. Click on the category Our Community/Our Environmental Commitment.

Important: Please call RECC before installation

If you're considering a solar system, remember that it is your responsibility to contact RECC while you are still in the design phase. Please contact Martin Hinton if you have any questions (217-438-6197).



New contract brings lower electric bills

Effective Jan. 1, 2018, RECC began a new 10-year and five-month Wholesale Power Supply Contract with NextEra Energy Power Marketing, LLC. This ends a nine-year Wholesale Power Supply Contract with the Illinois Municipal Electric Agency (IMEA). Our relationship with IMEA has been excellent, and we appreciate IMEA's outstanding service over the years.

Our NextEra Power Supply contract provides lower wholesale power



costs. This will enable the board to keep our retail rates stable and remove or reduce the current Power Cost Adjustment. Currently, the PCA charge on all member bills is 8.5 mils per KWH, or \$8.50 per thousand KWHs. The board will also have an

opportunity build equity by retaining higher margins and rotate equity through capital credit retirements.

NextEra Energy sells electricity to companies and businesses, including utilities, retail electricity providers, power cooperatives, municipal electric providers and large industrial customers. NextEra is the world's largest generator of renewable energy from the wind and the sun, and its nuclear fleet is the third largest in the country.

RECC to end Marathon water heater sales

Like so many other things in our industry, change is inevitable. RECC's long relationship with Marathon water heaters is coming to an end in 2018. RECC purchased its first Marathon water heater in 1997. It was installed in our energy efficient home in Chatham, IL. At the time, these high efficient water heaters were not available locally, so RECC became a Marathon dealer. Members had a readily available alternative to the standard metal water heater. In 20 years, RECC members have purchased more than 1,000 Marathon water heaters. The venture was successful and allowed us to form good working relationships with our trade allies.

Unfortunately, times and circumstances changed. Big box stores and other hardware chains began offering Marathon waters in Springfield. Rural America then adopted a powerful

tool known as the internet. With the click of a mouse or swipe of a finger, products could be ordered and delivered overnight to the most remote locations. Another factor was the cost increases. They skyrocketed because the material used to produce the shell was a byproduct of petroleum. The sales started to decrease. At our peak, RECC sold more than 100 water heaters per year. Now, we are selling about one per month.

Marathon water heaters were purchased by Rheem, and the warranty/service department was moved from Minnesota to Alabama. Rheem is a giant in the HVAC business, and the electric water heater market was just a small niche to them. The warranty process became more cumbersome and time consuming.

The government, once again, decided to increase the efficiency



standards. The new energy factor, on electric water heaters over 55 gallons, could not be achieved without the use of heat pump technology. There was some resistance to the targeted mandate, but ultimately, we were left with the few large water heaters still in the supply chain.

NAEC 2015 regulations essentially banned the sale of our popular 75-gallon model. Finally, RECC no longer had the personnel to repair and service warranties for water heaters. RECC still believes the Marathon water heater is a great product, but continuing to sell them would be difficult to justify at this time.

National Appliance Energy Conservation - NAECA 2015 Regulations

ELECTRIC	20-55 Gallon Capacity				Greater than 55 Gallon Capacity		
	Rated Storage Vol. (Gallons)	20	30	40	50	65	80
Current Standard	.94	.93	.92	.90	.88	.86	.81
2015 Standard	.95	.95	.95	.95	1.98	1.97	1.92

Standards apply to U.S. only.

\$250 Water Heater Rebate Is Now Standard

Heating Equipment: *

Geothermal Systems	\$250	(2.5 Ton Min.)
Heat Pumps with Electric Backup	\$250	(2.5 Ton Min.)
Heat Pumps with Gas Backup	\$100	(2 Ton Min.)

Water Heaters: **

Electric Water Heater	\$250	(40 Gal. Min)
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Appliances:

Electric Range	\$25	(New Only)
Electric Clothes Dryer	\$25	(New Only)

*A rebate application form must be submitted after the installation is complete.

**Minimum capacity - 40 gallons. A copy of your receipt should be submitted, along with your requested rebate type. Water heaters purchased for less than the rebate amount will be rebated for the actual price. Rebate for more than one water heater per residence is \$50 for additional units.



Rural Electric
Convenience Cooperative

3973 W. State Route 104
P.O. Box 19 • Auburn, IL 62615
(217) 438-6197
e-mail: recc@recc.coop
www.recc.coop



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Facts about home heating fires

- 🔥 From 2013-2015, an average of 45,900 home heating fires occurred in the United States each year. These fires caused an annual average of approximately 205 deaths, 725 injuries and \$506 million in property loss.
- 🔥 Heating was the second leading cause of home fires after cooking.
- 🔥 Home heating fires peaked in the early evening hours between 5 and 9 p.m. with the highest peak between 6 and 8 p.m. This four-hour period accounted for 29 percent of all home heating fires.
- 🔥 Home heating fires peaked in January (21 percent) and declined to the lowest point from June to August.
- 🔥 Confined fires — fires confined to chimneys, flues or fuel burners — accounted for 75 percent of home heating fires.
- 🔥 Twenty-nine percent of the nonconfined home heating fires — fires that spread past the object of origin — happened because the heat source (like a space heater or fireplace) was too close to things that can burn.

Source: Heating Fires in Residential Buildings (2013-2015)

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Looking for an easy way to make your home cozier? Try using an area rug to increase the insulation levels of your floors. Area rugs are stylish and can keep cool air from entering through your floors. Your toes will thank you!

