

Watts Up?

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Volume 24, No. 6

Ravalli Electric Co-op

Corvallis, Montana

**RAVALLI ELECTRIC CO-OP'S
76th ANNUAL MEETING
JUNE 11, 2011
SATURDAY
CORVALLIS HIGH SCHOOL GYM
9:30 A.M. REGISTRATION
10:30 A.M. MEETING PROGRAM**

AGENDA

Auditor's Report, Rick Matusiak

Manager's Report, Richard J Brown

Question & Answer Period

President's Report, Stacy L Bartlett

Business Meeting

Election of Trustees ~ Districts 2, 4 & 6

Scholarship Drawing ~ *Must have previously applied and be present to win.*

Adjournment

Door Prizes ~ *Must be present to win.*

Picture of Lower Woodchuck Substation north of Stevensville.



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A Touchstone Energy® Partner

Ravalli Electric Co-op

Rate's Letter to Members

May 4, 2011

Dear Member:

For the past couple of years we've been discussing our 10-year Power Sales Contract that expires on September 30, 2011. It has been an outstanding power agreement for our membership. To date the total dollars saved are \$9,654,702. However, that being said, the contract is expiring and we do have to catch up with the rest of the Bonneville Power Administration customers as today's rates are an estimated 52% higher than our current rate. At our Strategic Planning Session in August of 2010, we decided to hire EES, an Engineering firm out of Kirkland, Washington, to do an independent Cost of Service and Rate Study to meet the expected rate increase. That has been completed and thoroughly reviewed by both board and staff. We have also reviewed the results with a member focus group for potential input.

The final numbers worked out to be a rate increase of 19% on average for residential and commercial accounts. Some users will see that fluctuate depending on their usage patterns. The average residential user will see an approximate 50 cent per day increase. Irrigation and security lights will see a 24% increase, more in-line with the Cost of Service Study. While this will not catch those users up, it will help mitigate the discrepancies between the rate classes. The energy increase is 1 cent from 2.75 cents to 3.75 cents (WHOLESALE).

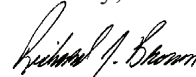
The increase will be for usage beginning on July 1, 2011 and you will see it on your August bill. The increase just prior to the contract end helps with a transition when usage is normal and not impacted by cooler temperatures.

Finally, while the number is significant, we are very pleased with the final rates. We have been fortunate to have had the old contract and its positive impact on a fast growing cooperative. The new rates will continue the financial integrity and strong commitment of service at cost to the members of Ravalli Electric Co-op.

Rate schedules will be available at the cooperative starting in late May. Please feel free to call and request one or stop by and pick one up.

It has been a privilege to work on your behalf. We look forward to seeing you June 11 at the Annual Meeting.

Sincerely,



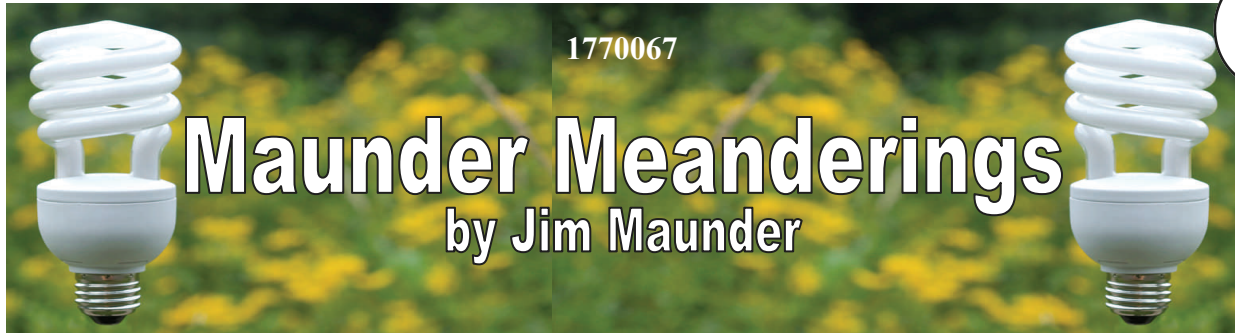
Richard J. Brown
General Manager

"The Power of Human Connections"

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Maunder Meanderings

by Jim Maunder

Calculating the Base Amount of Electricity You Use Each Month

Each month, rain or shine, hot or cold, your house and appliances use electricity. Sometimes you're aware of what you're using and sometimes not. Every house uses electricity differently and so do our members. An easy way to see what you're using is to analyze your monthly electricity bills. For this exercise you'll need the last 12 months of Ravalli Electric Co-op electricity statements or your statements from 2010.

Below is a spreadsheet to put your information in and calculate the amount of electricity you use each month.

Month	ReadDays	kWh	kWh/Days	Amount \$
January	30	1155	38.5	\$81.91
February				
March				
April				
May				
June				
July				
August				
September				
October				
November				
December				
Total				
Base = Minimum Monthly kWh x 350				
Weather = Total kWh - Base kWh				

Enter the information from each month's statement in the appropriate space. Read days are the days in each billing period shown on your bill. kWh is the total kilo-watt-hours you used that particular month. Divide the kWh total for each month by the read days in that month to get the average kWh you used each day. Total the columns for kWh and Amount \$. Look at the column for kWh/Days and select the smallest daily use total. Take that number and multiply it by 350. This will give you the "base" amount of kWh your house used the past year. Subtract the yearly base number from the yearly kWh total and that will give you the amount of electricity you used in the past year that can be attributed to the colder weather. If you divide the "colder weather" number by the yearly kWh total it will give you the percentage of your monthly electricity usage that is weather related. Subtract the weather related percentage from 100% and the remaining percentage is the amount of electricity you consumed the past year for appliances, water heating (if you have an electric water heater), cooking, lighting, entertainment, irrigation, etc.

If you have questions or would like an excel spreadsheet to compare back to back years, please contact our Member Services Department. Comparing back to back years will allow you to see if your usage increase or decrease is attributable to weather or your base load or both. Next month we'll use your base kWh to analyze each month of the year to see if your weather related usage is winter or summer driven.

Surviving Vehicle Accidents Involving Power Lines

Vehicles and power lines just don't mix. Every year there are accidents involving vehicles hitting power poles and a lot of times this causes the danger of downed energized power lines that people may contact. So, we want to remind our members what to do if they find themselves involved in a vehicle accident that involves a power line pole.

Instinct tells us to flee danger. Unfortunately, in vehicle accidents that bring down power lines, these natural inclinations can lead to tragic results.

Ravalli Electric Co-op wants everyone to know that if your vehicle hits a power pole, or otherwise brings a power line down, stay in your vehicle and wait until a utility crew arrives on the scene and ensures that the downed lines have been de-energized. Also, if you ever come upon or witness an accident involving toppled power poles and lines, don't leave your vehicle to approach the scene. Call 911 and report the accident.

According to the National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration, tens of thousands of accidents occur each year where power poles are struck by vehicles or large equipment. Each one of these accidents has the potential to bring down power lines. Surviving the accident itself might not be enough to stay alive. You need to know of the right moves to make.



In the vast majority of these accidents, the safest thing to do is remain inside the vehicle. Only in the rare instance of fire should you exit a vehicle. If you must exit the vehicle, do it safely by jumping free and clear of the vehicle. Before jumping, however, take a look around and above you to be sure there are no wires dangling in your path of escape. When making the jump, land with feet together and then hop away from the scene. It is critical that you keep your body from touching the vehicle and the ground at the same time, thus creating a path for electricity to flow.

When people are involved in a vehicle accident, electricity is most likely not on anyone's mind. They are most concerned about whether anyone was injured, or how badly their vehicle is damaged. They forget that by exiting the vehicle they're risking bodily exposure to thousands of volts of electricity from downed power lines. It is important to keep your cool, survey the scene, and take appropriate action.

Find the Hidden Number



We will hide three account numbers this month in our "Watts Up?" pages. If you find your account number, call the office at 961-3001 by the 20th of the magazine month and you get a \$30 credit on your electric bill. Good luck!

Ravalli County Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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Richard J. Brown
General Manager

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