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Is Your Power Out?

If your electricity is out for more than a few minutes...

Check your breaker box to see if a circuit breaker has tripped.

Then, check to see if your neighbors are without power.

Report Benton REA outages by calling 800-221-6987 or via the SmartHub app.

See You at RiverFest, Sept. 8

Our Rivers - Our Way of Life

Benton REA has joined other local utilities, businesses, community organizations and people of all walks of life throughout the region to host RiverFest 2018.

RiverFest 2018, a fun and educational family event, will feature exhibitors, vendors and entertainment to showcase all the benefits of the Federal Columbia River Power System and highlight the four lower Snake River dams including navigation, irrigation, recreation and power.

Admission is free to this fun, family-friendly event being held Saturday, September 8, from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the east end of Columbia Park in Kennewick.

Things you might see at RiverFest include: a 30-foot fish-shaped storytelling theater, face painters, tug boats, a salmon cannon, Captain Meriwether Lewis, kids arts and craft activities, percussion and vocal performances and more than 40 vendors.

Appropriately, "Our Rivers

- Our Way of Life" is the theme of the event.

"Those of us who call the Pacific Northwest our home are proud of the beauty and diversity of our natural resources. The Columbia and Snake rivers not only deliver a breathtaking landscape, they provide transportation, irrigation, recreation, and of course, the majority of the electricity that we need and use in our everyday life," said Benton



REA General Manager Michael

Bradshaw.

"At the event you can learn first-hand why the dams on these rivers help to keep our electricity rates and carbon emissions among the lowest in the nation."

Benton REA wishes to invite Benton REA members and their families to attend and support hydropower and its local benefits. ■

Benton REA's Mission

Our Mission at Benton Rural Electric Association, a member-owned and operated cooperative, is to provide affordable, and reliable energy and other member driven compatible services that enhance the quality of life for all of our members. Our mission will also provide a stable, safe, competitive career-oriented work environment for the Association's employees. Our mission is being pursued through the highest ethical standards, using progressive marketing in conjunction with sound financial and management principles. Learn more at BentonREA.org/about-us.

Co-op Solar Sells Out

Just eight days after members were able to enroll in Co-op Solar, the project sold out!

“We are pleased with the response from our members,” said Troy Berglund, community development and member relations manager. “Our members obviously feel that solar energy is a worthwhile investment.”

All 550 solar units were snatched up by 31 members eager to invest in Benton REA’s first community solar project. Members who are still interested in participating can submit a completed application to secure their name on the waiting list.

“Throughout the 25-year lifetime of the project, some participants may move out of the area, in which case they will no longer be eligible to participate” said Berglund. “If they want help transferring their solar units to an active member, we’ll contact members on our waiting list.”

The 30.12 kW community solar array will be built directly across from the West Richland office on West Van Giesen Street. The solar array is projected to be up and running in the spring of 2019.

Once the project is producing electricity, participants will receive a monthly credit on their bill for the kilowatt hours produced and an annual



Washington state incentive for the first eight years or 50 percent of their investment costs.

To get on the Co-op Solar waiting list, members must complete a Cooperative Solar Program Participation Agreement available at both Benton REA offices and BentonREA.org/co-op-solar. ■



MORE THAN POWER. A CONNECTION.

When I contacted Benton REA to turn power on, they told me I am a member. Getting service was easy, and I learned I’m not alone. Benton REA’s energy experts armed me with ways to boost my energy IQ so I can manage my energy use. When I moved here, I found more than power. I found a local connection.

We are **MORE POWERFUL TOGETHER.**

To learn how you and Benton REA are #MorePowerfulTogether, visit BentonREA.org.



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COOPERATIVE INFORMATION

BENTON RURAL ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

Prosser Office
402 7th Street | P.O. Box 1150
Prosser, WA 99350
(509) 786-2913
Toll Free 1-800-221-6987
Office Hours: Mon. - Fri., 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

West Richland Office
6095 W. Van Giesen,
West Richland, WA 99353
(509) 967-2921
Office Hours: Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Office Closed for Lunch Noon - 12:30 p.m.

www.BentonREA.org
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MEMBER SERVICES

This newsletter is a product of the Benton REA Member Services and Economic Development Office

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Elicia Copenhaver, Marketing and Communications
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Is Wireless Internet Right For Me?

Since 1997, Benton REA has served the Mid-Columbia and Lower Yakima Valleys with fast, reliable and safe internet through PowerNET. If you are new to the area, or just want to know more about your internet options, take a look at the answers to these frequently asked questions about PowerNET internet.

What is wireless internet service?

PowerNET provides point-to-point internet access using wireless radio telecommunications technology. PowerNET's locally owned and maintained wireless service currently provides high-speed internet service, without the limitations of running copper, fiber or cable to your home or business.



How far does PowerNET's wireless internet signal reach?

PowerNET serves White Swan to West Richland, Hanford to Plymouth and the communities in between. We reach places other internet providers cannot. We have 30 towers and 106 wireless access points throughout Yakima and Benton Counties.

Our internet signals can reach up to a 10-mile radius from their tower location.

Do I need a phone line to receive PowerNET internet service?

No. PowerNET's wireless system operates on a local PowerNET-owned network that is separate from the phone company.

Can I connect more than one computer at a time?

Yes. Multiple computers located at your business or residence can surf the internet simultaneously with a properly configured ethernet router, a service we can provide during installation at no additional cost.



PowerNET reaches places other internet providers cannot.

How fast is PowerNET?

PowerNET wireless internet speeds start at 2 Mbps download. That is roughly equivalent to DSL speeds in many areas and can be fast enough for movie-streaming or browsing all of your favorite websites. Packages increase in speed up to 10 Mbps Download and 3 Mbps Upload. Custom packages for higher speeds are also available upon a successful signal test.

How much does PowerNET cost?

Our starter package is \$49.95 per month with no additional fees or taxes. See all our packages at BentonREA.org/packages.

To find out if PowerNET internet service can reach your home or business, complete an internet service application at BentonREA.org/sign-up-for-service. Or, call 509-786-4004. ■

Co-op Youth Meet State Legislators

Nathan Cahoon and Taylor Smith returned from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Youth Tour with stories to tell of their week in Washington, D.C.

Along with seeing the national memorials and museums, Cahoon, Smith and three other Washington state delegates met Senator Maria Cantwell, Senator Patty Murray and Representative Dan Newhouse.

Electric cooperatives sponsored more than 1,800 students during the 2018 Youth Tour. This often life-changing trip exposes rural youth to opportunities in public service, history and electric cooperatives. Read the full story in your September issue of Ruralite Magazine.

Applications for the 2019 Youth Tour will become available in October. ■



Washington Electric Cooperative student delegates met with Representative Dan Newhouse on the House Floor during their trip to Washington, D.C. Pictured left to right: Talmage Hales, Taylor Smith, Nathan Cahoon, Newhouse, Israel Poulson and Tashi Simpson.

Farm Workers Reap a Safe Harvest

It can be an exciting and exhausting time, the culmination of a season of hard work. However, the rush to harvest can also yield tragic outcomes. Each year, dozens of farm workers are killed and hundreds are injured in accidents involving power lines and electrical equipment.

“Things people see every day can fade from view and in the busy-ness of harvest time, it’s easy for farm workers to forget about the power lines overhead,” says Richard McCracken of the Safe Electricity Advisory Board. “But failure to notice them can be a deadly oversight.”

Review with all workers the farm activities that take place around power lines. Inspect the height of farm equipment to determine clearance. Keep equipment at least 10 feet away from power lines – above, below and to the side – a 360-degree rule.



Farm workers should take these steps to ensure a safer harvest season:

- Use care when raising augers or the bed of grain trucks around power lines.
- Use a spotter when operating large machinery near power lines. Do not let the spotter touch the machinery while it is being moved anywhere near power lines.
- As with any outdoor work, be careful not to raise any equipment such as ladders, poles or irrigation pipes into power lines. Remember, non-metallic materials such as lumber, tree limbs, ropes and hay will conduct electricity depending on dampness, dust and dirt contamination.
- Never attempt to raise or move a power line to clear a path!
- Use qualified electricians for work on pumps and other farm electrical systems.

Operators of farm equipment or vehicles must also know what to do if the vehicle comes in contact with a power line: Stay on the equipment, warn others to stay away and call 911. Do not get off the equipment until the utility crew says it is safe to do so.

If the power line is energized and you step outside, touching the vehicle and ground at the same time, your body becomes the path of electricity to the ground and electrocution is the result. Stay inside the vehicle unless there’s fire or imminent risk of fire.

If this is the case, jump off the equipment with your feet together, without touching the ground and vehicle at the same time. Then, still keeping your feet together, hop to safety as you leave the area.

Once you get away from the equipment, never attempt to get back on or even touch the equipment. Some electrocutions have occurred after the operator dismounts and, assuming nothing has happened, tries to get back on the equipment.

For more information on farm electrical safety in English and Spanish, visit www.SafeElectricity.org. ■

Harvest Safety Tips

- Keep all equipment at least 10 feet away from power lines.
- Never try to raise or move a power line to clear a path.
- Power line sagging? Don’t move it. Call us immediately.

For more information on harvest safety, visit SafeElectricity.org

