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Free Member Classes Offered

Internet Security Class

February 13 at the Prosser Benton REA Office

Do you ever wonder if you are at risk of an internet hack or online identity fraud? Every day, thousands of hackers may be attempting to steal your personal information.

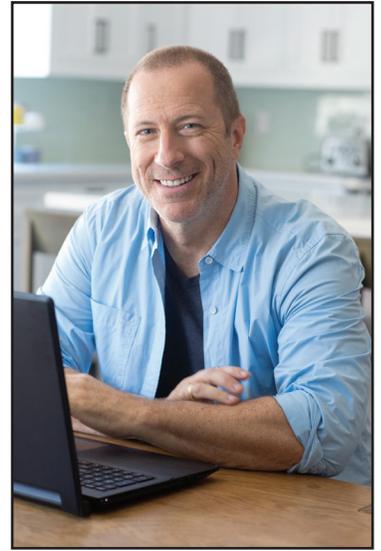
But, you can stop them. Benton REA and PowerNET want you to be confident in your ability to prevent internet and email security threats.

You are invited to attend a basic internet security class hosted by Benton REA's PowerNET. Sign up to attend the class Wednesday, February 13, at 6 p.m. in the Benton REA Prosser Office (402 7th

St.).

There is only room for 10 people in the class, so register quickly to reserve your seat. Laptop computers will be provided.

The class is free to Benton REA members and PowerNET internet customers. Others may attend for \$20. To register, call PowerNET at 509-786-4004. ■



Energy Conservation Class

February 28 at the West Richland Benton REA Office

If you want to lower your monthly energy use and be entered to win a \$100 credit on your next electric bill, sign up for Benton REA's upcoming energy conservation class Thursday, February 28, from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Benton REA West Richland Community Room (6095 W. Van Giesen).

Each registered attendee will receive a graph depicting their home's energy use from the past three years. Eric Miller, Benton REA's energy adviser, will help members interpret



their home's current and past energy use.

Attendees will learn about the role of appliances, lighting and other sources of energy use in the home. Other topics include the importance of a

well-insulated, reasonably tight home and selecting a proper heating and cooling system as well as the significance of keeping them in good operating order.

One \$100 and two \$50 bill credits will be given away at the end of the class. The class is free to Benton REA members. Nonmembers may attend for \$20. Only 35 seats are available. Register quickly to reserve your seat by calling 509-786-8265 or email eMiller@BentonREA.org. ■

Header Image: The sun shines over Canoe Ridge near the Columbia River.

Photo by Scott Stearns, staking engineer

Washington Electricity Costs Lowest in Country

Washington state has much to tout. We are blessed to live just hours from world-famous mountains, ocean views and waterfalls. Washington is home to some of the country's most innovative technology companies. And don't forget to brag about the most affordable electricity in the nation.

Benton REA charges residential members \$0.0783 per kilowatt hour. Combining this kWh rate and our monthly base charge, the average price per kWh in 2017 was 8.6 cents. That is 1.1 cents less than the Washington state average residential rate.

According to the most recent data available from the U.S. Energy Information Administration, Washington charged the lowest price for residential electricity at \$0.0966 per kWh. Louisiana charged just slightly

higher at \$0.097 per kWh.

"The Northwest is blessed with renewable, carbon-free energy that also happens to be the least expensive to produce," said Troy Berglund, community relations and member services manager at Benton REA.

It can be easy to take for granted the hydropower and nuclear energy produced in Washington. Our energy is not only affordable, but it is friendly to our environment. Most states rely heavily on coal and natural gas to produce the electricity needed for their thriving cities and rural communities.

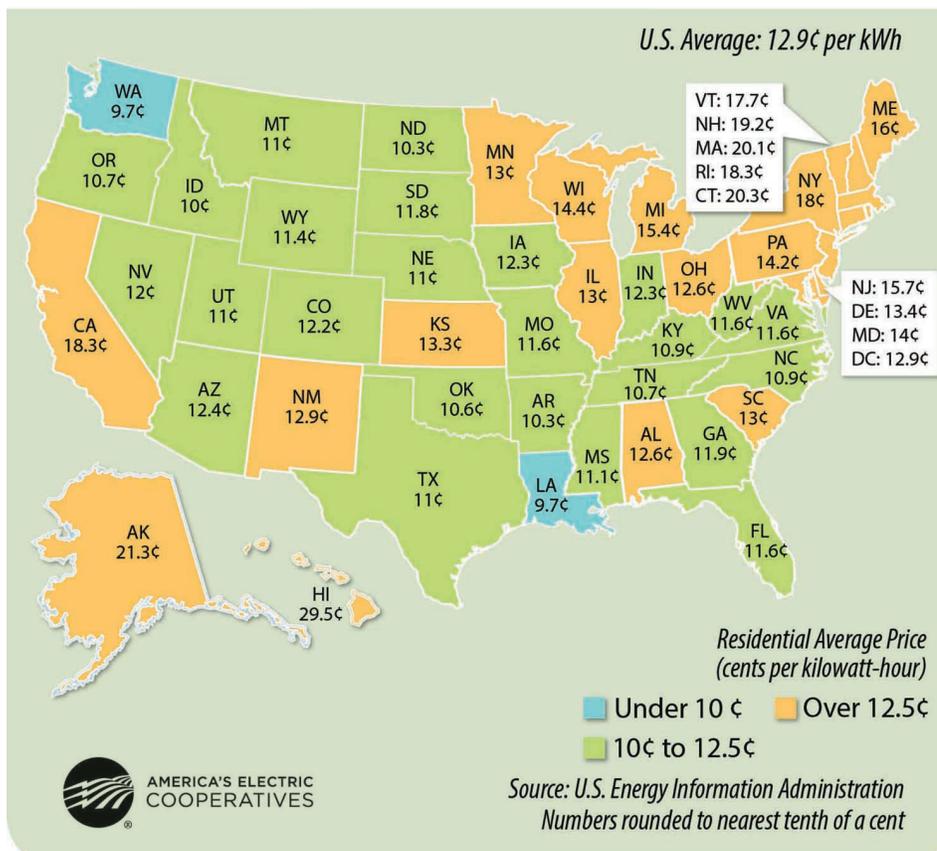
Eighty six percent of Benton REA's energy comes from hydropower, 8 percent from nuclear and less than 6 percent from natural gas and other fuels. You can view Benton REA's 2017 Fuel Mix Report on page 25 of your

February Ruralite magazine.

So, take the money you're saving just by using electricity in Washington, to treat your out-of-state friends to a trip in this amazing corner of the country. ■

Average Prices for Residential Electricity

2017 figures, in cents per kWh



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 HAVE POWER.

REPORT BENTON REA OUTAGES BY CALLING 800-221-6987 OR VIA THE SMARTHUB APP.

COOPERATIVE INFORMATION

BENTON RURAL ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

Prosser Office
402 7th Street | P.O. Box 1150
Prosser, WA 99350
509-786-2913
Office Hours: Mon. - Fri., 7 a.m. - 5 p.m.

West Richland Office
6095 West Van Giesen St.
West Richland, WA 99353
509-967-2921
Office Hours: Mon. - Fri., 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Toll Free: 800-221-6987
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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Energy-Efficiency Tips for Renters

If you rent your home, it often seems that you can't do much to control your electric bills. In reality, there are lots of low- or no-cost tricks you can put into place to cut down on electricity use.

Electronics and Appliances

Most electronics feature a glowing light when turned off, which means they're still drawing electricity. This is referred to as vampire or phantom load. One simple fix is plugging your devices into a power strip. Simply flip the switch on the power strip when you are not using the devices.

While your hands most likely are tied when it comes to the types of major appliances installed, if one needs to be replaced, ask your landlord to purchase an Energy Star model.

Weatherizing

A roll of weatherstripping and a tube of caulk can go a long way in saving energy and money. Check for gaps around doors and windows. Can you see daylight? If so, ask your landlord if you can seal cracks and reduce air flow.

You can buy sealing kits at any home improvement store. These plastic sheets fit over your window to block drafts.

Curtains can also help. Close them in the summer to block sunlight, and open them in the winter to let the warmth in.

More Useful Tips

- When light bulbs burn out, replace them with LEDs. If they have an Energy Star label, these bulbs typically last up to 10 times longer than

traditional incandescent bulbs and use 75 percent less electricity.

- Use your vacuum to clean coils in the bottom panel of your refrigerator.

- Keep your dryer vents clean. Clogged refrigerator coils and dryer vents will cause appliances to work harder and increase the risk of fire.

- Don't allow furniture to block air vents. Shut vents in rooms you do not use.

- Lower your water heater temperature to 120 F. This is warm enough for daily showers and chores.

Call Benton REA

If you're trying to save energy and money, you're not alone. Call Benton REA at 509-786-8265 for more ways to save energy and money. ■

WEATHERSTRIPPING DOORS

Capturing Energy Savings by Sealing Air Leaks

Save energy and seal air leaks by weatherstripping exterior doors. How do you know if you need to weatherstrip? If you can see any amount of light between the door frame and the floor, weatherstripping should be applied to eliminate energy waste. This DIY energy-saving project is relatively easy and inexpensive depending on the type of materials selected. The most common weatherstripping material is self-adhesive foam strips, although rubber, vinyl, metal or a combination of materials may also be used.



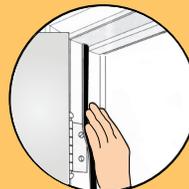
1 CLEANING SURFACES Clean the door and door jamb to be weatherstripped. For best results, weatherstripping should be applied to clean, dry surfaces above 20 F.



2 MEASURING DOOR & DOOR JAMBS To ensure greater accuracy, measure your space twice before cutting the material. It is best to plan for one continuous strip for each side of the door and door jamb.



3 CUTTING FOAM Cut long pieces of self-adhesive weatherstripping material (foam, vinyl, etc.) for each side of the door jamb and door.



4 APPLYING WEATHERSTRIPPING Peel back the self-adhesive foam. Apply one continuous strip of material snugly along each side. Make sure the weatherstripping meets tightly at the corners and is pressed firmly onto the door and door jamb. The material should compress tightly between the door and door jamb, without making it difficult to shut.

SOURCE: Department of Energy

On-the-Go With Benton REA's SmartHub App

You can access your electric use history, report electrical outages, pay your bill and read Benton REA news right from your phone.

Benton REA's SmartHub app is designed with your busy life in mind. If you haven't yet signed up

for a SmartHub account, go to www.BentonREA.org. Click the red "Pay My Bill" button and "Register to Use SmartHub!" All you need is an email address and your Benton REA account number, which is listed on your bill. Download the SmartHub app to access your account from anywhere.

With a SmartHub account, you can easily sign up for automated payments or paperless billing. Each month, we send this newsletter to you in the notifications area.

Prefer to use a computer instead of the app? Everything on the app is also available online. Log into your SmartHub account from Benton REA's website home page.

If you have questions about SmartHub, setting up your account or navigating the app, call Benton REA at 800-221-6987. ■



Scan this QR Code to download the SmartHub app on your smartphone or tablet

ANDROID



APPLE



Keep the Family Connected with

powerNET

BENTON RURAL ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

BentonREA.org/PowerNET 509-786-4004