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Get Paid Your Way: New Options for Ownership Credits

Benton REA members may now apply ownership credit payments to their electric accounts, donate them or receive a check in the mail

Benton REA has made it easier and more convenient than ever to get paid your ownership credits. Members can now receive their Benton REA capital (ownership) credit payments as an electric bill credit.

By purchasing electricity from Benton REA, you are a member-owner. Your ownership is reflected in credits allocated to you based on the amount of electricity you purchase each year.

When it makes financial sense, your Benton REA Board of Trustees approves payment of ownership credits. Traditionally, Benton REA mailed a check to members whose ownership credit payments were \$10 or more. But now, you have more options.

1 Apply your ownership credit payment to your primary active Benton REA electric account. This payment will appear as a credit on your Benton REA electric billing statement.

2 Donate them to Benton REA's Power to Care bill assistance program. Power to Care helps qualifying low-income members pay their past-due electric bills.



3 Donate them to the Benton REA Education Fund. The Education Fund provides scholarships to local graduating high school seniors and pays for the Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., electrical safety demonstrations, and member education resources and classes.

4 Receive a check in the mail (This is the default option). No action is required to receive a check when your ownership credit payment is \$10 or more. If your payment is less than \$10, the amount is held in your account until the total is at least \$10.

Two Ways to Make the Change

To continue receiving a check payment, no action is needed. To sign up for options 1-3 before this year's ownership credit payment in August:

- Complete and mail to Benton REA the form you will receive in your mailbox by July 15, or
- Go to www.BentonREA.org/OwnershipCredits to complete the form online by July 15.

Benton REA does not know at this time how much your 2021 ownership credit payment will be. Call 509-781-6724 if you have questions. ■

UPCOMING CO-OP BLOOD DRIVES

July 13 in Prosser

11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Holiday Inn Express & Suites

680 Wine Country Road

July 29 in West Richland

11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

West Richland Municipal Services Building, City Council Chambers

3100 Belmont Blvd.

To schedule your donation, call 509-781-6753 or use sponsor code "BREA" at www.RedCrossBlood.org

Every two seconds someone in America needs blood. Blood cannot be manufactured. It can only come from volunteer donors.



American Red Cross



Benton REA

Only \$6 a Year can help someone keep the lights on!

105.25 Your Bill
+ .75 Round Up Donation
=106.00 Total Due

If every co-op member rounded up their bill, together we could give more than \$5,250 each month to your neighbors in need!



Learn more at BentonREA.org/BAP or call 509-786-2913



Benton REA

WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER.



Let's Keep Small Businesses Thriving.

It's time to power a Small Business Comeback across America.

Co-op Connections is a free member benefit program brought to you by BENTON REA. Download the free Co-op Connections app to find discounts from your local merchants and pharmacies. We can support our neighborhood businesses and reopen safely.

Visit www.SmallBusinessComeback.coop for more information.

#POWERON



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.
- Check to see if your neighbors have power.
- Report Benton REA outages by calling 800-221-6987 or use the SmartHub app.

COOPERATIVE INFORMATION

BENTON RURAL ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

Prosser Office
 402 7th St. | 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 produced by the Benton REA Member Services and Economic Development Department:

- Elecia Copenhaver, Marketing and Communications Coordinator
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- May Hays, Community Relations Coordinator
- Ron Mitchell, Electrical Advisor
- Eric Miller, Energy Advisor

A Lot of Security for Less Than a Latte

PowerNET's managed router service helps families and businesses manage their internet network

For the cost of one large latte, have peace of mind about your home internet network.

PowerNET's managed router service helps families and businesses maximize their internet use while helping protect everyone connected for just \$5 a month, regardless of your internet provider.

Works with All ISPs

"PowerNET doesn't have to be your internet service provider to use our managed router service," Jeff says. "As long as you have a PowerNET-approved router, the service is just \$5 per month, regardless of your ISP."

If you do not have a compatible router, you can lease one from PowerNET for an additional \$5 a month.

"This service can help you determine if the Wi-Fi within your house is the issue, or if it is a problem with the speed you're receiving from your ISP," Jeff says.

Child Safety

Every day children face threats online.

"We can't always stop cyberbullies or online predators from attempting to contact our children," says Jeff Bastow, IT manager at Benton REA and father of five. "But, we can help prevent our kids from meeting them by monitoring the websites they visit, setting schedules and limiting the number of hours they are on the internet."

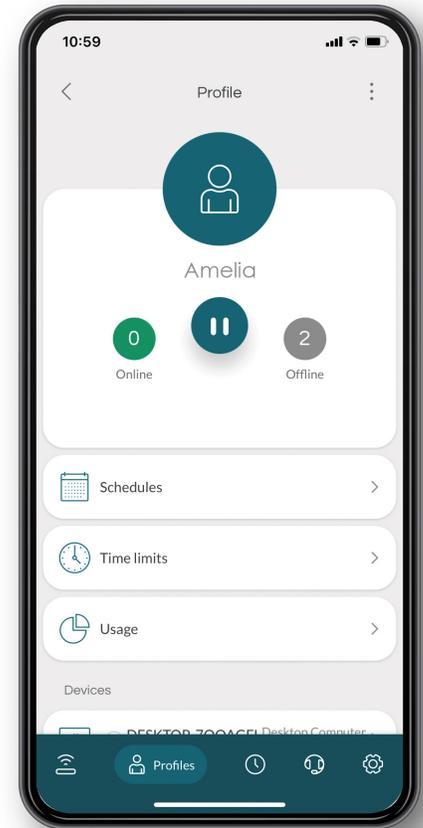
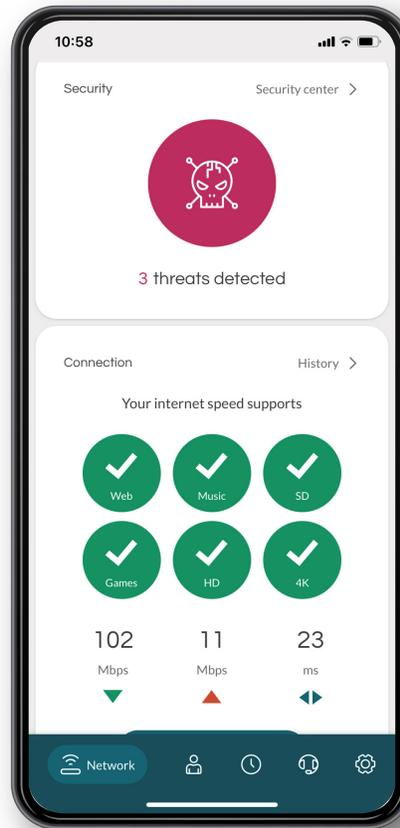
Being aware of the websites your children access helps parents start critical conversations about the dangers of the internet, while still allowing children to see the world through it.

"With this service you can see generally what websites children are going to," Jeff says.

Extra Security

"Malicious attempts to steal internet users' financial information and identity are created every day," Jeff says.

In addition to your computer's antivirus software, PowerNET's



PowerNET's managed router service is accessible anytime, anywhere on your mobile device. These screens show examples of the information users can know about their home or business network through this service.

managed router service can detect new devices on your network. If you did not authorize the new device, you can block it from accessing your network.

For the internet connected devices on your network, this service can detect if the devices are accessing virus-infected websites and potential security issues, such as computer vulnerabilities.

This added layer of protection further secures your sensitive personal data.

Who's Hogging the Bandwidth?

If you're wondering why your internet is slow at certain times of the day, or who is exceeding your family's data

limits, PowerNET can help.

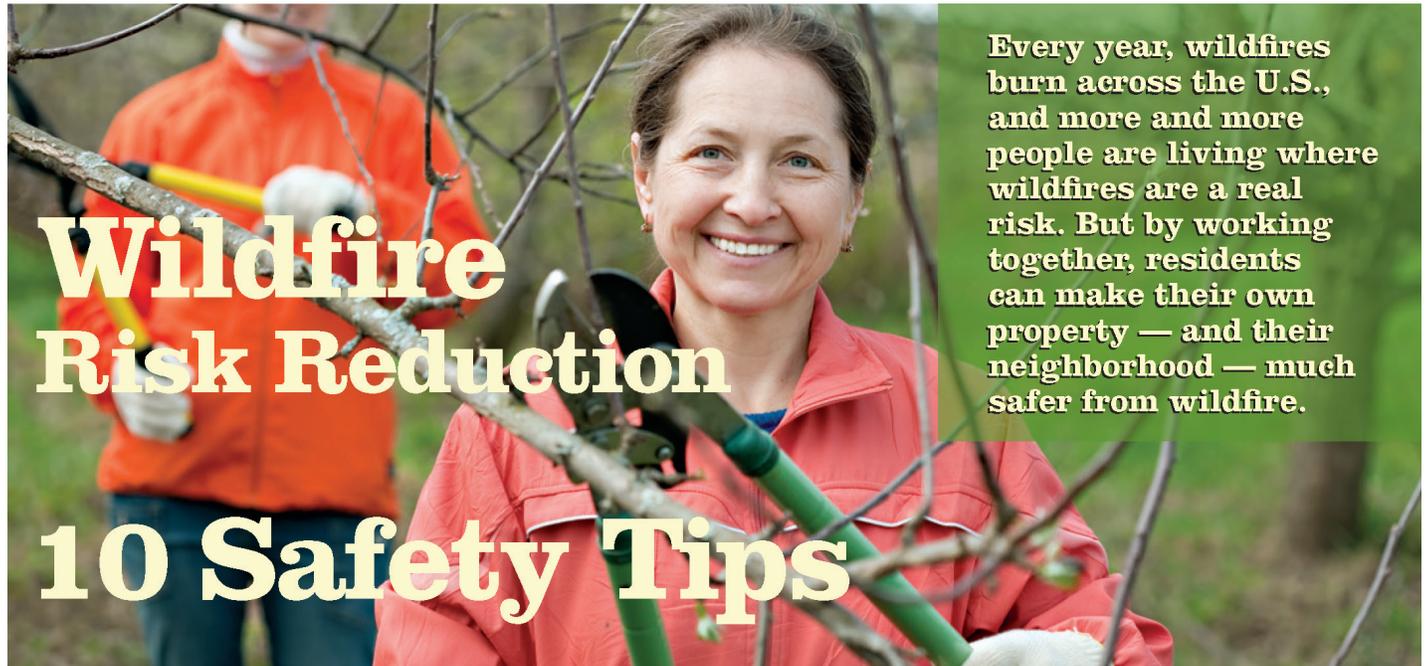
From the managed router service app, you can see the signal strength of all wireless devices and warnings for those causing performance issues.

"Each device on your network shares your internet bandwidth—the amount of data you can download or upload at one time," Jeff says.

PowerNET's managed router service shows in real-time the bandwidth each device or user is consuming and the speed of your internet connection.

To take control of your network with PowerNET's managed router service, call 509-786-4004 or go to www.BentonREA.org/ManagedRouter. ■

powerNET
BENTON RURAL ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION



Wildfire Risk Reduction

10 Safety Tips

Every year, wildfires burn across the U.S., and more and more people are living where wildfires are a real risk. But by working together, residents can make their own property — and their neighborhood — much safer from wildfire.

Action Items to Improve Your Home's Survivability:

- **REMOVE** leaves, pine needles and other flammable material from the roof, gutters and on and under the deck to help prevent embers from igniting your home.
- **SCREEN** areas below decks and porches with one-eighth inch wire mesh to help prevent material from accumulating underneath.
- **COVER** exterior attic and soffit vents with one-eighth inch wire mesh to help prevent sparks from entering your home.
- **ENCLOSE** eaves to help prevent ember entry.
- **INSPECT** shingles or roof tiles. **REPLACE** missing shingles or tiles. **COVER** ends of tiles with bird stops or cement to help prevent ember penetration during a wildfire.

Tips for Landscaping Around Your Home

- **REMOVE** dead vegetation and other flammable materials, especially within the first 5 feet of the home.
- **KEEP** your lawn hydrated and maintained. If it is brown, cut it down to help reduce fire intensity.
- **PRUNE** tree limbs so the lowest branches are 6 to 10 feet above the ground to help reduce the chance of fire getting into the crowns of the trees.
- **MOVE** construction material, trash and woodpiles at least 30 feet away from the home and other outbuildings.
- **DISPOSE** of branches, weeds, leaves, pine needles and grass clippings that you have cut to reduce fuel for fire.

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Increase your wildfire safety. Make simple low-cost changes to your home and landscape starting today.



Visit www.firewise.org for more information.



IT'S A BIG WORLD.
LET'S PROTECT IT TOGETHER.®

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