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It's Payback Time

This fall, Benton REA will allocate 2021 ownership credits to members who purchased electricity last year, as well as payback a portion of past years' ownership credits to members.

Traditionally, Benton REA mailed you a check any time your ownership credit payment was \$10 or more. Now, you have options.

1 Apply them 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. When your ownership credit payment is \$10 or more, Benton REA will mail a check to the address on your account. Due to the cost of processing payments, paper and postage, if your credits are less than \$10, the money is

held in your account until the total is at least \$10.

To change how you get paid, return the Ownership Credits Payment Authorization form to a Benton REA office. Download the form at www.BentonREA.org/OwnershipCredits or call 509-781-6724.

What Are Ownership Credits?

Ownership credits (previously referred to as capital credits) are a unique benefit of belonging to a cooperative. All utilities have margins, but only electric cooperatives like Benton REA allocate and, over time, pay back those margins to its members.

Benton REA operates at cost by annually allocating margins to each member based upon their purchase of electricity. Allocation of margins is called ownership credits, which reflect each member's ownership in and contribution of capital to Benton REA.

If the co-op has margins in the year you purchased electricity from Benton REA, your equity increases. Likewise, the ownership credit payments you receive decrease your equity by the amount of your payment.



How Much Will Each Member Get Paid?

Each member's payment is based on their total accrued ownership credits through the percentage of equity method. Additionally, the board has the authority to pay back one or more of the oldest years' equity to members.

When Will Each Member Get Paid?

Benton REA's board of trustees has voted to pay back \$1 million in ownership credits from all past years plus \$872,443 from 1994 and 1995.

Members receiving a payment this year can expect to see it before Christmas. ■

For more information about your ownership credits, visit www.BentonREA.org/OwnershipCredits.



ALL BLOOD TYPES NEEDED

Give Blood, Give Life

October 5 in West Richland

Benton REA Community Room
6095 W. Van Giesen St.
11 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.

October 6 in Prosser

The Green Room at the Princess
1226 Meade Ave.
11 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.

Use sponsor code "BREA" to schedule your donation
at www.RedCrossBlood.org.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

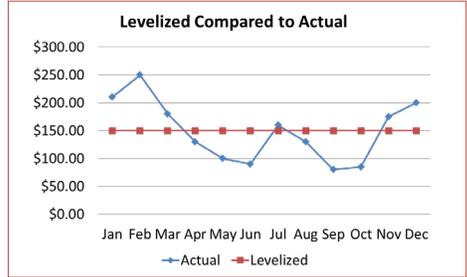
With winter weather on the way, now is the time to seal drafty windows. If you can see daylight around a window frame or if you can rattle a window (movement means possible leaks), the window likely needs to be sealed.

Most window leaks can be sealed with caulk or weatherstripping, which come in a variety of compounds and materials. Visit www.energy.gov/energysaver to learn how and where to seal air leaks.

Source: energy.gov



Levelize Your Bill in Shoulder Months



October is a great month to start levelizing your bill. During the shoulder months, when you use less electricity, build up a credit on your account, so winter energy use doesn't break your budget.

To sign up for levelized budget billing or to find out what your monthly payment would be, call 509-786-2913. ■

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 509-786-1626 or using 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 W. 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:

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RiverFest Returns

RiverFest 2022 returns to a fun, in-person format October 8. More than 50 exhibitors, including Benton REA, will feature the benefits of the river system and highlight the four lower Snake River dams.

At the Benton REA booth, pick up a salmon stress reliever and talk to us about about the lower Snake River dams and their impact on your affordable, reliable electricity. Anyone who signs up for the Voices for Cooperative Power network at our booth will be entered to win a smart thermostat.

VCP is a grassroots network of members working together to influence elected officials on issues that impact Benton REA and its members.

Visitors can view a Tidewater tug demonstration on the river, investigate a juvenile fish transportation truck, crawl inside FIN the Migrating Salmon and learn about all the attributes of the hydrosystem with hands-on activities and games for all ages.

There will be live music, food trucks, a river maze, the salmon tent storytelling theater, hydropower demonstrations and more.

“RiverFest celebrates and raises awareness about the overall hydrosystem and specifically the Snake River dams that are vital to our economy,” says Colin Hastings, RiverFest chairman and Pasco Chamber of Commerce CEO. “This

Spark Electrical Safety in Your Classroom or Workplace

Members of Benton REA may request a safety demonstration at their schools, community organizations or workplaces free of charge.

Benton REA co-owns a life-size electrical safety demonstration trailer with the goal of providing electrical safety education to people of all ages in our community. This demo must

event will have many fun activities for kids and adults alike, all while showing support for our hydro system.”

RiverFest is free on October 8 at Columbia Park, Kennewick, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. ■

be performed outdoors where the electrical arcs can safely wow the crowd.

A smaller, low-voltage, indoor electrical safety demonstration is also available for small groups or classrooms.

Call 509-786-8265 to schedule your electrical safety demonstration. ■



RiverFest

OUR RIVERS, OUR LIFE

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2022
10:00 AM to 3:00 PM
COLUMBIA PARK, KENNEWICK, WA

A FUN AND FREE FAMILY EVENT!

- Celebrate Our Rivers
- Learn Why Hydropower is Important
- Educational Exhibits
- Hands-on Learning Experiences
- Music & Entertainment
- Food Vendors



RiverFest 2022 brought to you by:



For information about how to get involved call the Pasco Chamber of Commerce at 509-341-9755 or visit riverfestwa.com.



Benton REA Journeyman Lineworker Conor Ames creates an arc during a high-voltage safety demonstration. PHOTO BY ELECIA COPENHAVER

\$21,000 Incentive Is Cherry on Top for Plymouth's River Point Farms

The River Point Farms' onion processing plant on Plymouth Industrial Road was built with energy-savings in mind. This forethought earned the ag producer a \$21,231.48 energy-efficiency rebate from Benton REA.

Workers in the young facility have stored, packaged and shipped onions since September 2021 with technology designed to prevent unnecessary electricity-use.

During construction, River Point Farms and Benton REA worked with Austin Rogers, a professional engineer with the Bonneville Power Administration Energy Smart Industrial program, to identify and implement three energy-saving projects at the plant. These include a heated purge desiccant dryer, adaptive refrigeration controls and a variable frequency drive for the chilled water pump.

"Compressing air is an energy-intensive process," says Austin. "Because River Point Farms installed an efficient technology, they do not need to generate as much compressed air."

The adaptive refrigeration controls keep rooms at the right temperature without running fans and defrost heaters longer than necessary. Variable frequency drives prevent high peaks of electricity use and save the ag producer money on its electricity bill.

"The real value is that year-to-year savings," says Austin. "The incentive is just the cherry on top."

River Point Farms is saving 565,161 kilowatt-hours and \$22,606 annually by choosing energy-efficient systems rather than lower-cost, less-efficient equipment. Even without the Benton REA incentive, the energy-savings gained will pay for the equipment in 16 months. With the incentive, that payback is reduced to less than five months.



Benton REA presents an incentive to River Point Farms (RPF) for energy-efficient projects in its new onion processing plant. Pictured from left: Eric Miller, Benton REA energy auditor; Adam Bingham, RPF processing plant manager; Shannon Olsen, Benton REA assistant manager of member services; Lynn Larsen, RPF senior controller; Traci Jensen, RPF general manager and Kerri Macomber, RPF maintenance manager. PHOTO BY ELECIA COPEHAVER

River Point Farms designed the facility for long-term energy-efficiency, and they haven't finished making improvements. They hope to qualify for a second incentive for variable frequency drives at their onion

storage facilities. Austin and Benton REA are helping River Point Farms identify more opportunities to reduce compressed air use and design future energy-efficient lighting projects. ■

Ag Rebates

- Variable Frequency Drives
- Irrigation Pump Testing and System Analysis
- Irrigation System Conversions
- Irrigation Hardware
- Sprinkler Package Replacements
- Freeze-Resistant Stock Water Tanks and Fountains
- Thermostatically-Controlled Outlets
- Thermostatically-Controlled Stock Tanks
- Transformer Deenergization
- LED Lighting
- Vacuum Milking Pumps
- Efficient Pump Upgrades
- Heat Recovery and Plate Coolers

Commercial Rebates

- Retrofits and New Construction
- Lighting Projects
- Variable Speed Motors
- Heating and Cooling Systems
- Connected Thermostats
- Variable Frequency Drives
- Insulation
- Windows

If your energy-saving project isn't on these lists, it may qualify for a custom project rebate.

Call 509-786-8265 for more information about making your business more energy efficient and the potential cost savings, loans and other programs available to Benton REA members.