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## Benton REA Office Closures

Veterans Day  
Friday, November 11th

Thanksgiving Day  
Thursday, November 24th

# Thank You For 33 Years at Benton REA

Wishing you all the best!



It is with mixed emotions that I write this final Manager's Message to you, the members of the Benton Rural Electric Association.

After 41 years in the electric utility industry, which includes 33 years in various positions at Benton REA, I have retired as of October 31, 2022.

We have been through many changes and challenges together over the last few

decades, and I want you to know that I greatly appreciate the positive working relationship that exists between you and Benton REA.

I also want to thank all of the dedicated and hard working people that I have worked with throughout my career. I sincerely wish you and Benton REA all the best as you move forward together to tackle future challenges.



Michael Bradshaw (Right) speaking at the NRECA Forum in 2018

*Thank you.  
Cooperatively,*

**Michael Bradshaw**  
General Manager/  
Executive Vice President



Left Photo: Michael Bradshaw (second from left) pictured with Senator Sharon Brown during a visit to Olympia. Right Photo: Michael Bradshaw working at his desk in the early 90's.



# Cook Up Some Energy Savings This Thanksgiving

Benton REA Offices CLOSED Thursday, November 24th. Happy Thanksgiving!

Thanksgiving has long been a favorite American holiday as family and friends gather to eat and give thanks. The one drawback is that the holiday contributes to an increase in annual energy use.

- Although it is traditional to buy a turkey with intentions for leftovers, a smaller turkey takes less time to

cook and saves energy. Unlike other meat and poultry dishes, it is also not necessary to preheat the oven when slow roasting a turkey for several hours.

- Turn down the temperature on your thermostat a few degrees while the turkey is cooking. The oven will add heat to your home, especially in the

kitchen area.

- Let your leftovers cool before refrigerating them. Putting them in the fridge while they are still hot will raise the temperature of your fridge and cause it to work harder to cool back down.
- When it's time to clean up, skip hand-washing your dishes. An ENERGY STAR-certified dishwasher uses less than half as much energy as washing dishes by hand and uses less water. So the time spent hand-washing dishes can be instead spent with loved ones. ■



## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Is your home heating system ready for the winter chill? One of the easiest ways to keep your system running efficiently is to regularly replace filters. If your central air system has a furnace filter, it should be replaced about every 90 days.

If your home is heated through warm-air registers, baseboard heaters or radiators, remember to clean them regularly to boost efficiency.

Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)



### 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](http://www.BentonREA.org)

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### MEMBER SERVICES

This newsletter is produced by the Benton REA Member Services and Economic Development Department:

Troy Berglund, Vice President of Member Relations  
Shannon Olsen, Assistant Member Relations Manager

Stacey Azure, Communications Specialist  
May Hays, Community Relations Coordinator  
Eric Miller, Energy Services Coordinator  
Ron Mitchell, Electrical Advisor

# Member Energy Assistance is Available

Need help paying your bill? These programs and services may be able to help!

As cold weather approaches and power bills increase, we understand that it can be difficult to keep up. If you are having trouble paying your electric bill, Benton REA has programs and services that may be helpful.

In addition, our billing department is always available to assist you with making payment arrangements to get back on track. You can reach them by calling 509-786-2913.

## Power To Care

Residential members with a past-due balance and a combined gross household income equal to or less than 200% of the federal poverty guideline are eligible to apply for Benton REA's Power To Care, bill assistance program.

- The amount of assistance depends on the family size, household income and amount due on the electric account.
- Funds will be granted as a credit on the electric account of the qualifying member once per calendar year.

## Low-Income Senior or Low-Income Disabled Discount

To ease the financial burden on

Benton REA's low-income senior or low-income disabled residential members, we offer a discount of \$24 each month to qualifying members.

### Qualifications:

- Combined annual household income that is equal to or less than 200% of the Washington State poverty guideline for two-member households.
- Applicants must be 62 years of age or older, or be able to provide proof of disability through a current "Social Security Administration Retirement, Survivors and Disability Insurance Statement" for the applicable period.

To apply for this discount, download the [discount application](#) or contact Benton REA at 509-786-2913 or 800-221-6987.

## Community Energy Assistance Programs

For other financial assistance, members can contact their local Community Action Committee. Help may also be available from these community organizations.

Northwest Community Action Center - Energy Assistance Program  
Toppenish: 509-865-7630  
eap@ncactopp.org

Benton Franklin Community Action Committee  
Pasco: 509-545-4042  
Prosser: 509-786-3379

LIHEAP - Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program  
Benton County: 509-545-4042  
Yakima County: 509-452-7145

Washington State Department of Social and Health Services  
Housing and Essential Needs  
877-501-2233  
800-209-5446

Veterans' Associations  
WA Dept. of Veteran's Affairs - Veteran's Assistance/Relief Fund: 800-562-2308  
Benton County: 509-737-3919  
Yakima County: 509-574-1537

For more information about assistance programs, go to <https://bentonrea.org/my-account/energy-assistance/>. ■



**GIVING TUESDAY**

**Less than \$1/month can make a world of difference**

**POWER TO CARE**

**ENROLL TODAY**

Visit [BentonREA.org/PowerToCare](https://BentonREA.org/PowerToCare) or Call 509-786-2913 to Enroll

**Benton REA**

# Power Out? Benton REA Crews are Ready!

Power outages occasionally happen. For most Benton REA members, they are rare and only last a few hours. But when major wind, ice or snow storms impact our area, extended outages can occur.

So when the power goes out, how do Benton REA crews know where to start working? How do you know if your outage has been reported? We've got answers to these questions and more, and it all starts with a safe, efficient plan for power restoration.

When the lights go out and it's safe for our crews to begin the restoration process, they start by repairing power lines and equipment that will restore power to the greatest number of people in the shortest time possible.

This process typically begins with repairs to the larger main distribution lines that service a great number of homes and businesses. After those repairs are made, crews work on tap lines, which deliver power to transformers, either mounted on utility poles (for above-ground service) or placed on pads (for underground service). Finally, individual service lines that run between the transformer and the home are repaired.

We can't control the weather, but we can prepare for it. Benton REA keeps a supply of utility poles, transformers and other equipment on hand so we can quickly get to work in the event of an outage. When widespread outages occur, multiple crews will be out in the



field simultaneously working to repair damage at multiple locations. We also coordinate with nearby utilities to bring in additional crews when necessary.

A proactive approach to maintenance helps minimize the chance of prolonged outages; this is why you see crews periodically trimming trees and clearing vegetation near rights-of-way. We love trees too, but it only takes one overgrown limb to knock out power for an entire neighborhood. Trimming improves power reliability for our entire community. In addition to managing vegetation, we regularly inspect utility poles, power lines and other critical equipment to maintain a more reliable system.

If you experience a power outage, don't assume a neighbor reported it. It's best to report the outage yourself, and

we make it easy to do. The quickest way to report an outage is through your SmartHub online account or app; you can also call our outage reporting number 800-221-6987 or 509-786-1626.

If you have a medical condition that requires electrical equipment, please let us know, and always have a backup plan in place. This plan could include a portable generator, extra medical supplies or moving to an alternate location until power is restored. If you plan to use a generator for backup power, read all safety information and instructions before use.

Mother Nature can be unpredictable, but as a member of Benton REA, you can feel confident knowing we're standing by, ready to restore power as quickly and safely as possible. ■

## Download the SmartHub App

Available in the App Store or Google Play

SmartHub is a web and mobile app that allows you to do business with us like never before.

- Manage your account
- Report power outages
- View and pay your bill
- View your usage history

...all in the palm of your hand

