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# Mark Your Calendar! Voltage 2024 & Connect - July 13

Get ready for a day packed with excitement and community spirit as Benton REA celebrates **Voltage 2024** its 87th annual member meet-up and family fun day. This year, **Voltage** will be held at Leona Libby Middle School, in West Richland, promising a fun-filled event from start to finish.

Members will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities. Take part in a thrilling tethered hot air balloon ride, see a high voltage electrical safety demonstration, and play games like bingo with exciting prizes up for grabs.

Kids can get free face painting, participate in hands-on activities, and play guessing games just for them! A Touchstone Energy mascot will be on site for pictures.

If you're interested in the latest electric vehicles, don't miss the Electric Vehicle Showcase. Featuring some of the newest models from McCurley Dealerships, this showcase will give you a glimpse into the future of all electric transportation.

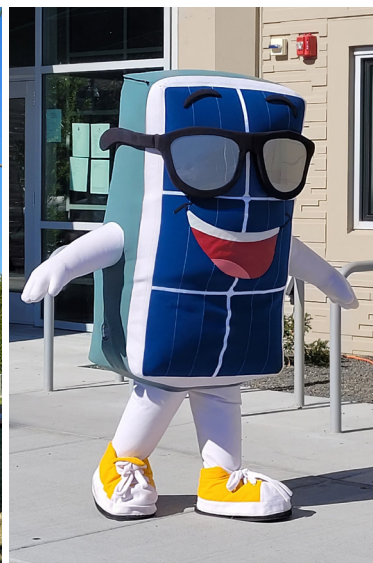
Head indoors to attend **Connect**, the business meeting portion of the day. Benton



REA's leadership will share a recap of the last year and give an update on what is on the horizon for Benton REA and its members.

Whether you're a long-time member or new to Benton REA, **Voltage 2024** is the perfect opportunity to connect with your community, learn about important issues, and have a great time. Mark your calendars for July 13 and join us for a day you won't forget!

Invitations will be attached to your June Ruralite Magazine. See you there! ■



# BIRTHDAY POP-UP

More Details  
Coming Soon!

Follow Us On Social  
Media for Updates



Facebook



Instagram



## Celebrating 87 Years

It's our **87th Birthday!** And of course we want to celebrate with you, our members.

We have a Birthday Pop-Up event in the works for Thursday, April 18 and we can't wait to see you there.

At the time of this newsletter we are still working out the final plans but we will announce it on our Facebook and Instagram pages very soon; so be sure you are following us!

We will also be serving up cookies at both our Prosser and West Richland offices. Please stop by and grab a cookie to help us celebrate **87 years** of lighting up our community.

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

With sunny days ahead, outdoor solar lights are a great option for lighting your outdoor space, without adding to your energy bill. Outdoor solar lights are easy to install and virtually maintenance free. A solar lighting system will work well only as long as the solar cells receive the manufacturer's recommended hours of sunlight. Best of all, using them won't increase your electric bill.

Popular home uses for outdoor solar lighting include pathway light sets, wall-mounted lamps, freestanding lamp posts, and security lights.

Source: [energy.gov](https://www.energy.gov)



### COOPERATIVE INFORMATION

#### BENTON RURAL ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

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Monday - Thursday  
7 a.m. - 5 p.m.

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Follow us on Facebook, Instagram and X

### MEMBER SERVICES

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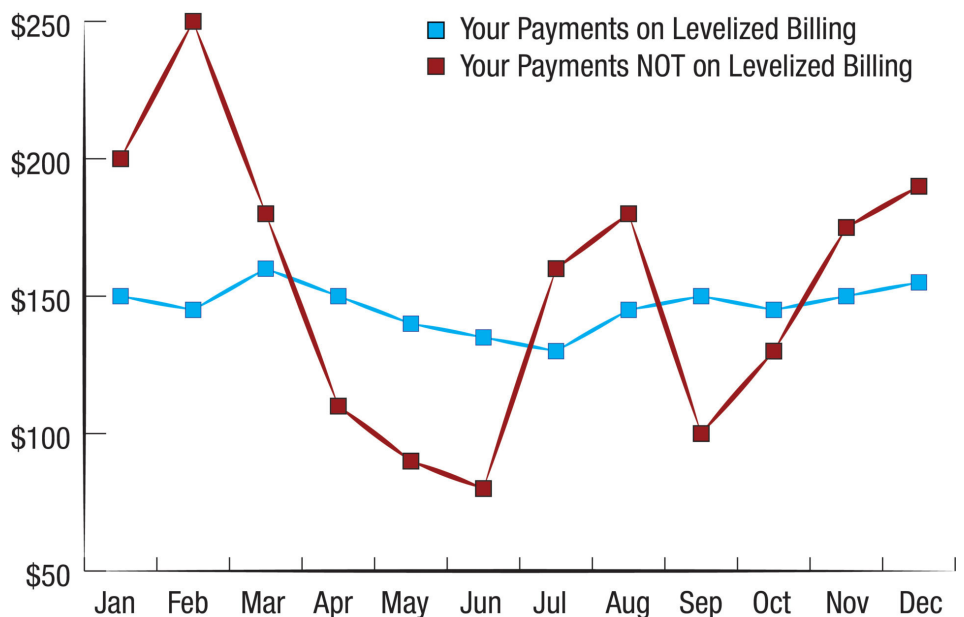
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## Levelized Budget Billing Can Help Ease Spikes in Winter and Summer Bills

Benton REA's levelized budget billing program makes it easier to stay on top of your monthly bills. Rather than billing you for your actual usage each month, we average out your seasonally fluctuating bills.

During really cold or really warm months, the amount of electricity you use to keep your house warm or cool will increase, and in turn, your bills will be higher. "Extreme temperatures increase our electricity usage and lead to a surprising spike in your bill. It's one of those unexpected challenges that can really strain your finances," says Iris Esparza, manager of member experience at Benton REA. "That's why programs like this are so important and helpful. They alleviate that shock and give our members the reassurance they need to navigate their household bills more easily."

Levelized budget billing payment amounts are determined by averaging electricity use of the 12 most recent



months.

Don't have 12 months history with Benton REA? No problem. Benton REA will calculate a fixed payment that will automatically convert to levelized budget billing once you have 12

months history.

To be eligible, a member's account must be paid in full. Eligible members may exercise the option to be put on the levelized billing program at any time during the year. ■

# Warm Temperatures are Just Around the Corner

## Start preparing your home now!

One of the best things about summer is the opportunity for fresh, homegrown food, whether it's shopping at the local farmers' market or sharing the abundance of garden tomatoes with a neighbor. It's amazing how just a few seeds, some fertilizer and water can turn into a bounty.

When I think about energy efficiency, I think about that bounty of food, and how with just a few simple actions, you can use less electricity and reap the rewards of energy savings.

You don't need to be a farmer or botanist to know that plants need water—just like you don't have to be a lineworker or engineer to know that adjusting the thermostat or turning off lights can reduce your monthly electric bill. There are a lot of things you can do at home to save electricity and money.

Cooling your home can account for a large portion of your monthly energy use in the summer, and the hotter it gets, the harder your air conditioner works to keep you cool.

There are several ways to manage energy use at home. On the graphic below, we're providing a few tips that can help grow your summer energy savings.

But we'd also like to share a few ways we're here to help you save—not only during the dog days of summer but throughout the year.

One of the great things about being part of Benton REA is that we're locally owned by you, our members. So instead of making profits, we can focus on helping our community. That's why we've developed incentives and programs to help you keep money in your wallet.

- **Rebates:** Benton REA offers energy efficiency rebates for smart thermostats, heat pumps and water heaters. Many of our rebates can be claimed by simply filling out a form. Find a list of all our rebates at [BentonREA.org/rebates](http://BentonREA.org/rebates).

- **Energy Consultations:** Our energy advisors can visit your home, determine the overall efficiency, and suggest upgrades.

We're simply here to help you. There are no investors making profits here. Just knowledgeable people with local jobs, working for our neighbors to ensure there is electricity available when you need it. ■

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## 5 WAYS TO SAVE THIS SUMMER

When summer temperatures rise, so do our energy bills. Here are a few ways you can reduce energy use and grow your summer savings.

### 1. **Raise your thermostat.**

The smaller the difference between the indoor and outdoor temp, the more you'll save.

### 2. **Install window coverings**

like blinds or light-blocking curtains to prevent indoor heat gain during the day.

### 3. **Seal leaks with caulk and weatherstripping**

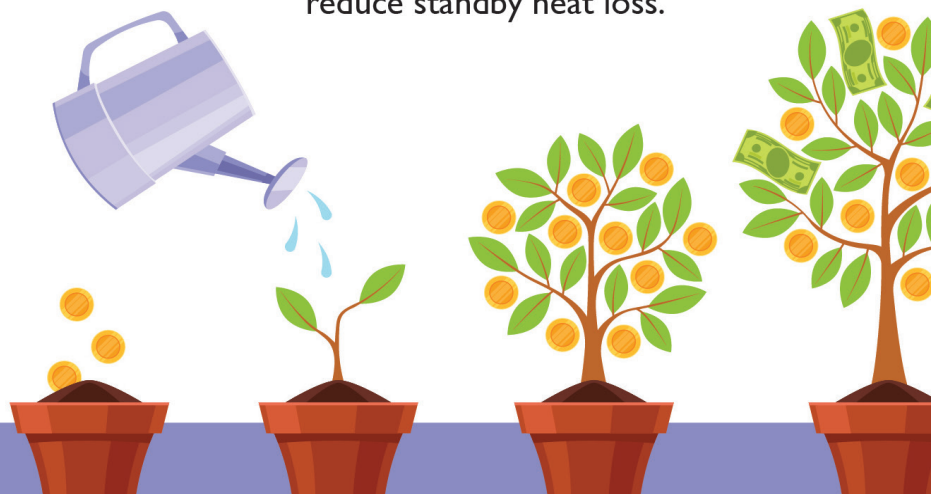
around windows and exterior doors. Air leaks force your air conditioner to work harder and run longer than necessary.

### 4. **Run ceiling fans**

for additional cooling but turn them off when you leave the room.

### 5. **Lower your water heater thermostat**

to 120 degrees to reduce standby heat loss.



Source: Dept. of Energy