

## A Message from the General Manager



My first six weeks as General Manager at KEC have been both rewarding and educational. We have many opportunities and challenges in our future. Many of those future challenges involve power costs.

KEC has maintained efficient operations enabling us to hold rates steady since 2006, even during these volatile times. Our rate increase in 2006 was the first time our rates were higher than the rates in 1993.

Our power supplier, the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), has announced their intention to increase our wholesale electric rates in October 2009. Because of this it will be necessary to raise our rates as well. To do this we are implementing a three-fold approach: one, look for ways to reduce costs by closely reviewing operational activities; two, develop a rate structure to minimize the impact this will have on you, our members; and three, provide and promote ways for members to conserve energy.

Although BPA has not yet formally announced the amount of their increase, KEC management is in the process of analyzing various rate structures for the future.

Increasing costs makes energy efficiency more important than ever and we will continue to urge you, our members, to take advantage of our incentive programs and government rebates. See the following page to learn more about Federal Tax Credits. Through improvements in energy efficiency, the region will be able to delay the time until electric generation will have to be constructed. Don't forget, we sell compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) in our office. Also, if you have an electric water heater you qualify for up to two free showerheads. Just stop by our office or visit [www.kec.com](http://www.kec.com) to learn more.

Electric cooperatives are owned and operated by their members and focus on members' needs and local priorities. The cooperative business model guarantees every member a voice in business decisions. Members know they can trust their cooperative, because it was created not to make profits, but simply to deliver electricity. We work hard to achieve a better quality of life for our members and that's the Cooperative Difference.



**Doug Elliott**  
 KEC General Manager

## Take the Guesswork Out of Your Electric Bill with the Level Payment Plan

The Level Payment Plan is a billing arrangement that averages your annual electric bill into leveled monthly payments. Your meter is still read each month so you will see the actual readings and charges on your bill. Every month your account is reviewed and, if necessary, adjusted due to changes in usage or costs, so there may be minor fluctuations in your averaged amount.

Twelve months' service location billing history and a zero balance are required to begin the Level Payment Plan. Arrangements are subject to credit approval.

Couple Level Payment Plan with SurePay to pay your bill directly from your checking, savings, debit or credit card account (Visa or Mastercard) with an electronic funds transfer. You continue to receive your monthly bill as your receipt, and your bank will pay on the due date.

Call KEC at 208.765.1200 to sign up for Level Payment Plan by May 29.

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## What You Need to Know About Energy Efficiency Tax Credits

With the passing of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, known as the stimulus bill, tax credits are now available for energy efficiency upgrades to your home.

Tax credits are a great way to get back some of your investment in home energy upgrades. They're better than tax deductions because they lower your federal income tax, dollar-for-dollar.

The stimulus plan provides a tax credit of up to \$1,500 for energy efficiency upgrades. You can install an efficient heating, ventilation and air conditioning system, or weatherize your home. Hold onto your receipts—up to 30 percent of your investment is eligible for the tax credit.

If you're not sure what to do first, [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov) provides a great resource for learning how to make energy efficiency improvements to your home.

### KEC Rebates

In addition, KEC offers rebates on many energy efficient products—making home upgrades even more affordable. See details below.

- Water Heaters - \$100 for Marathon's 50-gallon and larger; \$50 for standard
- ENERGY STAR Clotheswashers - \$70 for electric water heaters or \$25 for non-electric water heaters
- ENERGY STAR Dishwashers - \$25
- ENERGY STAR Refrigerators - \$25
- Heat Pumps - \$300-\$1,690
- Geothermal Heat Pumps - \$3,300
- Ductless Heat Pumps - \$1,500

**Rules and conditions apply. For more information visit [www.kec.com](http://www.kec.com) or call 208.292.3213.**



### Invest in Efficiency!

Your heating, ventilation and air conditioning system use 40-60 percent of your home's energy. Make sure you get your money's worth! Replace an old system with an efficient ENERGY STAR qualified system, and 30 percent of the cost qualifies for a tax credit, with a cap of \$1,500.

# Call Before You Dig

Dial 811 ▶▶▶

Don't forget to call 811 at least two working days before starting any digging or excavation project.

## May is National Electric Safety Month *Spring Chore Safety*

After spending long winter days indoors, most people love to get outside in the spring, even if it's just to do chores. However, outdoor chores can bring electrical hazards. For example, ladders contacting power lines cause nine percent of electrocution-related deaths each year, according to recent data from the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). Landscaping, gardening and farming equipment cause another seven percent. To avoid electrical hazards, make sure you and your family follow these simple tips:

- Teach children to stay away from electric transformers and substations and explain what posted warning signs mean.
- Avoid damp conditions when using electricity. Keep all electrical devices and cords away from water.
- Place waterproof covers on all outdoor outlets.
- Install ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) in outlets where water may be present.
- Only use extension cords marked for outdoor use. Match power needs of an electric tool or appliance to the cord's label information.
- Dial 8-1-1, the national "Call Before You Dig" phone number, at least 48 hours before engaging in any type of excavation work. Local utilities will be notified to mark the approximate location of any underground lines on your property.
- Inspect power tools and appliances for frayed cords, broken plugs and cracked or broken housing, and repair or replace damaged items.
- Store power tools indoors.
- Unplug outdoor tools when not in use.
- Do not carry power tools by the cord.
- Use only a fiberglass or wooden ladder if you must work near overhead wires.
- Never touch a person or an object that has made contact with a power line.

Source: *Electrical Safety Foundation International; CPSC*



## 2009 KEC Golf Classic Set for July 17

The 10th annual KEC Golf Classic has been set for July 17 at Twin Lakes Village Golf Course. Proceeds from this year's event will benefit the Operation Round Up Scholarship Fund and Habitat for Humanity of North Idaho. We were able to raise more than \$15,000 last year. Look for details in next month's newsletter. Call 208.292.3270 or email [eneff@kec.com](mailto:eneff@kec.com) if you'd like to be included on our mailing list.

# Ask Chris, KEC's Energy Efficiency Expert



**Q:** I'm looking for a new TV, what should I consider before purchasing one?

**A:** There are about 275 million TVs currently in use in the U.S., consuming over 50 billion kWh of energy each year — or 4 percent of all households' electricity use. This is enough electricity to power all the homes in the state of New York for an entire year.

Depending on the technology behind the TV you're watching, your monthly related energy costs can vary dramatically. Standard sets use a cathode ray tube, with those smaller than 40 inches drawing roughly 73 watts when on—close to what a 75 watt incandescent lightbulb uses. An average flat-screen LCD TV of the same size also requires 70 watts, while a similar flat-screen plasma TV can really suck some power, consuming an average 246 watts when on. With more families opting for flat screen TVs these days, the choice between LCD and plasma can really make an impact, to almost startling levels on a national scale.

ENERGY STAR qualified TVs use about 30 percent less energy than standard units and save energy when they are turned off. For a list of models that qualify visit [http://downloads.energystar.gov/bi/qplist/tv\\_prod\\_list.pdf](http://downloads.energystar.gov/bi/qplist/tv_prod_list.pdf).

*Do you have an energy efficiency related question for Chris Aiken, KEC's Energy Services Coordinator? Contact him at [caiken@kec.com](mailto:caiken@kec.com) or 208.292.3213. Answers will be published monthly in the newsletter.*



## Save Using Your Co-Op Connections® Card!

Don't forget to use your KEC Co-op Connections card. This card is free and another benefit of being a member of Kootenai Electric Cooperative.

It gives KEC members discounts at area businesses and it also helps promote local business.

Be sure to look at all the discounts by visiting our web site at [www.kec.com](http://www.kec.com). It's a good idea to know the discount of the business you are visiting. If you don't have internet access, call us at 208.292.3203 and we will send you a listing of all discounts.

## Use Your Card for Cooperative Healthy Savings

Cooperative Healthy Savings provides discounts on dental, vision and hearing and is offered exclusively to Co-op Connections cardholders. The \$4.25 monthly fee you pay provides discounts to your entire family.

### Discount Offer

*\$4.25/month or \$50/year. Regular price is \$5.50/month.*

Save 10-60% on prescription eyeglasses and contacts at participating retailers. Save 10-30% on LASIK surgery. Save 10-40% on mail order contacts. Save 15-50%\* on general dentistry and cleanings. Save 15% on Beltone hearing aids or save 37-58% on hearing aids.

\*Actual costs and savings vary by provider and geographical area. Dental benefit is not available to VT residents. The discount health care card is not insurance. This discount card program contains a 30 day cancellation period. For more information visit [www.kec.com](http://www.kec.com).

## News Briefs

### Facility Charge 101

Lately, we've had questions about the facility charge on your bills. The facility charge is a flat fee charged to all members that includes a portion of the cost of the electric system, including repair and maintenance. It helps allow service to remain available to our members. This is separate from the kWh charge, which is what you pay for the electricity you use.

### Northern Lakes Fire Offers CPR/AED Training

Northern Lakes Fire District will offer a free CPR/AED training class on Saturday, June 13 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Northern Lakes Fire Station 5 at 9158 E. Mokins Bay Rd.

The class is open to all adults 18 and older and includes a BBQ lunch for all participants.

This class will be limited to the first 30 applicants, please RSVP to 208.772.5711 by Friday, June 5.

### Win a \$50 Energy Credit

Four KEC account numbers are hidden in this newsletter. If one of these numbers is yours, contact us at 208.765.1200 and receive a \$50 credit on your bill!

### Board of Directors Meeting

The next KEC Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for 9 a.m. Thursday, June 18. The meeting date is subject to change. Confirm with Terry Brown at 208.292.3211 if you'd like to attend.

Outage to report: **877.744.1055**  
Business line: **208.765.1200**  
Call before you dig: **811**  
Web: **www.kec.com**  
E-mail: **kec@kec.com**