

SAVE THE DATE: SEPTEMBER 10, 2022



Join Us for the Member Appreciation Event

We hope you can join us for KEC's Member Appreciation Event on Saturday, September 10, 2022, between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. at Bluegrass Park in Coeur d'Alene at 6071 N. Courcelles Pkwy. Join us for free food and gifts, as well as these fun activities for the whole family:

- Inflatable slides, bungee trampolines and more
- Safety demonstrations
- Bucket truck rides
- Music with a DJ

If you have any questions, please contact us at kec@kec.com or 208.765.1200.

Save a Life: Avoid Distractions While Driving

Some temptations are hard to resist. While driving, we typically hear that “ding” on our phone, alerting us to a text or call coming through, and we sometimes feel the urgent need to check it. We know we shouldn't, but we reason that we're going to make an exception—just this once.

So, why do we indulge in behavior we know to be wrong, dangerous and, in many states, illegal? Call it hubris. According to AAA research, most people feel they are better-than-average drivers. After all, we have busy lives and are accustomed to multitasking. But mounds of research and thousands of deaths every year prove otherwise.

August is Back to School Safety Month. As a new school year begins with young drivers and school buses back on the road, it's a good time to remind our members of the dangers of distracted driving.

The reality is that using a phone while driving creates enormous potential for injuries and fatalities.

Continued on the back page.

Play it safe. That text can wait.



While driving, turn phone to silent mode or pull over if the text can't wait.

ABOUT OPERATION ROUND UP®

When neighbors are in need, we take action through Operation Round Up® grants. Last year, nearly 20 local non-profits and community groups received more than \$54,000 to help with everything from energy payment assistance to various health care and school programs.

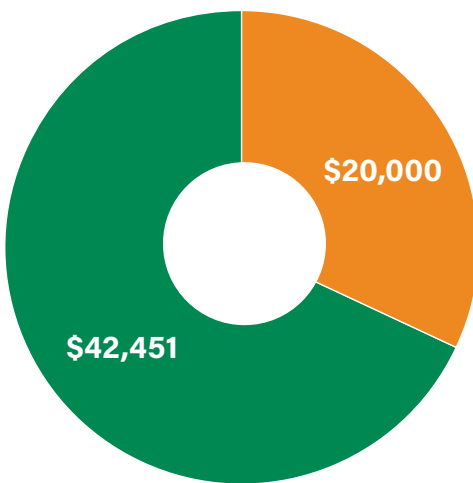
Participating in Operation Round Up® is easy. The average monthly member contribution is 50 cents and together our members have generated more than \$1.2 million since November 2002.

Are you “rounding up” your KEC bill? If not, we need your help! The program is easy. Each month, KEC “rounds up” the electric bills of participating members to the next highest dollar. The donations are placed in the Kootenai Electric Trust and a volunteer board of members (see board member list to the right) determines how to allocate the funds to our community. They award grants to local non-profit organizations including schools, food banks, senior centers and more. Operation Round Up® also helps local students pay for college or trade school. Over the last 16 years we have supported more than 200 students with scholarships. These scholarships help educate and strengthen our community.

Start “rounding up” your KEC bill by logging in to your KEC SmartHub account and click under the Billing and Payments tab. You may also visit www.kec.com or contact us at kec@kec.com or 208.765.1200.

2021 OPERATION ROUND UP® ANNUAL REPORT

COLLECTED FUNDS:
\$85,067



AWARDED FUNDS:
\$62,451

■ Scholarships ■ Grants

A sampling of 2021 grants:

- \$10,000 to KEC’s Project Share program. These funds are available to KEC members who qualify for help paying their energy bills.
- \$2,500 to the Rathdrum Senior Center to purchase containers for home delivered meals.
- \$2,500 to the North Idaho Fair Foundation for the Farm to Table event for area fifth grade students to learn where their food comes from.
- \$2,000 to Fosterful to assist child welfare offices in providing a nurturing environment for children entering foster care.
- \$2,000 to Heart Reach’s Turkeys & More program, which provides turkeys and holiday food to serve 1,800 families in need for Thanksgiving.

Independent Accountant’s Report Conducted by Magnuson, McHugh & Company, P.A.

Kootenai Electric Trust Board Members

Jay Baker
District 1

Jessica Bacon Wourms
Secretary/Treasurer
District 2

Dan Green
District 3

Joe Piedmont
District 4

Randy Foiles
District 5

Tom Craig Zajicek
Chair
District At-Large

Cheri Zao
Vice Chair
District At-Large

Members who choose not to contribute to Operation Round Up® or who would like to begin contributing may simply opt out or opt in on their bill or contact KEC by phone, letter or email.

Employee Spotlight: Tim Lederhos



Tim Lederhos is an IT Administrator. He has worked for KEC for 11 years.

Tell us about your work experience prior to KEC.

I started my working life as a farm hand, fixing fences, driving trucks, bailing hay and planting trees. This is where I learned the value of a hard day's work. Shortly after, I found my way into the restaurant industry, working as a waiter and busser, and I found immense joy in serving others. The inspiration to help others led to some time working as a youth counselor in a wilderness environment. Here too, I found a wonderful sense of purpose. As life changed, I found myself continuing a childhood curiosity about technology, which turned into a career.

What made you interested in working for KEC? How did you train for work in this field?

Prior to KEC I was a contractor for many years, and it required a lot of travel. It was fine before I had a family, but as my family grew, I wanted to find a career where I could be closer to home. One night, while traveling for work and staying in a hotel, I found the KEC job posting. That is where the journey started with KEC. In addition to studying information technology in college, some of my training has been self-taught or on-the-job. As a kid, I learned a lot by tinkering with computers. I also take continuing education classes as part of my job at KEC.

Tell us about KEC's IT department.

The Information Technology (IT) department is a team

of seven individuals and together we manage KEC's information systems, including network hardware and software, applications, enterprise management system, cybersecurity, GIS and other data and voice communications. Our work helps to support, protect and maintain all the data and technology employees need to meet our mission to provide exceptional and reliable service to our members.

What does a day look like for you as an IT Administrator?

In my role, I'm responsible for the maintenance of KEC's supervisory control and data acquisition and automated meter infrastructure systems. These systems automate much of the work we do at KEC and allow us to provide real time electric use data, bill our members, respond to power outages, perform switching to re-route power, improve reliability, reduce wildfire risk and more. These are complex systems and require regular maintenance and monitoring to ensure they operate and are secure.

I also work with KEC staff to develop processes and custom applications to gather data, perform analytics, and provide reporting for many aspects of our daily operations. For example, I designed an app that allows KEC staff to track equipment details in the field. From there, the app shares data with our customer information system, which allows office staff to schedule maintenance and repairs.

What is the biggest challenge in your job?

As our company grows, we have more employees, devices and data to support. The IT department has grown significantly in recent years to keep up with this growth. Enabling employees for remote work during the pandemic was also a huge challenge. We made it happen but continue, like others, to face product shortages and increasing costs.

What is the best part of your job?

Helping others. I find it rewarding to help a coworker with a problem or a challenge. Oftentimes my work helps relieve others' workloads. It feels good to see them smile and make a part of their jobs easier.

HOLIDAY OFFICE CLOSURE

The KEC office will be closed on Monday, September 5, in observance of Labor Day.

CALL 811 BEFORE YOU DIG

Before you start any digging project be sure to call 811. Digging without calling can disrupt service to an entire neighborhood, harm you and those around you, and potentially result in fines and repair costs. Calling 811 gets underground utility-owned lines marked for free and helps prevent undesired consequences.

KEC BOARD MEETINGS

Members are welcome to attend monthly board meetings. Meeting dates vary—please call Constance Felten at 208.292.3211 for details.

WIN A \$50 ENERGY CREDIT

Below are 10 KEC account numbers. If you find yours contact us at 208.765.1200 to receive a \$50 bill credit.

**1648646, 1286499, 1807761, 1845319, 1841327,
1825086, 1826402, 1246320, 1611087, 1462724**

Distracted Driving Continued.

Distractions take a motorist's attention off driving, which can make a driver miss critical events, objects and cues, potentially leading to a crash.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, one of every 10 fatal crashes in the U.S. involves distracted driving, resulting in more than 3,000 deaths annually. This is a heartbreaking statistic considering so many of these accidents could easily be avoided if we'd simply put down our phones while driving.

Distracted driving is considered any activity that diverts our attention, including texting or talking on the phone and adjusting the navigation or entertainment system. Texting is by far one of the most dangerous distractions. Sending or reading one text takes your eyes off the road for an average of five seconds. At 55 mph, that's like driving the length of an entire football field with your eyes closed.

In addition to refraining from texting while driving, we can help keep the roads safe by moving over for first responders and other emergency vehicles. Additionally, if you see utility crews conducting work near the roadside, please move over when possible and give them extra space to perform their work safely.

At KEC, safety is foremost in everything we do—for our employees and the members of the communities we serve. We routinely remind our crews of the dangers

of distracted driving, and we hope you'll have similar conversations with your teens who may be new to the roadways and are especially susceptible to the lure of technology.

Let's work together to keep everyone safe on the roads. Remember: that text can wait and waiting just might save a life.



Electrical Safety Tips for Hunters

We encourage all members to be aware of electrical equipment while hunting. Keep these safety tips in mind as you enjoy the great outdoors.

- Keep clear of electrical equipment.
- Do not shoot at or near power lines or insulators.
- Know where power lines and equipment are located where you hunt.
- Be vigilant in wooded areas where power lines may not be as visible.
- Never place deer stands on utility poles.
- Never place decoys on power lines or other utility equipment.