



SALT RIVER ELECTRIC

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

A Publication For Members Of Salt River Electric Cooperative Corporation

Zachary Epperson, Editor



Goodbye, sign of the times!

Salt River News

A monthly publication for the 54,366 members of the Salt River Electric Cooperative Corporation, serving Bullitt, Nelson, Spencer, and Washington County, plus portions of six surrounding counties, since 1937.

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Tim Sharp

On Our Cover

For the first time since November of last year, Salt River Electric offices are back open. Here, Customer Service Representative Chelsey Medley pulls up one of the final “Lobby Closed” signs from the front lawn of Salt River’s Bardstown office. Read more on page 28E. Photo: Zachary Epperson

Behind on your bill? Let us help you!

As we collectively emerge from the shadow of the pandemic, it’s a welcome sight to see so many businesses getting back to normal. That includes us, too.

Over the past month, Salt River Electric has worked tirelessly toward resuming normal operations, such as reopening our



offices to members. As a result of resuming normal business operations, our customer service representatives are hard at work preparing payment arrangements for those members behind on their bills.

We know some of you are still struggling, but just know that we’re here for you. Our members know they can always pick up the phone and call Salt River Electric, no matter the issue. So, give us a call at (502) 348-3931 or stop by an office to make plans today. Salt River Electric is always here to help.

Solar 101: Points to ponder before purchasing a solar system

If you’re thinking about installing solar panels, there are important things to consider before making a major investment.

To learn more, please check out our booklet called *Solar 101: What you need to know*. You can read it at <https://billing.srelectric.com>, by clicking on the “Solar 101” icon located on our home page.

If you want to support renewable power, please also consider co-op sponsored programs such as Cooperative Solar or Envirowatts. These renewable programs are easy and affordable—and from a source you know and trust. Learn more about each under our website’s “Products & Services” tab.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Tim Sharp, President & CEO

A return to normal

Twenty-five years ago, a classic commercial debuted on television screens showing moping children and an excited father buying school supplies all while the Christmas song, *It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year* gleefully ushered in the back-to-school season.

In 2021, the beginning of a new school year comes with a tremendous sense of relief and hope as the school-children in our communities look forward to a return to “normal,” without masks, social distancing and other pandemic restrictions which affected parts of the last two school years.

Though safety is paramount at Salt River Electric, and we adjusted our operations to adhere to all health directives, we share in your enthusiasm for normalcy. Regular readers of Salt River's updates in *Kentucky Living* understand our unique connection with and commitment to our communities. Because we are a cooperative, Salt River Electric is led by, belongs to and was built by members of the communities we serve. In other words, our co-op employees and board members are your neighbors, so we share in the successes and challenges of our communities.

A common refrain throughout the pandemic was “we're all in



VASYL/ADOBE STOCK

this together.” Well, it didn't take a pandemic for Salt River Electric to take up that concept; we've embraced it since our founding 84 years ago.

Additionally, we're proud to report that before, during and after the pandemic, our commitment to and ability to provide safe and reliable electricity at competitive rates never wavered. Salt River Electric works every day to

guard against threats to our reliable service, whether from natural disasters or harmful policies.

As schools reopen, please be mindful of school buses and crosswalks. Perhaps the next time we find ourselves waiting behind a school bus with its stop sign arm extended, we can take that as a cue to also stop to be thankful for a return to normal in this most wonderful time of the year.

Back-to-school start dates

August

3–Bardstown Independent Schools
4–Bethlehem High School
4–St. Gregory
5–St. Joseph

10–Bullitt County Public Schools
11–Spencer County Public Schools
19–St. Dominic Elementary

24–Washington County Schools
25–Nelson County Schools

The push for electricity in rural Kentucky

In 1924, wealthy New Yorker Franklin D. Roosevelt traveled to rural Warm Springs, Georgia, in search of healing waters for his polio-crippled body. His experiences there inspired actions leading to the establishment of the nation's more than 900 rural electric cooperatives, including Salt River Electric.

Roosevelt enjoyed country life, with one exception: the cost of his electricity.

"I found that the charge was 18 cents a kilowatt-hour—about four times as much as I paid in Hyde Park, New York," he said, explaining how his long-term interest in reliable, affordable electricity began.

At any price, most of his rural neighbors didn't have access to electricity. Roosevelt learned this as he drove his handicap-equipped Ford throughout the countryside, making friends with local farmers and country store operators like O.R. Caudle.

One warm spring day, the future president pulled up to Caudle's store and asked for a cold Coca-Cola and help repairing a low tire. "He noticed we were pumping the tire with a hand pump and asked if we



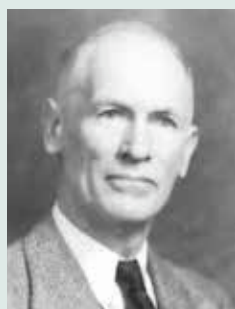
had ever tried to get electricity," said Caudle. The question sparked a longtime conversation about the need for rural electrification that continued each time Roosevelt stopped by the store for a drink.

Nine out of 10 U.S. farm homes were still without electricity when Roosevelt's first push for power occurred soon after he moved into

the Oval Office. The passage of the Tennessee Valley Authority Act in May 1933 authorized the construction of transmission lines to serve "farms and small villages that are not otherwise supplied with electricity at reasonable rates."

In 1935, Roosevelt established the Rural Electrification Administration. A year later in 1936, the Rural Electrification Act was passed, clearing the way for O.R. Caudle and others like him to form member-owned electric cooperatives. And then, just a few months after, five men from Nelson, Washington, Spencer and Bullitt counties banded together and formed the Salt River Rural Electric Cooperative Corporation, bringing electricity to farmers and rural residents throughout the region.

Through Roosevelt's advocacy—spurred by a high electric bill and, perhaps, the love of a cold Coca-Cola—the power eventually flowed, illuminating farmhouses, energizing businesses and powering progress throughout the nation.



Less than two years after the establishment of the REA, from left, M.W. Seay, W.F. Thompson, G.S. Greear, Ack Harned and J.A. Wathen came together to form Salt River RECC in the spring of 1937. Photos: Salt River Archives

Salt River welcomes members back with reopening of offices

On June 14, Salt River Electric took a big step forward in our return to normalcy. For the first time in over seven months, the doors to our lobbies and offices were unlocked for our members and the general public to come inside once again. The reopening plan had been in the works for some time, gradually becoming more and more likely as COVID-19 restrictions were eased by state and federal health officials. When the doors were finally opened that Monday morning, many were excited to welcome our members inside once again.

“We’ve missed the interactions with our members!” Manager of Office Services Phyllis Oliver explains. “We get to know them

personally and missed out on what was going on in their lives.”

Those daily interactions we have with our members are an important part of what we do here at Salt River Electric. We live, work and are involved in the same communities as members are, and naturally want to know how our neighbors are doing.

Karen Smith, customer service representative in Springfield, knows that feeling all too well when it comes to her local members.

“Having people come back in, I think it brings back that homey feeling,” Smith says. “It’s exciting to see them (again). It was hard keeping that connection through a pane of glass.”

Members have slowly started to trickle back into offices over the past few weeks; however, they haven’t been crowding to get back in. The pandemic taught us all to find alternate ways to conduct our business, resulting in some members finding new ways to engage with Salt River Electric; whether that be through a drive-thru, night deposit or using one of our many online payment methods.

Though, the reopening of offices does signal one thing: The power of human connection can’t be substituted.



Looking at the front doors of the Salt River Electric Springfield office, members will notice that “LOBBY CLOSED” signs are now a thing of the past. Photos: Zachary Epperson



Members can once again visit lobbies to conduct business, including using our self-service bill paying kiosk, like the one at Salt River’s Shepherdsville office.

Four Salt River Electric students receive scholarships

This month, as many students pick up their backpacks and return to the classroom, Salt River Electric would like to highlight the four recipients of our annual scholarship program.

As announced during our annual business meeting, our then-senior recipients included: Shianne Bonham, Mackenzie Cain, John Hite and Lynne Tormoehlen.

According to the recipients' applications, Bonham, a graduate of Spencer County High

School, plans to attend Vanderbilt University this fall, studying music and pre-med; Cain, a Bullitt East graduate, plans to enroll at West Virginia University to study biology; Thomas Nelson's John Hite is expected to attend the University of Louisville to study engineering; and Washington County's Tormoehlen plans to enroll at Dordt University with plans to study agribusiness and education.

Salt River Electric has awarded annual scholarships to top seniors

from around the area for over 20 years, part of our commitment of giving back to the communities we serve. Applicants are scored based on their completed applications, as well as a short essay. One senior is chosen from each of Salt River's service districts.

Congratulations to these now-freshmen college students on their achievements, and good luck to all of those heading back to the classroom this fall, wherever that might be.



Shianne Bonham



Mackenzie Cain



John Hite



Lynne Tormoehlen

Electrical safety basics for back to school

As children head back to school, parents can teach them a valuable, potentially life-saving lesson: Respect electricity.

Here are four electrical safety basics every child should know:

1 Mixing water and electricity can harm you.

Teach children not to use electrical toys or other devices near water or in the rain.

2 Electrical outlets have limits. Plugging multiple devices into a single outlet or power strip can create sparks and even cause a fire if that outlet can't handle the load. Teach kids to plug into

surge-protected power strips or to use one device at a time and unplug the rest.

3 Teach children to unplug devices by grabbing the plug, not the cord. Yanking a cord out of an electrical outlet can damage the appliance, the outlet or the plug, leaving the appliance or toy unable to operate safely.

4 Electrical substations are fenced off to keep children and pets out. If a toy or small pet gets inside of the fence, the child should tell a parent or teacher, who can call a trained worker to come and retrieve it.



A Message From Salt River Electric

Work, play safely around water

Few things are more refreshing on a hot day than cool water—in the shower or pool, under a sprinkler or even from a garden hose.

Yet few things are as dangerous around the home as water that comes into contact with electricity. So follow these tips:

- Keep electrically powered toys, appliances, outdoor TVs, electric grills—anything with a plug—far from the pool bathtub, sprinkler system, sink and hoses. And keep them out of the rain, even if it's only sprinkling.
- If an electric toy or appliance lands in water, don't touch it—and teach your children the same. Electricity travels quickly through water, so touching anything electrical that's wet can lead to a shock or worse—electrocution.
- Have an electrician check the electrical connections to pools, hot tubs, fountains and other outdoor water sources. They should be grounded.
- If you use extension cords to reach outlets for washers, dishwashers, air conditioners or other appliances in wet spaces, disconnect them. Those appliances should be plugged into grounded outlets, not flimsy extension cords.



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Avoid power lines when flying kites or drones

With summer in full swing, remember to use caution near electrical equipment as you explore the great outdoors. If you are flying a kite or drone, always remember the importance of safety.

Flying kites or drones near power lines can be dangerous and could disrupt electrical service to fellow members and businesses.

If the wind pushes your kite near a power line or electrical facility, let go of it. Your safety is never worth chasing a kite into a dangerous environment. Keep your kite in an open area far away from electric equipment.

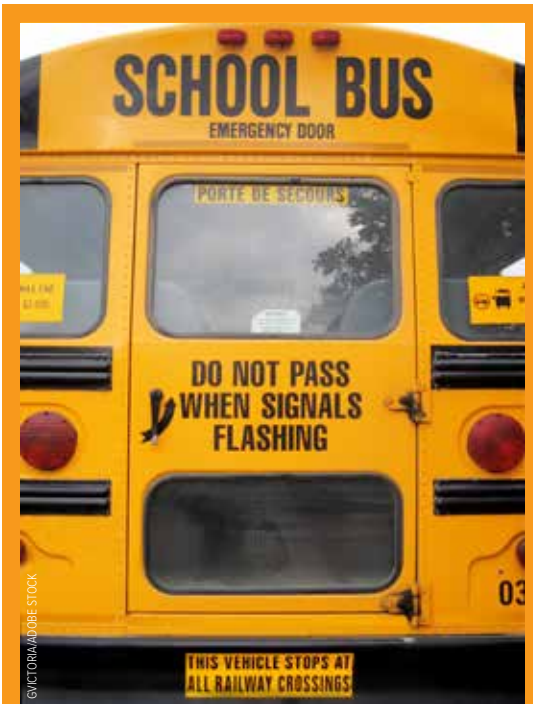
Never fly kites using wire, metallic thread or wire-reinforced string. Use paper, plastic or wood to build a kite, and only fly during dry weather. Children should always have adult supervision when flying kites.

Flying a drone near a power line may affect your drone's signal, causing it to fly into the line. Remember, dark and windy conditions are bad when it comes to a safe flight.

If you are operating a drone that contacts and gets caught in a power line, call us right way and don't try to remove it yourself.

In addition, check local laws before flying a drone near power lines, power plants, substations and other electrical equipment. Flying a drone near electric infrastructure may violate local laws.

As always, please be safe, and enjoy the beautiful outdoors.



**Salt River Electric
wishes everyone
a safe start to the
school year**

EXPERIENCING A

POWER OUTAGE?

You have 3 ways to report it!

- 1. Call 1-800-221-7465**
- 2. Our smart phone app**
- 3. Srelectric.com, using your
username and password**



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