



## MEMBER HANDBOOK

4848 State Route 325 South, PO Box 200, Rio Grande, OH

Call 800-231-2732 ~ Outage - 800-282-7204

Website: [www.buckeyerec.coop](http://www.buckeyerec.coop)

Email Inquires: [info@buckeye.com](mailto:info@buckeye.com)



# Welcome

# Welcome to Buckeye Rural Electric Cooperative!

You have joined 18,000+ fellow members in parts of nine counties in southeast Ohio who receive their electricity from Buckeye REC and who also own the business that serves them. This is why rural electric cooperatives are different. You not only rely on us to provide electric service, you also have an ownership stake in the co-op and elect the trustees who set the policies by which our business operates.

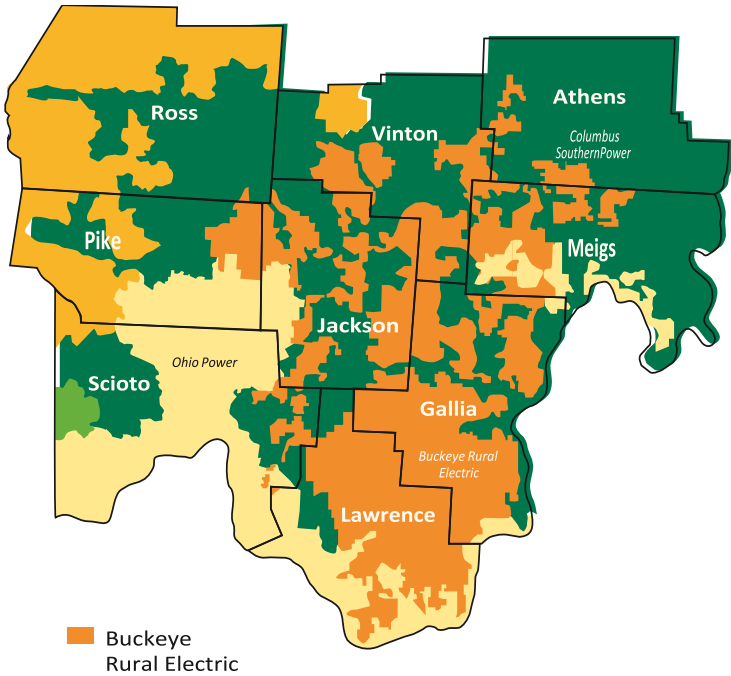
Buckeye Rural is one of 25 Ohio electric cooperatives and are a member-owned, locally managed, and democratically- controlled utility with roots going back to the mid-1930s. Buckeye REC is one of the oldest continuously operating businesses in the region, but there's nothing old about our approach to service. We use cutting edge technology to keep the lights on and our employees are dedicated and highly skilled.

Buckeye REC cannot control nature, and therefore can't guarantee an uninterrupted power supply. However, recent capital investments in the electric system have resulted in steadily declining outage numbers. If your power does go out, don't hesitate to call us. Buckeye REC is on duty 24-hours a day, 7 days a week, including holidays.

This member packet contains useful information to help you learn more about your electric provider.

***BUCKEYE RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE STRIVES TO  
PROVIDE DEPENDABLE ELECTRIC SERVICE TO OUR  
MEMBER-OWNERS  
AT THE MOST REASONABLE COST***

Thanks for allowing us to serve you...  
The Employees, Management, and Board of Trustees of  
**BUCKEYE RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**



## BUCKEYE REC TERRITORY MAP

Buckeye provides service to parts of 9 counties in Ohio  
(see above map highlighted in orange)

Ross, Pike, Scioto, Vinton, Jackson, Gallia,  
Lawrence, Athens and Meigs

# IMPORTANT INFORMATION

**General Information (800) 231-2732 or (740) 379-2025**

**OUTAGE - (800) 282-7204**

or Text us if you have signed up for text alerts

NOT SIGNED UP YET?

Visit - [www.buckeyerec.coop](http://www.buckeyerec.coop) and select the tab  
“Report an Outage” then register your phone to  
“Report an outage by text message”

E-mail Inquiries - [info@buckeyerec.com](mailto:info@buckeyerec.com)

Website: [www.buckeyerec.coop](http://www.buckeyerec.coop)

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Hours of Operation: 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday – Friday

- **Rio Grande Office** – located at 4848 State Route 325 South, Patriot, Ohio 45658 (Main office near Rio Grande, Ohio)
- **Willow Wood (Linville) Office** – located at 5459 State Route 217, Willow Wood, Ohio 45696  
**Open WEDNESDAYS ONLY** 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Closed Noon to 1:00

# **BUCKEYE RURAL ELECTRIC**

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# 'Ohio Cooperative Living' Magazine

As a member of Buckeye REC, you will receive a monthly subscription to *Ohio Cooperative Living* magazine, the state publication of Ohio Rural Electric Cooperatives (OREC). The magazine features interesting stories about people and places in the Buckeye State.

A center-section of *Ohio Cooperative Living* contains stories and announcements specifically aimed at members of Buckeye REC. *The magazine is a primary means of informing you about your rural electric cooperative. We encourage you to read each monthly issue to stay abreast of the important messages published in the local section.*

From time to time, we also run public service ads in your local newspaper or on local radio and TV stations.

Also, you may visit Buckeye REC on the Internet! The Web home page of your cooperative is **[www.buckeyerec.coop](http://www.buckeyerec.coop)**, and the contents are regularly updated. Need information about electrical service requirements or schematics? Want to review the current rate schedules for electricity? Need information to help with home energy conservation or ways to save money on your electric bill?

**[Go to www.buckeyerec.coop](http://www.buckeyerec.coop)**

# Cooperative Benefits

You are a member of a rural electric cooperative, a unique type of utility based on a non-profit model in which the users of power are also the local owners of the business. You and fellow co-op members meet every year at the Buckeye REC Annual Meeting to elect individuals to the Board of Trustees or vote on bylaws. The Board of Trustees sets the policies of the co-op; hires and directs the Executive Vice President/General Manager; and has fiduciary responsibility.

## THE COOPERATIVE DIFFERENCE

Electric cooperatives differ from Municipality or Investor-Owned Utilities because we are nonprofit and can return a percentage of revenue after operating expenses (margins) back to Members in the form of capital credits (as a bill credit if the refund amount is under \$25, and a check if over \$25). The remaining funds stay in Member accounts as your investment in our infrastructure and operations. Your Board of Trustees decides this amount.

## CAPITAL CREDITS

Capital Credits are each member's share of the margin. As a co-op member, you are paid patronage capital when there are net margins from the business operation of Buckeye REC.

Capital credit totals accrue until the Co-ops financial condition permits and the Board of Trustees decides to make a general retirement or actual "cash back" dollars to you.

## How Do Capital Credits Work?

Because electric co-ops operate at cost, any excess revenues, called margins, are returned to members in the form of capital credits.

5  
Your co-op notifies you of how and when you'll receive your capital credits retirements.

1  
Your co-op tracks how much electricity you buy and how much money you pay for it throughout the year.

At the end of the year, your co-op completes financial matters and determines whether there are excess revenues, called margins.

Electric co-ops  
have retired  
**\$11 billion**  
to members  
since 1988.

4  
When the co-op's financial condition permits, your board of directors/trustees decides to retire, or pay, the capital credits.

2  
Your co-op allocates the margins to members as capital credits based upon their use of electricity during the year.

Source: National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation

In the event of a member's death – Capital credits are refunded to the surviving spouse or heirs: For additional information and details, please contact Buckeye Rural Electric at 740-379-2025 or 800-231-2732

**Even if you move off the Cooperative lines** you will still receive the Capital Credits that you have earned – so it is VERY important to keep us informed of address changes so we can mail your Capital Credits to you when there is a general retirement.



# HOW TO REPORT AN OUTAGE



We hope your electric service is reliable all the time, but outages are possible during severe weather, due to trees growing into lines or animals that come in contact with energized equipment, or because accidents have occurred involving Buckeye REC facilities.

Knowing that you and your neighbors share a power interruption can help us pin-point the problem. Don't hesitate to call, toll-free, at any time of night or day to report what you suspect to be a power supply problem: **(800) 282-7204**

*However, before you call, please check a few things on your side of the electric meter. **Make sure the problem is not a tripped breaker or blown fuse.** If we dispatch a line crew after your outage call and it turns out the problem involves the house's electrical wiring or fuses/circuit breakers, Buckeye REC will have to charge a service fee for the false alarm.* Also, check with your nearest neighbors to see if they are out of power. When reporting an outage, you should give dispatchers the name in which the electric account is listed, the location (preferably the map number on electric bill), and your telephone number.

During a wide-spread power outage, such as sometimes occurs during severe weather due to ice, wind, or lightning; Buckeye REC's outage reporting system will be overwhelmed by thousands of calls. Please be patient and keep trying. Our line crews will be working diligently to restore power, starting at substations and major circuits to re-energize the most co-op members in the shortest amount of time. You might see the lights come on at homes across the road or down the street from your house, but you are still in the dark. This is because your house is fed from a different circuit, just like wiring inside your home is connected to different breakers/fuses.

**DO NOT ATTEMPT** to move downed power lines or drag trees or limbs off lines! Treat all high-voltage equipment as if it was fully energized.

Finally, keep refrigerator and freezer doors shut during a power outage.

# OUTAGE REPORTING VIA TEXT MESSAGES AND ONLINE



TO REPORT AN OUTAGE VIA TEXT MESSAGE visit BREC's website at [www.buckeyerec.coop](http://www.buckeyerec.coop) and click on the tab "*Report an Outage*" at the top of the page. Members will then see a link in green labeled "*Report an outage by text message*". First time visitors will need to set up an account that allows the system to link their cell phone number with their service address. After setting up the account, the member will easily be able to text an outage to BREC within seconds instead of calling the outage hotline.

TO REPORT AN OUTAGE ONLINE log in to BREC's online member access portal at [www.buckeyerec.coop](http://www.buckeyerec.coop). Choose the "Pay Your Bill" and log on to your account. Once logged in, choose the "*Report an Outage*" tab on the left side of the screen. Your outage will immediately be sent to our dispatcher.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Remember to check all breakers, etc. in/outside your home as a service fee will be charged if the problem is found on the member's side.

# TO REPORT AN OUTAGE BY PHONE 800-282-7204

# BE PREPARED FOR HAZARDOUS WEATHER

## Severe storm checklist

It is rare for Buckeye Rural Electric Cooperative Members to experience an extended outage, but being prepared is best.

No matter the season, hazardous weather can present a challenge to reliable electric service. Here are some tips to keep prepared:

- In an outage, call 800-282-7204 or text.
- Keep a five-day supply of drinking water in plastic bottles (one gallon per day, per person).
- Store a manual can opener with enough non-perishable food for five days. Canned meats and peanut butter are recommended – don't forget pets.
- Use paper plates, plastic utensils and pre-moistened towelettes to conserve water.
- Have a camp stove or grill for outdoor cooking.
- Keep extra batteries, matches, propane, charcoal and firewood.
- Store a portable, battery-powered radio and alarm clock.
- Keep hand-held devices fully charged with one one-portable phone that will work even if power is interrupted.
- Plan where to meet and how to communicate with family if separated.
- Keep your automobile's fuel tank full.
- Coordinate with neighbors to care for the elderly and disabled living alone.
- Maintain a supply of prescription and over the counter drugs, vitamins and special dietary foods.
- Keep a store of personal hygiene supplies including plastic trash bags.
- Please first-aid kits in your home and car.
- Make sure you have cold-weather clothing, blankets and sleeping bags. Use flashlights or other battery-operated lighting instead of candles.
- Keep fire extinguishers fully charged.
- If you have a well for water, fill your bathtub with water for bathroom use before the storm.
- Check to see current weather conditions.

# **BUCKEYE REC ELECTRIC RATES**

## **RESIDENTIAL**

Fixed Charge -- \$26 per month

(Frist 500 kWh @ .049500 cents/kWh ~ Over 500 kWh @ .03500 cents/kWh)

## **COMMERCIAL SINGLE-PHASE**

Fixed Charge -- \$30 per month

(Frist 500 kWh @ .049500 cents/kWh ~ Over 500 kWh @ .03500 cents/kWh)

## **COMMERCIAL THREE-PHASE**

Fixed Charge -- \$40 per month

Demand Charge – \$6.25/kW

(Over 300 kWh @ 3.0 cents/kWh ~ Over 300 kWh @ 2.2 cents/kWh)

*\* Per kW of billing demand*

**Area Light -- \$12 Monthly Fee**

# UNDERSTANDING YOUR ELECTRIC BILL

Your electric bill will arrive via U.S. Postal Service every month on or about the same date. If your bill does not arrive, call us immediately. The amount you owe for electric service is still due.

The bill includes important information about your account. “Total Amount Due” and “Due Date” information appears in the top right-hand corner. Below the bar code is a list showing the meter read dates, kilowatt-hour use, etc. A breakdown of account activity for the previous month is displayed in the bottom third of the bill page.

## **Charges for Electric Service include the following:**

**FIXED CHARGE** – A flat fee paid by every co-op member despite the amount of kilowatt hours used. The fixed charge helps pay to provide and maintain service to the meter.

**DISTRIBUTION CHARGE** – This is the cost of constructing, operating, upgrades and expansion of local electric distribution system, including equipment and facilities needed for meeting residential and commercial demand and varies with kWh usage. It is the local lines you see in your neighborhood which distribute power from substations to the meter at your location.

**GENERATION & TRANSMISSION CHARGE** – This portion of your bill is not controlled by BREC. This is the cost of owning, operating, and maintaining power plants and transmission lines necessary to produce and transmit energy to BREC. It also includes the cost of fuel, environmental regulations and taxes and represents about half of your bill. Transmission is long-distance high-voltage “grid” which moves large volumes of bulk power to your local substation. Transmission costs are about 5 percent of our electric bill. Your power is produced by Buckeye Power, Inc, a generation and transmission cooperative owned by the 25 distribution cooperatives serving Ohio.

You might also see other charges on your electric bill, such as rent for an area light, credits for water heater load control switches, etc.

# BUCKEYE POWER – Your Source of Power

## Generation & Transmission and Ohio electric cooperatives

Ohio Electric distribution cooperatives receive electricity from Buckeye Power, Inc., a generation and transmission cooperative.

Early leaders had the vision that the Ohio electric cooperatives should have their own generating plants. Through Buckeye Power, a power generating and transmission co-op owned by the local distribution cooperatives of which Buckeye Rural Electric is a part, co-op members own units 2 and 3 at the Cardinal Station, a coal-fired power plant located about seven miles south of Steubenville.

The two units came on line in 1968 and 1977, respectively, and have a combined 1,230 megawatts (MW) of low cost generating capacity. Thanks to an investment of nearly \$1 billion in environmental enhancements, the Cardinal units rank among the cleanest in the country.

Through a unique joint ownership and operating arrangement, Buckeye Power contracts with American Electric Power, the owner of Cardinal Unit 1, to operate units 2 and 3. Additional generation dedicated to service Ohio's electric co-ops includes the Robert P Mone Plant, dedicated in 2002. Located in Van Wert County, its 510 megawatts of power, provided by three natural gas or oil-fired combustion turbines, are there to meet peak electric demand periods.

Ohio's Electric Cooperatives' generation mix also includes:

- 55 MW of hydro power from the New York Power Authority
- 200 MW of coal-fired generation through an ownership interest and associated rights in the Ohio Valley Electric Corporation (OVEC).
- 200 MW of peaking power from single-cycle, natural gas-fired combustion turbines at a plant in Greenville, Ohio.
- 9.6 MW from landfill methane gas at the Suburban Regional Landfill near Mt. Perry, Ohio, and the Hancock County Landfill near Findlay.
- 4.45 MW from agricultural biogas projects in Ohio.

# WHERE CAN I PAY MY ELECTRIC BILL?

Please try to pay your bill by the due date. A 10-percent penalty is assessed on bills not received by BREC at its offices by the due date. Remember that a “postmark” date does not qualify as the date that payment is received. Allow 4 - 5 days for a payment to reach us if paying at a BREC pay station or if sending by mail to avoid the penalty.

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## **AUTOMATED TELEPHONE SYSTEM –**

Call **800-231-2732** to access our interactive voice response phone system. Press **Option 2** to pay with your credit card/ check or press “**0**” to speak to a friendly Member Services Representative.

**AUTOMATIC BILL PAYMENT - See our insert to sign up for this service.** After sign up, you will continue to receive a statement showing energy use and payment will be drawn from the specified checking/savings, or debit/credit card for bill payment. The amount will vary month to month unless you sign up for budget billing.

**ONLINE BILL PAYMENT SYSTEM** at [www.buckeyerec.coop](http://www.buckeyerec.coop) features paperless billing and accepts all forms of payment listed below. You will need a paper statement with statement ID to set up your online account.

**MAIL** your payment using the envelope and statement stub to the address below or **VISIT OUR OFFICE INDOOR LOBBY** and speak with one of our friendly Member Services Representatives.

**BUCKEYE REC  
PO BOX 200  
RIO GRANDE, OH 45674**

**VISIT OUR OFFICE DRIVE-THROUGH WINDOW** during office hours: 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, or after hours - use our night deposit drop-box located at the drive through.

## WHAT TYPES OF PAYMENT ARE ACCEPTED

- Cash-Accepted at our office lobby or drive-through
- Check -Accepted online, office lobby and drive through, mailed payment or through the automated telephone system.
- Credit/Debit Card – Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Discover are accepted online and via telephone services and at our offices.

## Warning: Third Party Payment Websites!

The cooperative urges members to stay away from third party websites when making payments.

Those who pay online need to carefully review what web site you are using. Third party bill pay sites advertise the cooperative name, information and logo to get members to use their service but are NOT affiliated in any way with Buckeye Rural Electric Cooperative. They will charge you a service fee to use their site. ***Buckeyerec.coop does not charge a fee to make payments online.***

Payments made through these sites are not guaranteed – they may not arrive on time, may not be applied to the account properly and could result in late fees or disconnections.

If paying online, use the cooperative's website link <https://billing.buckeyerec.com/brec/login.jsp>. If you have any questions regarding your online account, please contact our office.



# BREC PAYMENT STATIONS

Several area businesses accept Buckeye REC bill payments:

- All locations of Hocking Valley Bank in Athens
- Hocking Valley Bank, East Washington St., in Albany
- Hocking Valley Bank, North Plains, in The Plains
- Peoples Bank in Middleport and Pomeroy
- Liberty Federal Savings Bank, 7510 County Road 107, Proctorville
- Liberty Federal Savings Bank, 314 Park Ave, Ironton



You can also pay your electric bill (**cash only**) at **WALMART, KROGER AND MANY OTHER LOCATIONS** through CheckFreePay's many locations. It's the nation's leading provider of walk-in bill payment solutions. With more than 20,000 CheckFreePay agents across the U.S., we're sure you'll find one of their walk-in payment locations near you.

Visit [www.checkfreepay.com](http://www.checkfreepay.com) and select the tab to "Find a Location". Click on "Agent Locator" and choose Option 2 to search by zip code. Enter your zip and a list of **CheckFreePay's** agents near you will be displayed.

**DO NOT remit** payments by mail or **DO NOT** pay for delinquent bills at any pay station. Your payment may not reach our office in time to prevent cut off and collection charges.

# BUDGET BILLING PLANS

Standard Budget billing allows you to pay a set amount every month. Once every 12 months, a “true-up” of the account occurs, based on actual use.

The true-up might require you to pay for an excess amount of kilowatt hours used during the period if use exceeds your budgeted monthly total. Or, if use is less, you will receive a credit or a refund from the true-up. **April and May are sign up months for Standard Budget billing** and the account must have a -0- balance to start.

Average Budget billing uses a payment equal to the last 11 months use plus the current bill divided by 12. The monthly payment may vary some but stays more consistent without the highs and lows that can occur in winter and summer months. You may sign up for *Average Budget billing* anytime provided you have good credit.

Budget billing participation is based on credit rating, and the amount of the monthly bill is an estimated average from the previous 12-month period based on actual use.

# Deposits, Service Fees, and Special Charges

**Deposit/Account Origination Fee:** A new account origination fee of \$30 per account shall be paid as well as a security deposit of \$165 or 130 percent of the annual average of monthly consumption, whichever is greater. (See Policies #411 and #440) The security deposit, when required, will be kept by Buckeye REC until such time as the member has completed 12 monthly payments with no delinquencies. Buckeye Rural Electric shall consider the status of the applicant and act according to the criteria returned from a soft credit report for the deposit amount. Based on these criteria the security deposit may also be waived.

**New Service Extension Fees:** The Cooperative will provide service only to the point of the service attachment at the top of the meter pole, on the side of the structure, or service mast of the structure, which will be furnished and installed by the member. See Policy #610 for terms and conditions of residential new service.

## NOTICE TO PROPERTY OWNERS OF BREC IDLE SERVICE POLICY

Once an account has been disconnected and is idle or inactive for 90 days or longer there will be a \$300 re-establishing service fee **in addition** to any unpaid balances and/or deposits, etc. Also, the service entrance must be inspected by a certified electrician after 90 days and meet all applicable code requirements before reconnection takes place.

Per Buckeye Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc. policy numbers 411 and 670, any service that remains idle beyond 90 days is subject to RETIREMENT or removal. If a service is scheduled for retirement, then BREC will remove any and all of its property installed on the premises. Once retired, all charges associated with re-establishing service would be charged to the landowner.

If you do not want the electric service removed/retired and subject to the additional \$300 re-establishing fee (after 90 days from disconnection) call BREC during normal business hours to set up an active account and pay the minimum facility charge each month.

# Handling of Delinquent Accounts

Bills for electric service are considered delinquent if the full amount due is not received at Buckeye REC offices on or before the due date stated on the bill. If the net amount of your bill is not paid on or before the due date posted on the bill statement, the gross amount (net with penalty added) is due. If the due date falls on a weekend or holiday, the net amount may be paid on the next regular co-op work day.

Conscientious handling of your electric account can save money in late payment penalties and fees for collection and reconnection after disconnection for non-payment. However, we realize that sometimes situations and emergencies occur.

If you are unable to pay your bill by the due date indicated on your statement ***YOU MUST CONTACT OUR OFFICE PRIOR TO THE DISCONNECT DATE*** and a payment arrangement may be available, depending on the circumstances. This type of delinquent account treatment must be made in Buckeye REC offices with the Member Services Department. Payment arrangements are offered at the discretion of the cooperative. Disconnection will occur if the terms of a payment arrangement are not honored.

You may request emergency assistance, if applicable, from various federal and state funded energy assistance programs available to qualified utility users. Contact your local Community Action Agency, Department of Job and Family Services, or Veterans Service Office (if you are a veteran) for more information.

Please familiarize yourself with Buckeye REC's Policy #490 for collection and disconnection of delinquent electric accounts to avoid any misunderstanding, and if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at (800) 231-2732 or (740) 379-2025 between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

**FOR BUCKEYE RURAL ELECTRIC POLICIES** – Please refer to our web-site at [www.buckeyerec.coop](http://www.buckeyerec.coop) under the tab ABOUT select “Service Policies”.

# Help Meeting Your Payments

We all need help at times, County Services are Here:

## Community Action

Gallia/Meigs Co. (740) 367-7341  
Lawrence Co. (740) 532-3534  
Athens Co. (740) 757-1090  
Scioto Co. (740) 354-7545  
Pike Co. (740) 947-2131  
Jackson Co. (740) 384-3722

## Job and Family

Meigs Co. (740) 992-2117  
Lawrence Co. (740) 532-3324  
Athens Co. (740) 797-2523  
Scioto Co. (740) 353-2218  
Jackson Co. (740) 286-4181  
Pike Co. (740) 947-2171

## Veterans Services

Jackson Co. (740) 286-3004  
Gallia Co. (740) 446-2005  
Lawrence Co. (740) 533-4327

## Outreach Programs

Athens County Children's Services (740) 592-3061  
Athens & Meigs County Salvation Army (740) 797-1305

# Automated Metering for Accuracy, Convenience

PLC (Power Line Communication) technology is utilized by the AMI (Advanced Meter Infrastructure) system to measure kilowatt-hour use at your home or business. The meters send power line carrier signals back to our substations, and the data is then transmitted to co-op headquarters, where the readings are used to calculate your monthly bill. The AMIs also allow us to “ping” meters in the system to determine the extent of power outages. In addition, the meters’ report to us possible cases of tampering or power theft.

Theft of electricity is something we take seriously. Because it is extremely dangerous and costs all other co-op members, Buckeye REC prosecutes theft to the fullest extent of the law. Breaking a seal or tampering with an electric meter can result in jail time, stiff fines, or both. If you see a broken meter seal, notify Buckeye REC immediately.

## **Only Buckeye Rural Electric Employees are permitted to remove a meter**

No member or other individuals are permitted to gain access (i.e. cutting seal, removing meter, etc.) to a meter socket (base), served by Buckeye Rural Electric Cooperative (BREC) under any circumstance.

If a member requests to have the power disconnected or a meter removed (pulled), they must coordinate with BREC. Only BREC employees are permitted to remove (pull) a meter. This work is only to be performed during regular work hours unless approved by a supervisor. Members should provide adequate notice for BREC to schedule. Any applicable fees will apply.

If BREC finds the seal removed and a meter that has been removed (pulled) by anyone other than an employee, the member’s account will be charged \$350 (minimum) for unauthorized meter tampering. Other additional charges may apply.

# Rebates and Co-op Energy Saving Programs

## **Dual Fuel: The Smart Choice**

Combine a high efficiency electric heat pump with a fossil fuel (LP, propane, or natural gas) backup furnace to achieve savings and comfort the year-around. Buckeye REC members can qualify for a \$600 rebate on qualifying dual fuel unit installations.

## **Energy Audits**

Is your home weatherized and energy efficient? Buckeye REC offers advice for performing self-energy audits and recommendations for caulking, sealing, and weather-stripping your way to lower electric bills. We also provide free, on-site energy audits conducted by trained co-op personnel, but there is a waiting list for this service and we ask that you first perform the self-energy audit to help whittle down the list of potential problems.

## **Peak Load Alert Program**

During winter's coldest periods and summer's hottest times, demand for electricity across Ohio and the nation "peaks." This doesn't mean there is a shortage of power; rather baseline generation capacity has been exceeded and surplus demand is being filled at market prices. The demand costs associated with peak periods can be quite high, driving up consumer electric bills.

You can help Buckeye REC avoid setting a new peak of record by staying tune to local radio and TV stations during extreme temperature periods. When you hear Buckeye issue a PEAK ALERT WARNING, take steps to reduce your energy use.

# Members' Responsibilities

Access to Facilities -- Right of access is crucial to Buckeye REC in its efforts to ensure reliable electric service. Keep the path to your service line and meter pole/pedestal unobstructed in case our linemen have to reach these facilities for repair or maintenance. Remember that co-op personnel are called on to work around-the-clock, so don't be surprised during periods of severe weather to see our trucks on the road night and day. Our crews need access to your property during these times and the regular work week. Buckeye REC meter technicians perform inspections of meters and check readings. Please keep your animals under control for the safety of these workers.

Co-op personnel wear Buckeye REC uniform clothes, drive vehicles marked with the Buckeye REC logo, and do not mind you asking them for identification. Call one of the offices if you are unsure of the person with whom you are dealing.

Right-of-Way Clearing -- Buckeye REC attempts to clear a 40-ft. right-of-way (20 feet on either side) around its power lines. Any "danger trees" identified outside the 40-ft. zone will also be removed if the trees could threaten electric facilities. You can help us by not planting fast- or tall-growing trees or shrubs close to power lines and poles. Vegetation growing into lines or trees falling on lines is the major source of power outages.

Report Line Problems – Please report any conditions along power lines that need attention. When you call one of our offices, be prepared give details about the location and type of problem: broken or leaning poles, wires sagging too low, trees growing into the lines, broken insulators, sparks coming from lines or transformers, grass fires burning poles, children playing in a substation or underground transformer, meter tampering or theft of electricity.



# Check Emergency Generators

If you tie a generator into your home's wiring system, you must have a **double-pole, double-throw** switch installed between the generator and the Buckeye REC power supply. Without the switch, electricity from the generator could back-feed on the power lines and endanger linemen working to restore service during an emergency. If you have any doubt about your compliance with this safety requirement, have an electrician check your wiring or call Buckeye REC. We can tell you what's needed.

## Life Support Systems



Notify Buckeye REC if you or someone in your home is dependent on an electrically-powered life support unit. **We also strongly urge that anyone with life support or health monitoring equipment have a back-up power supply in case of emergencies.** No one can predict when power outages will occur or how long interruptions of service will last. Restoration efforts could take hours or days in the wake of severe storms. You are advised to have a backup power source for medical equipment or a place to go until electric service is restored.

**Buckeye REC strongly urges its members to install and properly maintain smoke alarms and carbon monoxide (CO) detectors in their homes and businesses.**



# Safety Around High Voltage Power

DO YOU KNOW WHAT CAN KEEP YOU SAFE?

## Power line safety checklist:

Accidentally contacting a power line can be dangerous, or even deadly, so please - KEEP A SAFE DISTANCE – ELECTRICITY CAN TRAVEL!

When outdoor, keep a safe distance from power lines and other equipment your co-op uses to get electricity to your home. Always remember to:

- Stay away from power lines, meters, transformers and electrical boxes.
- Never climb power poles or attach anything to the poles.
- Don't climb trees near power lines. This is work for professionals. If the vegetation grows in the right-of-way, Buckeye REC will schedule removal of the trees by its contractors. Call to notify us of these situations.
- Never fly kites, remote control airplanes or balloons near power lines.
- If you get something stuck on a power line, call **800-231-2732** and stay away!
- Keep a safe distance from overhead power lines when working with ladders or installing objects such as antennas or rain gutters.
- Never touch or go near a downed power line.
- Don't touch anything in contact with these wires, such as a car, fence or clothesline.
- Keep children and pets away from energized lines – electricity can travel!
- If you use a generator, check our website for important safety info.

If a power line falls on your car, stay inside the vehicle. Warn away people who try to touch the car or the line. Call yourself or ask someone to call **9-1-1**, then **800-282-7204**.

The only circumstance in which you should consider leaving a car that is in contact with a downed power line is if the vehicle catches fire. If it does, open the door. **DO NOT STEP OUT OF THE CAR!** You may receive a shock. Instead, jump free of the car so that your body clears the vehicle before touching the ground. Once you clear the car, shuffle in small steps at least 50 feet away, with both feet on the ground. Do not try to help someone else from the car while you are standing on nearby ground as electricity can travel!

## Be aware that most accidents involving electricity occur in and around the home

- If you're not a licensed electrician, never try to repair a fuse or breaker box. If you see broken or frayed wires, if certain circuits trip frequently, or if you notice any other problems, call an electrician.
- Never replace a blown fuse with a substitute, such as a penny, and always use the correct-sized fuse for replacement. A fuse that is too powerful can cause a fire hazard.
- If a fuse or circuit breaker frequently blows, you may have too many appliances, or appliances that may be too powerful, on that circuit. Try unplugging a few items. Then, if the circuit continues to blow, call an electrician – you may have a potentially serious problem.
- Always keep water away from the control panel.
- NEVER work on the electrical system while a control panel switch is on.
- If you have a power outage, check the control panel first. If your panel uses circuit breakers, reset it (them) from off to on. If you have fuses, look for the broken metal strip in the top of the blown fuse. Then, replace the fuse with one of the correct amperage.

The outlet, or receptacle, perhaps is the most commonly used and least-thought- of device in the home. Every electrical appliance, tool, computer and entertainment center component we use is powered through one. We just plug in and forget about it, assuming all our power needs will be met. And that's true if we follow some simple but important safety principles:

- Check outlets regularly for problems, including overheating, loose connections, reversed polarity, and corrosion. Consider having an electrical inspection performed by a qualified, licensed electrician to help determine the integrity of your outlets and your entire electrical system.
- Check for outlets that have loose-fitting plugs, which can lead to arcing and fire.

- Avoid overloading outlets with too many appliances. Never plug more than one high-wattage appliance in at a time in each.
- Make sure there are safety covers on all unused outlets that are accessible to children. Replace any missing or broken wall plates.
- Check for any hot or discolored outlet wall plates. Look from across the room; Sometimes you'll see a darkened area in a teardrop shape around and above the outlet that may indicate dangerous heat buildup at the connections.
- If an outlet or switch wall plate is hot to the touch, immediately shut off the circuit and have it professionally checked.

Buckeye REC strongly urges its members to install and properly maintain smoke alarms & carbon monoxide (CO) detectors in their homes and businesses.

## Only Buckeye Rural Electric Employees are permitted to remove a meter

No member or other individuals are permitted to gain access (i.e. cutting seal, removing meter, etc.) to a meter socket (base), served by Buckeye Rural Electric Cooperative (BREC) under any circumstance.

If a member requests to have the power disconnected or a meter removed (pulled), they must coordinate with BREC. Only BREC employees are permitted to remove (pull) a meter. This work is only to be performed during regular work hours unless approved by a supervisor. Members should provide adequate notice for BREC to schedule. Any applicable fees will apply.

If BREC finds the seal removed and a meter that has been removed (pulled) by anyone other than an employee, the member's account will be charged \$350 (minimum) for unauthorized meter tampering. Other additional charges may apply.

## **BUCKEYE REC SCHOOL AND CLUB SAFETY PROGRAM**

Co-op personnel demonstrate electrical safety at local schools and civic organizations. The 45-minute safety program incorporates a high-voltage display and lessons geared for age groups from 5 years old to senior citizens. Call us to schedule a safety demonstration.

## **ENERGY MANAGEMENT**

The first step to better energy management is learning how your home and habits affect your bill.



## **BECOME AN INFORMED CONSUMER**

Your co-op provides the same quiet and reliable electricity whether you plug in a refrigerator or a lamp; however, they use very different amounts of electricity – and have dramatically different costs to operate.

Because electrical outlets don't come equipped with gauges like cars, you have to take a different approach to understanding how much energy you're using when you plug things in.

This guide is designed to provide the tools and information to give you a better understanding of how much electricity you use in your home and how your electricity use affects your bill each month.

# UNDERSTANDING YOUR ENERGY USE

We all know the wonderful things electricity makes possible. There's TV, radio, video games, and computers. Not to mention that electricity keeps us warm in winter, cool in summer, cooks our food, heats our water, cleans our clothes and keeps our homes and schools bright. Electricity is always ready to make our lives a little easier.

Electricity's abundance and reliability are precisely why it's so tricky to tell how much you're using. Other types of energy require occasional reminders of how much you've consumed – your car will need a refill, or you'll empty the propane tank on your gas grill – but you never really “run out” of electricity.

However, that doesn't mean you can't measure how much you use. The information and tools provided in this book will help you become a smarter electrical consumer and make wise energy choices.

## FIRST, WASTE LESS

You don't need to give anything up to reduce your energy use. By simply changing a few habits you can reduce the amount of electricity you waste and take control of your energy costs. Being a smart energy consumer means you're doing the same thing you've always done – only with less energy.

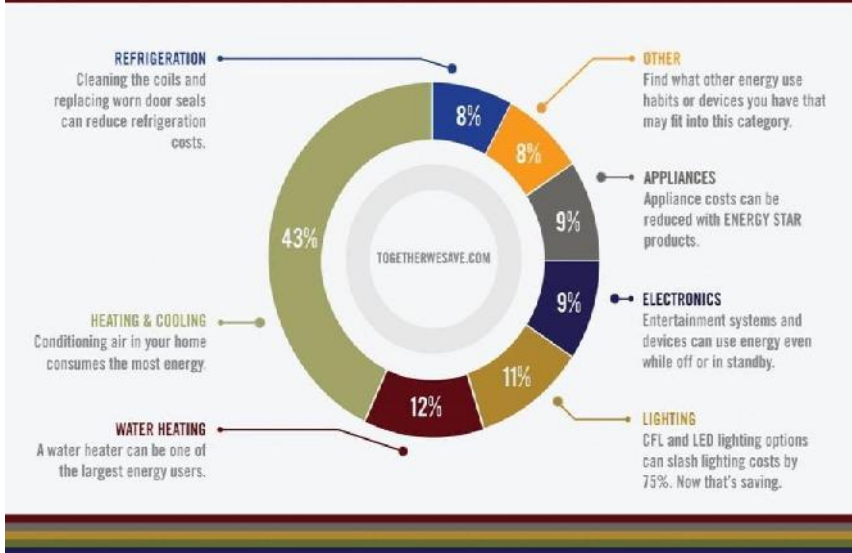
This guide will introduce ways you can become Energy Wise by providing tips to make your home more efficient. This is just a start. Check with your electric cooperative to find out what assistance they can offer.



## USING YOUR METER

Your meter is a highly accurate tool. If used properly, it gives you the most precise picture of your electricity use. The most important thing to remember is to read it on the same day of each month. If you check your meter every 30 days, you'll be able to monitor your electricity use more accurately.

# HOME ENERGY USE



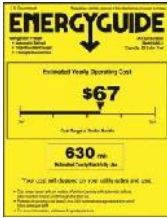
## TOP 10 TIPS

1. Plug electronic devices such as cable boxes, printers and TVs into power strips to turn off during vacations or long periods without use.
2. Replace any light bulb, especially ones that burn more than one hour per day, with a light-emitting diode (led) bulb.
3. Close shades and drapes during the day to help keep heat out in summer.
4. Outside your home, caulk around all penetrations including telephone, electrical, cable, gas, water spigots, dryer vents, etc.
5. Set water heater temperature no higher than 120 degrees F.
6. Use air-dry cycle instead of heat-dry cycle to dry dishes.
7. Keep your garage door down. A warmer garage in the winter and cooler garage in the summer will save energy.
8. Change HVAC filters monthly.
9. Make sure the dryer vent hose is not kinked or clogged.
10. Ensure gaskets around door seal tightly.

# DETERMINING YOUR ELECTRICITY USE

Your home is unique. Factors that affect your energy use range from the number of people in your family, to the type of heating and cooling you use, to how often you entertain guests.

Other factors can affect energy costs as well. Was it colder or hotter than normal? Did you finally buy that new stereo system you've been saving up for?



## ENERGY GUIDE

If you've shopped for appliances, you've likely seen the bright yellow Energy Guide label. This label provides an estimated annual operating cost for an appliance. The cost to operate an appliance should be a major consideration in your purchasing decisions; a less expensive appliance may eventually cost you more due to the accumulation of higher energy bills.



## ENERGY STAR

If you're not into crunching numbers to compare energy costs, just look for the Energy Star logo. It's a simple way to ensure you're buying an efficient product. ENERGY STAR certified products meet strict energy efficiency guidelines set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Energy.



# ESTIMATING ELECTRICITY USE AND COST

Appliance and equipment wattage and operating costs can vary greatly. The following formulas will show you how to determine where your electricity dollars are being spent.

## Step 1

Your electric bill amount is determined by the number of kilowatt-hours (kWh) used during a billing period. The first step is to determine your average cost per kWh. Average kWh cost = \$ amount of the energy portion of your electric bill divided by kWh used.

**EXAMPLE:**  $\$100 \div 1,000 \text{ kWh} = \text{\$}0.10 \text{ per kWh}$

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## Step 2

Since the wattage of an appliance determines the electrical use per hour, the second step is to determine the wattage of the appliances of concern. The wattage of an appliance is found on the serial plate. Electrical load may also be expressed in volts and amps, rather than watts. If so, multiply volts X amps to determine the wattage.

**EXAMPLE:**  $120 \text{ volts} \times 12.1 \text{ amps} = 1,452 \text{ watts}$

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## Step 3

Use the formula shown in the following example to estimate use and cost. A light uses 100 watts and is left on 15 hours. How many kWh are used and what does it cost you?

**EXAMPLE:** kWh used =  $(100 \text{ watts} \times 15 \text{ hrs}) \div 1,000 \text{ watts} = 1.5 \text{ kWh}$

*1,000 watt-hours are equal to 1 kWh - Your cost =  $1.5 \text{ kWh} \times \text{\$}0.10 = \text{\$}0.15$*

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## Step 4

To find your daily cost for electricity, divide your bill amount by the number of days in the month.

**EXAMPLE:**  $\$100 \div 30 \text{ days} = \text{\$}3.33 \text{ which is your daily cost.}$

To find the daily cost per person in your family, divide the daily cost by the number of people in your family.

**EXAMPLE:**  $\$3.33 \div 4 \text{ people} = \text{\$}0.83 \text{ per person per day}$

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## ELECTRICITY USE TABLE

Appliance	Watts	Appliance	Watts
<b>Kitchen</b>		<b>Lights</b>	
Blender	500	CFL Bulb - 40 Watt Equivalent	11
Can Opener	150	CFL Bulb-60 Watt Equivalent	18
Coffee Machine	1000	CFL Bulb-75 Watt Equivalent	20
Dishwasher	1200-1500	CFL Bulb-100 Watt Equivalent	30
Espresso Machine	800	Compact Fluorescent 20 Watt	22
Freezer - Upright - 15 cu. ft.	1240 Wh/Day	Halogen -40 Watt	40
Freezer - Chest - 15 cu. ft.	1080 Wh/Day	Incandescent 50 Watt	50
Fridge - 20 cu. ft. (AC)	1411 Wh/Day	Incandescent 100 Watt	100
Fridge - 16 cu. ft. (AC)	1200 Wh/Day	LED Bulb-40 Watt Equivalent	10
Garbage Disposal	450	LED Bulb 60 Watt	13
Kettle-Electric	1200	LED Bulb 75 Watt	18
Microwave	1000	LED Bulb 100 Watt	23
Oven-Electric	1200	<b>Laundry</b>	
Toaster	850	Clothes Dryer-Elec	3000
Toaster Oven	1200	Clothes Dryer-Gas	1800
Stand Mixer	300	Clothes Washer	800
<b>Heating/Cooling</b>		Iron	1200
Box Fan	200		
Ceiling Fan	120	Vacuum	1000

**Note:** TVs, Computers, and other devices left plugged in but not turned on still draw power.

Appliance	Watts	Appliance	Watts
<b>Tools</b>		Tankless Water Heater-Electric	18,000
Band Saw-14"	1100	Water Heater-Elec	4500
Belt Sander-3"	1000	Window Air Conditioner 10,000 BTU	900
Chain Saw -12"	1100	Window Air Conditioner 12,000 BTU	3250
Circular Saw 7-1/4"	900	Well Pump 1/3 1HP	750
Circular Saw 8-1/4"	1400	<b>Living Room</b>	
Disc Sander 9"	1200	Blu-ray Player	15
Drill 1/4"	250	Cable Box	35
Drill 1/2"	750	DVD Player	15
Drill 1"	1000	TV - LCD	150
Hedge Trimmer	450	TV - Plasma	200
Weed Eater	500	Satellite Dish	25
<b>Miscellaneous</b>		Stereo Receiver	450
Clock Radio	7	Video Game Console	150
Curling Iron	150	<b>Office</b>	
Dehumidifier	280	Desktop Computer (Standard)	200
Electric Shaver	15	Desktop Computer (Gaming)	500
Electric Blanket	200	Laptop	100
Hair Dryer	1500	LCD Monitor	100
Humidifier	200	Modem	7
Central Air Conditioner- 24,000 BTU	3800	Paper Shredder	150
	3250	Printer	100
Furnace Fan Blower	800	Router	7
Space Heater	1500	Smart Phone Recharge	6
Sewing Machine	100	Tablet-Recharge	8

# MONITOR YOUR USE AND COST

The most effective way to measure your electricity use is to use your meter and keep an accurate record. Take a few minutes each day (preferable at the same time) to jot down your electric meter reading. Start the first day of the month.

By subtracting the previous day's reading from the current reading, you'll get the number of kilowatt-hours (kWh) used during that 24-hour period. By adding the daily figures into a weekly total, you can see how much – and when – your family used power during that month.

*Monitoring your kilowatt-hours is a vital first step to understanding your electricity use. Understanding your electricity use is the first step to becoming more efficient at home. (Please use the graph on the next page to determine your electric use)*

Visit [www.buckeyerec.coop](http://www.buckeyerec.coop) for energy saving tips and use the home energy calculators to see where your energy dollars are going. Select Tool Center and choose the calculator for your specific need.

	DAILY READING	kWh USED DAILY	RECORD OF DAILY ACTIVITIES THAT AFFECT YOUR ENERGY USE
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
	WEEKLY TOTAL		
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
	WEEKLY TOTAL		
15			
16			
17			
18			
19			
20			
21			
	WEEKLY TOTAL		
22			
23			
24			
25			
26			
27			
28			
	WEEKLY TOTAL		
29			
30			
31			

EXTRA DAYS TOTAL

# FACTORS THAT AFFECT ENERGY USE

## Season

Electric bills will typically jump in the summer due to air conditioner use. You may see similar increases in the winter if you heat with electricity. Electric bills tend to be lower in the spring and fall, when temperatures are milder.

## 'Phantom' Load

When you turn something off, that doesn't necessarily mean that it has stopped using electricity. Many electronics that have a standby mode draw an electric current even while they're turned off. Known as "phantom" loads, they can add up quickly. In fact, the average home wastes 42 kilowatt-hours each month due to phantom loads – that's nearly \$50 per year. Unplug all electronics that display a clock or light while turned off, or use a smart power strip to limit phantom loads.

## Vacation

When you're gone for a couple of weeks, your electric bill should decrease significantly, right? Wrong!

Many people believe that when they leave for vacation, their electric meter stops until they return. If you've ever wondered how an empty house can use so much energy, ask the follow questions:

- 1. Was the water heater turned down or off during your vacation?** Remember, if the water heater is left on during vacation, it will continue to operate and maintain the tank temperature even if you're not using any hot water.
- 2. Did other appliances and electronic devices run while you were on vacation?** Clocks, cell phone chargers, DVD players, heating and air conditioning equipment, computers, fax machines and TV sets may draw some "phantom" electricity. Unplug them while you're on vacation.

## Vintage

Older appliances and electronic devices often draw more current than newer models. While it can be difficult to invest in new appliances or electronic devices when you've got reliable older models, the cost savings from reduced energy use can, in some cases, recoup much of the cost of an upgrade.

# IT STARTS WITH YOU

Making a habit out of any combination of the following measures can significantly reduce your electricity usage:



1. **ADJUST THERMOSTATS** – Turn down your thermostat during cool months and turn it up when air conditioning. Install a programmable thermostat to accommodate your weekly schedule (i.e., don't heat an empty home).
2. **TURN DOWN THE WATER HEATER** – Although some manufactures set water heater thermostats at 140 degrees F, most households usually only require them to be set at 120 degrees F. For each 10 degrees F reduction in water temperature, you can save 3% - 5% in energy costs.
3. **GO LOW FLOW** – Install water flow restrictors and aerators on sink faucets and shower heads. These measures save money by reducing water use – and minimize the burden on your water heater.
4. **TURN OFF LIGHTS** – Just like mom and dad always said: leaving lights on wastes electricity.
5. **SWAP FOR CFLS or LEDS** – Compact fluorescent lamps use 70% less energy and last up to 10 times longer than standard incandescent bulbs.

6. **PLUG DUCT LEAKS** – Leakage from areas such as joints, elbows and connections in your ductwork can be substantial. Use foil tape (not duct tape) or caulk to seal ducts.
7. **INSULATE** – You spend a lot of money and energy heating your home. Don't let it escape so easily. Use insulation with an R value of 45 or more in the ceiling and attic, and 20 or more in the walls.
8. **REPLACE FILTERS** – Replacing a dirty air filter can save money by reducing the amount of electricity needed to run a blower motor.
9. **SHUT THEM OFF** – Turn off electronic devices when not in use. Don't under-estimate the energy savings realized by turning off or unplugging unused televisions, stereos and computers.
10. **FILL THE CRACKS** – Seal exterior cracks and holes and ensure tight-fitting windows. Small cracks or holes in the building's exterior can really add up to substantial heating or cooling losses.
11. **MAKE SOME SHADE** – Sunlight streaming through windows in the summer can substantially increase air conditioning costs. Use shading methods (like window coverings, awnings, trees and bushes) wherever possible.
12. **CLOSE THE DOOR** – Don't heat or cool the outdoors. Keep exterior doors closed as much as possible. Block and insulate unneeded windows and other openings.

**FOR MORE MONEY-SAVING ENERGY EFFICIENT IDEAS, VISIT THESE WEB SITES:**

[www.togetherwesave.com](http://www.togetherwesave.com)

[www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov)

[www.buckeyerec.coop](http://www.buckeyerec.coop)-select Tool Center to use any of our home energy calculators



## STATEMENT OF NON DISCRIMINATION-ALL ARE WELCOME

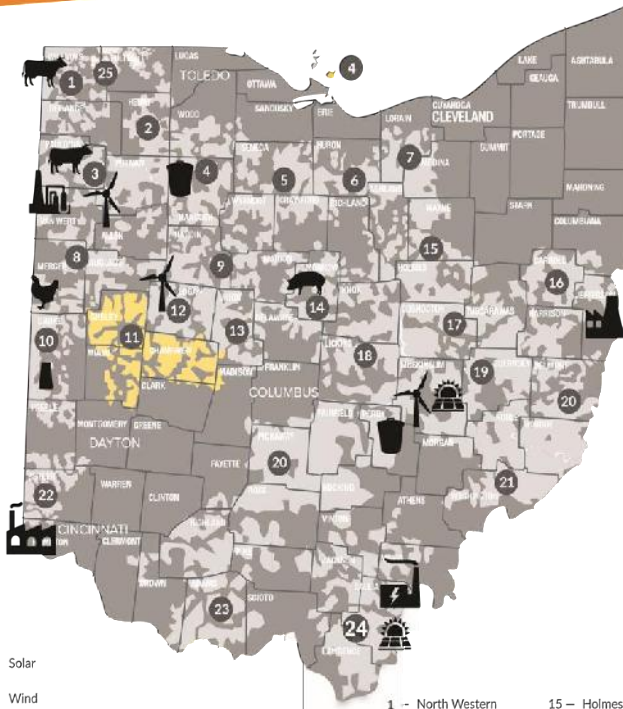
In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442, or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

# Ohio's Electric Cooperatives' Service Area



- Solar
- Wind
- Biodigester
- Biodigester
- Biodigester
- Landfill
- Cardinal Plant

- Kyger Creek Generating Station
- Robert P. Mone Peaking Plant
- Greenville Peaking Plant
- Clifty Creek Generating Station

- 1 - North Western
- 2 - Tricounty
- 3 - Paulding-Putnam
- 4 - Hancock-Wood
- 5 - North Central
- 6 - Firelands
- 7 - Lorain-Medina
- 8 - Midwest
- 9 - Mid-Ohio
- 10 - Darke
- 11 - Pioneer
- 12 - Logan
- 13 - Union
- 14 - Consolidated
- 15 - Holmes-Wayne
- 16 - Carroll
- 17 - Frontier
- 18 - The Energy Co-op (Licking)
- 19 - Guernsey-Muskingum
- 20 - South Central
- 21 - Washington
- 22 - Butler
- 23 - Adams
- 24 - Buckeye
- 25 - Midwest Energy (based in Michigan)

## OHIO'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

www.ohioec.org

**Buckeye Power:** The wholesale power supplier for the 25 distribution cooperatives serving Ohio.  
**Ohio Rural Electric Cooperatives:** The statewide trade and services association.  
 Together, we are **Ohio's Electric Cooperatives.**

[www.ohioec.org](http://www.ohioec.org)

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