

miami-cass remc

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

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PERU, IN 46970

PHONE NUMBERS & HOURS

Local.....765-473-6668
Toll Free.....800-844-6668
Fax.....765-473-8770
E-mail.....mcremc@mcremc.coop
Web Site.....www.mcremc.coop
Call Before You Dig.....811

Office hours: 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Monday-Friday

CUSTOMER CONTACTS

James Yates
Chief Executive Officer

Robert Schwartz
Director of Operations

Charles Lewis
Director of Office Services

Jody Long
Director of Finance and Accounting

Susan Wagoner
Director of Marketing

TO REPORT AN OUTAGE

- Check circuit breakers or fuses first.
- If possible, check to see if neighbors' lights are also out.
- Phone 765-473-6668 or toll free 800-844-6668 24 hours a day and report the outage. Give the name the service is listed under. If possible, give map location and account number from bill.
- Give us your phone number in case we need to call you back. State the problem, such as loss of power, partial power, dimming or flickering lights.
- Please be patient. Our crews will restore service as quickly as possible.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Charles W. Wilson, president
Donald E. Willson, vice president
Paul D. Childers, secretary-treasurer
Mark B. Hahn
D. Marion Hopkins Jr.
Dennis Jim Savage
Fred Warner

Are you a winner this month?

Here on these blue-edged pages, four account numbers are hidden. Find your account number, and call us during office hours by the last working day of the month, and a \$20 credit will appear on a future month's bill. Wondering what your account number is? Check your Miami-Cass REMC bill. It's on there twice. Every month, four members have a chance to win!

CO-OP News

Information from your electric cooperative

CEO COMMENTS

Environmental umpire is making bad calls for all

As a big sports fan, sometimes I'm upset by an umpire's decision. I know "umps" are needed to enforce the rules of the game, but I've seen quite a few blown calls in my time.

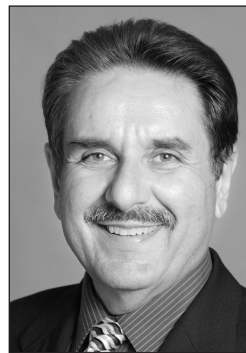
In many ways, umpire mistakes mirror what's going on with government regulation regarding electric utilities and electricity production. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) writes the rulebook for power suppliers like Wabash Valley Power Association, which generates your electricity. The EPA also serves as an umpire, enforcing the rules of the game.

At Miami-Cass REMC, we're committed to keeping your electric bill affordable. So you can understand why I get upset when I see EPA folks make bad calls that put pressure on how much you pay for power.

Over the past two years, Congress debated, but never passed, a comprehensive climate change bill. Into this void, the EPA has stepped forward and has now fielded a team of new regulations. Out of these "players," three could hit electric bills out of the park.

• **Clean Air Transport Rule:** This rule kicks in next year and aims to cap power plant emissions of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides from state to state between 31 eastern states and the District of Columbia, **including Indiana**. By 2014, EPA claims the rule – when combined with other state and federal measures (such as Maximum Achievable Control Technology, or MACT, rules for mercury emissions) – will reduce sulfur dioxide emissions from power plants by 71 percent and nitrogen oxides emissions by 52 percent from 2005 levels. However, it will cost utilities \$2.8 billion every year to comply. 524000

• **Cooling water intake requirements:** Power plants use water from lakes or rivers to cool generating equipment. While screens and various components prevent fish and other wildlife from entering water intake pipes, the EPA believes this equipment could be improved. We're expecting a rule proposal this month, and the impact could be severe. The North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC), the nation's bulk power grid watchdog, claims if this rule is strictly enforced, one-third of U.S. electricity capacity may need to be retired.



James Yates
Chief Executive Officer

• **Coal ash:** To ensure the safe disposal of fly ash and other residues (bottom ash, scrubber sludge, and slag) produced by coal-fired power plants (known as coal combustion residuals or CCRs), the EPA is considering whether or not to designate the materials – for the first time – as hazardous waste. Complying with this rule could cost billions and would also halt recycling efforts. Right now we use one-third of all fly ash as a Portland cement substitute – and for every ton of concrete replaced by fly ash, a ton of greenhouse gas emissions is avoided. On four prior occasions –

most recently under the Clinton Administration in 2000 – the EPA determined CCRs do **not** warrant regulation as a hazardous waste. Not only did EPA find CCRs rarely, if ever, exhibit a hazardous waste characteristic, the agency also concluded states can safely manage CCRs under federal non-hazardous waste rules.

Miami-Cass REMC is committed to keeping you informed about government regulations that will increase the cost of electricity. We're joining co-ops nationally to ask Congress for a much-needed time-out – a two-year moratorium on EPA regulation of carbon dioxide greenhouse gases. A delay would give lawmakers the opportunity to fashion climate change legislation that protects you, our consumers, and keeps electric bills affordable.

We're working together to keep your electric bills affordable. We're controlling costs through innovation. And we at Miami-Cass REMC continue to put you, our members, first. No matter what the future brings, one thing is certain – "We're looking out for you." Find out more at www.ourenergy.coop and ask your elected officials tough questions about our energy future.



The environmental umpire is set to make some bad calls that will impact your electric bill.

Does a wood-burning fireplace keep a home warmer?

This is a fable. Nearly everyone agrees that a wood-burning fireplace adds beauty and value to a home. But, it can also be a source of major heat loss. In fact, 80 to 90 percent of the heat produced by a wood-burning fireplace is often lost through the chimney. Moreover, an open fireplace pulls in more air than needed for combustion (including the warm air within your home and the cold air that seeps in around windows, doors, and other openings), which can substantially increase your winter heating bills.



Kim Burton
Energy Advisor

Keep your heating bills from going up in smoke

There are a number of fireplace accessories that, if used correctly, will help you save energy by reducing heat loss through your fireplace, including the following:

- **Fireplace damper** — The damper is designed to prevent the warm air generated by your furnace from being lost through the chimney when it is not in use. Over time, temperature changes and moisture can warp the damper so it no longer seals properly. Without a tight seal, you may see a significant increase

in your heating bills. If the seal on the damper is not working properly, have it repaired or replaced. 204001

- **Flue sealer** — A flue sealer (also known as a draft stopper) is a removable stopper that prevents air from escaping through the chimney. These inflatable devices — made from heavy-gauge plastic — are inexpensive, and easy to install and remove. You typically install a flue sealer in the off-season and remove it at the start of the heat-

ing season. Place the flue sealer just below the damper to prevent heat loss and down drafts when the fireplace is cold and not in use.

- **Glass doors and fireplace covers** — Glass fireplace doors are designed to fit standard firebox openings. Secure-fitting frames with fiberglass seals and adjustable inlet vents reduce heat loss and prevent down drafts. Removable fireplace covers, which are considerably less expensive than glass doors, fit tightly around the fireplace opening to prevent heat loss when the fireplace is not being used.

- **Fireplace inserts** — A fireplace insert is like a wood stove modified to fit your masonry fireplace. It prevents heat from escaping up your chimney and can improve the efficiency of your fireplace by 65 percent or more.



Inserts consist of a firebox and a steel shell. Room air is warmed as it flows between the firebox and shell. Most units have glass or metal doors and air circulating fans, which redistribute the warmed air into the room. Professional installation is recommended.

No matter what method you choose to reduce heat loss, it is important to have your fireplace cleaned and inspected at least once per year by a qualified technician. Follow manufacturer's recommended maintenance procedures for the cleaning and care of your fireplace. With a small investment and a little attention to detail, you can enjoy a warm, cozy fire while saving on energy costs and increasing the comfort of your home.

Energy saving ideas for your laundry

Here are some quick suggestions, courtesy of Miami-Cass REMC, to help you save energy costs when doing your laundry.

- Wash laundry in cold water instead of hot. Hot water only needs to be used for very dirty loads.
- Wash and dry only full loads. The machine uses about the same amount of water whether you wash a full load or just one item.
- Separate your laundry into loads of slow and fast drying clothes.
- Don't add wet items to a load in the dryer that has already been started.
- Clean the lint filter after every load.
- Check your outside dryer exhaust vent. Make sure it opens and closes freely. If it doesn't close tightly, outside air is getting into your house through the dryer, and you will need to replace the exhaust vent.
- Dry clothes outside in good weather.
- Use the moisture sensor feature on your dryer (if there is one).
- Buy ENERGY STAR®-rated washers. Qualified washers use about half the water and electricity of standard washers.

Choose your appliances carefully

Every appliance has two price tags — the purchase price and the operating costs. Consider both when buying a new appliance.

Appliances account for about 20 percent of your household's energy consumption. When shopping for a new appliance, look for the ENERGY STAR® label. ENERGY STAR-labeled products usually exceed minimum federal standards by a substantial amount.

When you're shopping for appliances, think

of two price tags. The first covers the purchase price — think of it as a down payment.

The second is the cost of operating the appliance during its lifetime. You'll be paying on that second price tag every month with your utility bill for the next 10 to 20 years, depending on the appliance. Refrigerators last an average of 13 years; room air conditioners and clothes washers, about 11 years each; dishwashers about nine years.

Based on standard U.S. Government tests

ENERGYGUIDE

Refrigerator-Freezer
With Automatic Defrost
With Side-Mounted Freezer
Without Through-the-Door-Ice Service

XYZ Corporation
Model ABC-W
Capacity: 23 Cubic Feet

Compare the Energy Use of this Refrigerator with Others before You Buy.

This Model Uses
776 kWh/year

Energy Use (kWh/year) range of all similar models

Uses Least Energy 742	Uses Most Energy 836
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kWh/year (kilowatt-hours per year) is a measure of energy (electricity) use. Your utility company uses it to compute your bill. Only models with 22.5 to 24 cubic feet and the above features are used in this scale.

Refrigerators using more energy cost more to operate. This model's estimated yearly operating cost is:

\$68

Based on a 1995 U.S. Government national average cost of 8.4¢ per kWh for electricity. Your actual operating cost will vary depending on your local utility rates and your use of the product.
Important: Retain this label before consumer purchase as a violation of Federal law (16 U.S.C. 6305).

How to Read the EnergyGuide Label

The EnergyGuide label gives you two important pieces of information you can use to compare different brands and models when shopping for a new refrigerator:

- Estimated energy consumption on a scale showing a range for similar models
- Estimated yearly operating cost based on the national average cost of electricity.

To help you figure out whether an appliance is energy efficient, the federal government requires most appliances to display the bright yellow and black EnergyGuide label. Although these labels will not tell you which appliance is the most efficient, they will tell you the annual energy consumption and operating cost for each appliance so you can compare them yourself.

The importance of tree trimming

Miami-Cass REMC trims trees every year for several reasons. I'd like to discuss a few of those reasons with you.

The first reason is safety. Trees that grow too close to our lines are susceptible to voltages in excess of 7,200. During the right conditions, that type of voltage can carry through the tree and cause harm or even death to people, animals and equipment.

Another important reason for tree trimming is reliability. Trees are the leading cause of power outages at your REMC. Most outages occur during storms of any type – snow, rain, thunderstorm, ice and wind. Trees may fall or limbs may break, blow into the wires or even just hang on the wires.

Miami-Cass REMC works hard to maintain the trees on our system. Reliability is of great importance to us. Currently we use contractors to do our trimming. This helps to keep costs down and also frees up our employees to build and maintain our lines.

The majority of our tree trimming occurs during the fall and winter months. Trimming at these times is generally better for the trees and also cuts down on waste, as most of the leaves are gone. Planning for trimming is done in the summer, allowing the planner to have a better view of the trees needing to be trimmed. Our current plan is for a four to five year trim.

Trimming trees around power lines is solely



Rob Schwartz
Director of Operations

the responsibility of the co-op. Attempting to do any trimming yourself can be dangerous and costly. If there is ever any question of the proximity of a power line to a tree, please contact us. A trained employee can give you a recommendation. 2500

Having your trees trimmed can offer many advantages, and it should be considered for all trees on your property. Tree trimming is essential when growing a new tree. The shape of the tree can be controlled by proper trimming early. When you have your trees trimmed, you reduce the risk of limb breakage, disease, damage to your property, and irregular tree shape.

Tree trimming is not only aesthetic, but it can keep your trees healthy and promote the growth of foliage, flowers and fruit. Letting your fruit tree limbs get long and out of control can be a real problem. Tree limbs can easily get weighed down by the weight of the ripening fruit. This can cause your tree to lose many limbs in one growing season. Not only does this make your tree look unsightly in your yard, but it opens up areas on the tree, making it susceptible to disease.

A professional tree trimmer will know what time of year is best for your particular tree to be trimmed. Some trees should not be trimmed in the winter. If you are trying to promote new growth, have your trees trimmed in the summer. A skilled tree trimmer can tell ex-

actly where to cut to promote growth in areas where it is needed. This can help improve the shape of your tree and can balance the number and density of limbs. You can also decide if you would rather have a wide or slender tree shape. Having a balanced shape can also add strength to the tree. A professional arborist or tree trimmer will know how to trim the limbs so they grow in the direction you desire.

Tree trimmers will also look for certain types of limbs to trim. For example, limbs close to the ground will usually be trimmed. Smaller trees trying to grow at the base of the trunk will also most likely need to be removed. Dead and broken limbs will need to be properly cut so they can heal correctly. There are many factors that should be considered, which is why most people wisely choose a professional tree trimmer to do the job.

For the most reliable results, you should do a little research before hiring a tree trimmer. Many people may buy some equipment and call themselves professionals. If you want to be sure of your results and get a real professional opinion, call a certified arborist. This can be especially important if you have a tree that needs to be saved.

Hiring a certified arborist for pest management and disease control could literally mean the difference in saving or losing a tree. Make sure you get real, honest advice when looking for tree trimming services. Call a certified arborist or a tree trimming service for all of your tree care needs.

Attention REMC members!

Act now to help prevent increases in your electric bills!

Tell members of Congress they must step up to keep the EPA from using the Clean Air Act (CAA) to regulate greenhouse gas emissions from power plants. Congress never intended for the EPA to use the act to regulate carbon dioxide.

Even the act's author has called the CAA the wrong tool for the job – predicting that the resulting regulation would be a “glorious mess.” Ask your elected officials to stop the EPA before it's too late.

Please visit www.ourenergy.coop and let your senators and representatives know that climate change legislation must be done in a way that protects your monthly budget.

**ACT
NOW!**



Electric utilities, like Miami-Cass REMC, trim trees for many reasons including safety and reliability. Trees are the leading cause of outages at Miami-Cass REMC.

BOARD UPDATE

Your board of directors at work: Results of the December meeting

1. Counted seven board members present.
2. Fred Warner presented the December 2010 Wabash Valley Power board report.
3. CEO report was presented by Jim Yates.
4. Minutes of the previous board meeting were approved.
5. Minutes of the 2011 budget meeting were approved.
6. November monthly operating, financial, marketing and safety reports were reviewed and approved.
7. Approved new membership application and service agreement.
8. Selected delegates and alternates to the NRECA, NRTC, Federated, NISC and CFC annual meetings.
9. The CEO is to meet with a potential building architect to discuss the building renovation project. 646121
10. Set the next board meeting for Tuesday, Jan. 25, at 9 a.m.

Scholarship applications are available this month

Miami-Cass REMC will grant scholarships to graduating seniors again this year! The scholarships are funded through the proceeds of our long distance telephone service. Applications will be accepted until March 18.

Scholarship applications will be available at the Miami-Cass REMC office or on our website, www.mcremc.coop. Applications may also be obtained in the guidance offices of the following schools: Caston, Lewis Cass, Logansport, Maconaquah, North Miami, Oak Hill, Peru and Pioneer.

To qualify for a scholarship, an applicant must:

- Come from a household receiving electrical service from Miami-Cass REMC.

- Be a current high school senior, with aspirations to further his/her education and who can demonstrate financial need.

- Provide a current high school transcript of grades.

- Provide a letter of recommendation from a teacher or guidance counselor.

- Be able to enroll, at least part-time, at an accredited educational institution.

The Miami-Cass REMC board president will appoint a committee of three REMC directors to select the scholarship recipients. At least \$3,000 in scholarship funds will be available for awarding to deserving students.

Scholarships will be made payable to the educational institution, which must be an accredited college, university, or technical school.

Children and grandchildren of current Miami-Cass REMC board members and employees are not eligible to apply.

Students who are selected for scholarships will be recognized at our Member Appreciation Day/Annual Meeting on Sept. 17.



Old washers agitate your clothes.
Especially your pockets.

Old washers waste water—hot water. Which means energy. Which means money. And lots of it. Give your clothes a break, cut the waste and save with an ENERGY STAR® qualified clothes washer. You'll save a ton of water, really cut your energy costs, and get a \$50 rebate. Not bad for doing what's good.

\$50 REBATE



ON A QUALIFYING
ENERGY STAR®
CLOTHES WASHER

For rebate details, contact your
Miami-Cass REMC Energy Advisor:
765-473-6668 / mcremc.coop

Save the Energy Guide from your
purchase to claim your rebate.



Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives
The power of human connections®