

Bedford Rural Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

BEDFORD REC

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814-623-5101

Email: support@bedfordrec.com
Website: www.bedfordrec.com

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OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday
7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Electric Vehicle FAQs



YOU'VE LIKELY HEARD OR READ that most automakers have planned to transition of many or all their new vehicles to electric-only models over the next 10 years. At this point, no one really knows to what degree that plan will become reality. Regardless of the type of car you drive today, the electrification of some sectors of the transportation arena is underway.

We regularly receive inquiries about electric vehicles (EVs) from Bedford Rural Electric members, so I wanted to respond to some of those frequently-asked questions:

Q: Why is the co-op communicating about electric vehicles?

A: There is a lot of information in the media about EVs, both good and bad. We are providing information so that our members can make informed decisions when considering an EV purchase.

Q: Does the co-op have an EV?

A: We do not, but we have budgeted for the purchase of one in 2023 for research and development purposes. We intend to learn how EVs operate, what infrastructure is needed to support them, and to help raise awareness and promote understanding of EV technologies.

Q: Why is the cooperative involved in EV infrastructure issues?

A: All electric utilities are planning now to ensure they have the necessary infrastructure in place to meet future EV charging needs — without jeopardizing our system's reliability. Upgrading our infrastructure to accommodate widespread EV adoption will cost millions of dollars. As your local co-op, we believe we are the best resource to advise and help our members and local businesses plan for the future.

Q: Can I charge my EV using an existing outlet or do I need a special outlet?

A: All EVs come with a 110-volt-compatible (Level 1) charging unit that can be plugged into any standard household outlet. For an eight-hour charge, this will enable traveling around 36 to 40 miles a day. If you typically drive longer distances or are in a hurry, a Level 2 charger provides about 180 miles of range over an eight-hour charging period. A Level 2 charger must be installed by a licensed electrician.

Q: Does the outside temperature affect the range of an EV?

A: During the recent December cold snap, some EV owners saw their range reduced by as much as 25% within minutes of leaving the garage. Others, who were parked outside, were unable to charge at all because of the cold. Unlike a gas-powered vehicle, where the heat is mostly coming from the engine, an EV must produce cabin heat and manage an optimal battery temperature with energy from the battery, which can reduce battery range.

Q: Will an EV meet my daily driving needs?

A: If you are like most Americans and drive an average of 30 miles a day, an EV can most certainly meet your daily needs. If your commute is more than 100 miles, you will want to seriously consider the pros and cons.

Q: What kind of incentives are available for EVs?

A: There are a variety of tax credits, rebates and other incentives available for EV purchases. Visit afdc.energy.gov/laws/electric-vehicles-for-tax-credit to learn about federal incentives available through the Clean Vehicle Credit program. The cooperative is in the process of developing an EV rebate program that will focus on the EV charger.

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Cooperative Youth Making a Difference in the World

GARY DIEHL, MEMBER SERVICES MANAGER

WE HAD A PRETTY SPECIAL and unique visitor to the co-op office a few weeks back. It's not too often adjectives like "7-year-old" and "CEO" are uttered in the same sentence, but that's exactly what Tuukka Saari is — and so much more. In April 2021 when he turned 6, some family members got him some tie-dye kits as gifts for his birthday. At the time, neither he nor his family had any idea what that would blossom into.

Tuukka lives in Everett along with his mother, Tiffany, and grandparents, Tom and Robin. They have lived in the same house and been members of Bedford REC for the past 18 years since relocating to from Connecticut. Tuukka attends Everett Elementary, where he is in the second grade. I'm not sure his classmates realize it, but he has become somewhat of a local celebrity. When you ask him about being famous, he



TIE-DYE: Tuukka Saari, 7-year-old CEO of Tie Dye by Tuukka, LLC, holds up a tie-dyed shirt he created for his business.

shrugs it off as if what he's been doing the last couple years is just second nature.

You see, subsequent to receiving those birthday gifts, he started making shirts for family members. Soon thereafter, family members and friends began asking for more shirts, and they started "donating" to get one. To keep costs minimized, his grandfather decided to buy some shirts in bulk. By January 2022, Tuukka and Tom decided to start a Facebook page and establish an LLC, mainly to give family members an opportunity to get a shirt and get rid of the stock that was accumulated. All this time, Tom was thinking in his head he may have to eat some shirts. Boy, was he wrong! Because it was at this point Tie Dye by Tuukka officially launched.

In March 2022, the donated money must have been on Tuukka's mind, because he started asking about helping others with some of the proceeds. He made his first charitable donation to Your Safe Haven of Bedford County in the amount of \$375. News of this young man's actions started to get out and the local paper, The Bedford Gazette, ran an article. Soon thereafter, Altoona's TV station, WTAJ, ran an in-



HARD AT WORK: Tuukka applies dye to a shirt as part of his business' production line.

terview at the family home in Everett. As news of Tuukka and his affinity for giving became more widespread, so did the desire for others to make sure he was recognized. And in April 2022, Tuukka and his mom hit the national stage with an appearance on "The Kelly Clarkson Show."

With the exposure, interest in Tuukka and sales of the products took off even more. Tom no longer had worries about "getting rid" of stock — actually, just the opposite. He had to think about keeping up with raw materials and filling orders. The business was and still is run completely out of the family's kitchen, so you can imagine as the Saaris were dealing with Tuukka's new-found fame and the rise in orders, there was a tiny bit of chaos. But they faced it head on, and when the summer rolled around, Tuukka decided to make his second charitable donation to the Special Olympics of Bedford. His third donation was a collaborative effort with Last Line clothing company in downtown Bedford. Last Line is a veteran-owned clothing store, which according to its website has the sole purpose of helping other veterans. Tie Dye by Tuukka and Last Line put their heads together and created a specially designed shirt, sold on a limited basis, with all the proceeds going to benefit homeless vets in our area. Trust me, Tuukka is not done yet — there are others on his radar. And as the company grows, so do the donation amounts.

Tuukka has a huge heart and, by definition, is a philanthropist. But at the same time, he's a business owner and has a trust established so some of the profits are put away for the future. He is an interesting 7-year-old because unlike other kids his age who might want to latch onto a new smart-

phone or Playstation, Tuukka has greater aspirations. When asked what he wants to do with some of his savings, he states, "I'd like to buy a \$2,000 Lamborghini." While the used car market for such an automobile may dictate a higher price, at least he has his eye on the prize. As far as the company and personal goals for Tie Dye by Tuukka, he says, matter-of-factly, "I want to build an empire."

Tie Dye by Tuukka is not a one-trick pony, either. The family may have started out doing just T-shirts, but their product line has expanded to include hoodies, pet bandanas, tote bags, tapestries and baby onesies. Tuukka also tackles projects such as making specialized shirts for sports fans, like those requested in Miami Dolphin colors or one requested by an avid Florida Gators backer. The family also made a unique shirt for the employees of a local dental office, where the shirt front was dyed into the shape of a tooth. And a couple of popular regional rock bands have placed substantial orders to share with their adoring fans. To date, the Saaris have produced more than 900 T-shirt orders and have shipped to 23 different states, including Hawaii. In an effort to help keep things organized, they launched a fantastic website — tiedyebytuukka.com — where you can check out their products, read about community endeavors and place orders. The company has almost 800 members on their Facebook page and can be reached at 814-617-0007 or P.O. Box 437, Everett, PA 15537.

A percentage of every sale is set aside for charity. And just like any other business, there are operating expenses. The production of tie-dyed materials is more involved than some may think, and time and labor goes into each product. It's essentially an eight-step process, including soaking, wringing, mixing inks, folding,



YOUNG BUSINESSMAN: Tuukka Saari, son of Bedford REC member Tiffany Saari, is joined by members of the Bedford County Chamber of Commerce during an induction ceremony.



GIVING BACK: Tuukka donates some of his proceeds to the Special Olympics of Bedford County.

coloring, plastic wrapping, rinsing and laundering. From start to finish, a shirt takes about 36 hours to produce. This doesn't include the up-front prep or shipping. The business is a three-person operation where Tuukka does a little bit of everything, from hands-on production to public relations and sales. Tom helps with folding, public relations and finances. Tiffany helps with folding, inventory and research (how to fold, special processes learned from the net, etc.), and developed the Tie Dye by Tuukka logo that appears on every product.

In November 2022, Tuukka became the youngest member of the Bedford County Chamber of Commerce. Two different TV stations were on hand to cover the event. His latest press was in the Altoona Mirror in December. Remember, though, at the end of the proverbial day, Tuukka is still just a kid. He plays soccer, is the

catcher on his baseball team, likes to ride bikes (he has a pedal and an e-bike) and, like any other youngster his age, plays the occasional video game. This gent has an infectious smile, is easy to talk to and is just an all-around quality young man. If you see him or the family out and about, make sure you say hello. And who knows — maybe you'll want to order a Tie Dye by Tuukka. 🍷



Food drive winner

Congratulations to the winners of this year's drawing for members who contributed to the Bedford REC Food Drive. Anthony and Marilyn Lemin of Everett received a \$50 credit on their electric bill.

FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

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Widespread EV adoption could potentially change the cooperative's electricity consumption pattern, which could change how we are billed by our

Bedford Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc. Nondiscrimination Statement

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 usda.gov/oascr 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.

Brooks R. Shoemaker
General Manager & CEO

Bedford Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc. is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

wholesale suppliers. In other words, it matters when members choose to charge their EVs. Therefore, we are contemplating incentives to provide owners a rebate on their charger in exchange for allowing the co-op to control it at certain

times of the month. It would be similar to our water heater program; however, there may be a time-of-use metering element involved, too.

Q: Should I let my co-op know if I purchase an EV?

A: Absolutely! As more cooperative members buy EVs, knowing where they're located helps ensure we have the infrastructure in place to meet charging needs.

Whether you're ready to make an EV purchase or wondering if an EV can meet your daily driving needs, we're here to help you make an informed decision.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Did you know insulating your electric water heater could save you 7% to 16% on annual water heating costs?

The U.S. Department of Energy rates this project as something most homeowners can tackle on their own. You can purchase pre-cut jackets or blankets for about \$20 at most home improvement stores. A Marathon water heater from the cooperative, it does not require additional insulation. 📺

BROOKS SHOEMAKER
GENERAL MANAGER

HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

Bedford Rural Electric Cooperative (REC) will be awarding at least four scholarships of \$1,000 each to seniors whose parents' or guardians' primary residence is served by Bedford REC.

For an application, go to our website at bedfordrec.com and click on scholarship information under the member services tab. Applications are also available at the office.

All applications and required information must be received no later than March 1, 2023.

**Mail application to:
Bedford Rural Electric Cooperative
P. O. Box 335
Bedford, PA 15522**

OUTAGE REPORTING

In case of an outage...

- 1 Check your fuses or circuit breakers.
- 2 Check with your neighbors, if convenient, to see if they have been affected by the power failure.
- 3 Call the 24-hour number, 814-623-7568, OR call 800-808-2732* during office hours.

**(Please help us save money - only use this number if toll charges apply.)*

Please give the person receiving the call your name as it appears on your bill, your telephone number and your map number, if known. Any specific information about the outage will also be helpful in pinpointing the problem.

**To report an outage call:
814-623-7568**

During widespread power outages, many members are calling to report power failures. You may receive a busy signal, or in certain cases, your call may go unanswered. This occurs in after-hours outages when the office is not fully staffed. Please be patient and try again in a few minutes.