

Bedford Rural Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives
serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

BEDFORD REC

P.O. Box 335
Bedford, PA 15522
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.

Outages Happen to All of Us, but Then What?



**BROOKS
SHOEMAKER**

NO ONE LIKES OUTAGES. PERIOD.

Our members do not like to be inconvenienced, and our lineworkers would probably rather get a full night's sleep than answer a 2 a.m. phone call. They might also prefer finishing a job before quickly shutting down to investigate an outage's cause.

While Bedford Rural Electric Cooperative (REC) works hard to minimize outages, we all know they happen.

When the power goes out, follow these steps: First, check your panel box to verify no circuit breakers have tripped or fuses have blown. Next, check if your neighbors still have power.

Remember: Bedford REC is not responsible for electrical issues within your home. Therefore, you will need to hire an electrician to diagnose the problem. However, if the problem isn't within your home, report the outage to the cooperative. Call 814-623-5101 and press 1 if you lose power between 7:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. or 814-623-7568 after hours.

Please be patient. If the outage is due to a minor, isolated issue, you will speak with one of our employees relatively quickly. However, during larger events, call volumes may be high because many members attempt to contact us. In such cases, we may exceed our incoming call capacity and may not be able to answer immediately.

Please have the account holder's name, phone number, physical address or account number available. This information greatly simplifies the reporting process. Additionally, please avoid reporting outages via Facebook or email because those channels are not monitored 24/7.

How extreme summer temps impact reliability

When outdoor temperatures soar, electricity use increases. That's because our air conditioners run longer and more often to counteract outdoor temperatures. Plus, we tend to use electricity at the same times — in the afternoon and early evening — and that equals a lot of strain on our electric grid.

We work closely with Allegheny Electric Cooperative, Inc. (Allegheny), our wholesale energy provider, on resource and infrastructure planning to ensure you have the power you need whenever you flip a switch. The electric grid, however, is much larger than your local co-op.

We work proactively with Allegheny to ensure our portion of the grid is resilient and reliable. We regularly perform system maintenance, modernize equipment and plan our disaster response, but it takes everyone to ensure the grid's reliability.

Our future electric rates are partially based on how much power you use on hot summer days. Between now and the end of September, when demand for electricity is highest (typically hot, humid weekdays between 1 and 6 p.m.), we pay premium prices for the energy our members consume. You can do the "Electric Shift" during those periods by shifting your consumption to off-peak hours. Here are a few suggestions:

- ▶ Select the highest comfortable thermostat setting on your cooling equipment and turn it up several degrees, whenever possible. This helps minimize the difference between indoor and outdoor temperatures.
- ▶ Seal air leaks around windows and exterior doors with caulk and weatherstripping. Air leaks and drafts force your cooling system to work harder than necessary.

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Blue Knob Offers Summer Programs for the Public

JENNA REFFNER, OFFICE ASSISTANT

IN THE NORTHWESTERN PORTION OF Bedford County sits the picturesque Blue Knob State Park. Locals are well acquainted with everything the park has to offer. Kids spend the summer swimming in the pool. Families picnic under the many pavilions. Campers come from all over to spend the weekend in nature. Hikers, snowmobilers, horseback riders, mountain bikers and cross-country skiers frequent the 26 miles of trails year-round.

Named after the second highest mountain in Pennsylvania, the park stretches across more than 6,128 acres. The Blue Knob All Seasons Resort features the highest ski slope in Pennsylvania.

'An unbelievable place'

Blue Knob — peaking at 3,146 feet — and the surrounding area have a rich history. The earliest settlers farmed the land and built several distilleries, a lumber mill, and grist mill. The logging industry was in full swing, and a railroad followed Bobs Creek, the stream that winds through Blue Knob. The tracks have since been removed and replaced with hiking trails.



LEARNING IS FUN: Every summer, Jessie Kohan, the environmental education specialist at Blue Knob State Park, leads a variety of free, public programs on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays.

In 1935, the Blue Knob National Recreation Demonstration Area opened to the public before ownership of the park was transferred to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in 1945. On Sept. 26, 1945, Blue Knob State Park officially opened.

The Works Progress Administration and the Civilian Conservation Corps worked in the park in the 1930s to build cabins, hiking trails, and roads. The cabins are still available to rent.

If you've ever attended a program at the park, you've likely seen Jessie Kohan, the park's environmental education specialist.

"Blue Knob is an unbelievable place," Jessie says, adding she enjoys managing the public programs. "I love seeing adults and children become excited to learn about the park and feel like they have the answers they need. I want to teach people that they don't need to be afraid of the woods."

Jessie, who's been in her position for 27 years, appreciates seeing the same visitors year after year, alongside the one-time travelers just passing through. "I want to get people outside and appreciating nature," she says.

Jessie's public programs take place Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays through the summer. She leads a huge variety and tries to never repeat a program during the summer. Visitors learn about fire safety, astronomy, telescopes, mushrooms, coyotes, grouse, making apple cider, birds, trees, gardening, disc golf, invasive plants/insects, the Lost Children of the Alleghenies monument, owls, snakes and more.

Programs and partners

Jessie doesn't pretend to be an expert on all topics. Instead, she often calls on others to help teach the programs. Earlier this summer, she worked with Fort Bedford Trout Unlimited and Mountain Laurel Trout Unlimited on a program about fly tying. Participants collected and learned about aquatic insects. The group then learned how to make flies to match the insects collected from the stream.

Jessie also partners with the Laurel Highlands On and Off Road Bicycling Association to teach mountain biking basics. The park has bikes available for use on the day of the program, but visitors must call ahead to reserve one.

This summer, Jessie is partnering with a professor from Mount Aloysius College to present a program on natural soap making and natural dyes. This summer will also feature a program on maple syrup production. Typically, trees are tapped in late winter/early spring, and Jessie is hoping this will give participants a chance to learn about

and prepare for next year's season.

Jessie doesn't just work on public programs. She also works with local schools, nature clubs, Scout groups, public libraries, retirement homes, church groups, mental wellness and health groups, and organized camping groups. In addition, she shares her environmental knowledge with teachers from local schools.

Something for everyone

When Jessie puts a program on for a school, she makes sure it meets Department of Education standards. Earlier this month, the Commonwealth launched the Science, Technology & Engineering, and Environmental Literacy & Sustainability standards, a new integrative way of teaching the sciences. Jessie works with all ages, from 4-year-olds to college students, and is also helping three Girl Scout volunteers who are working on their silver badges.

"I know it looks like I'm just playing in the woods, but there's a lot more to it," Jessie says with a laugh. "The park is full of mountain streams, hiking trails, tons of facilities, a swimming pool, a group camp and modern cabins. Come for the day and go swimming with your kids, pack a lunch, and then attend an evening program. Make a day of it."

The best part? Most of the activities at Blue Knob are free to the public. If you're interested in being added to the summer program email list, contact Jessie at blueknobeepprograms@pa.gov or 814-608-3039. 📧



WHAT A VIEW: Chappell's View, at an elevation of more than 2,400 feet, is one of the many picturesque places at Blue Knob State Park.



PREVENT FOREST FIRES: Blue Knob State Park's Jessie Kohan gives Smokey Bear and a young student a hug during a recent program about fire safety.

- ▶ Use ceiling fans to make yourself feel a few degrees cooler. Remember: Ceiling fans cool people, not rooms, so turn them off in unoccupied spaces. During summer, set ceiling fan blades to rotate counterclockwise, which pushes cool air down for a wind-chill effect.
- ▶ Close blinds, curtains and shades during the hottest part of the day to block unwanted heat gain from sunlight. Consider blackout curtains with thermal backing or reflective lining to keep the heat outside and cool inside. Thermally lined blackout curtains work the opposite in the winter and are a solid, year-round investment.
- ▶ Use smaller appliances, such as slow cookers, air fryers and toaster ovens, to cook meals. Studies have shown air fryers use about half the electricity of a full-sized oven. Because air fryers are smaller and use focused heat, they cook food faster, put out less heat, and use less energy.

As we face the challenges posed by soaring summer temperatures, understanding the impact on energy demand is crucial for maintaining a reliable, affordable power supply. Shifting energy consumption during periods of extreme heat saves money for you and your fellow cooperative members.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

During summer months, run large, heat-emitting appliances, such as clothes dryers and dishwashers, during the evening to reduce indoor heat gain and keep your air conditioner from working harder than necessary. 🌡️

BROOKS SHOEMAKER
GENERAL MANAGER & CEO

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 814-623-5101 during office hours.

Please have the account holder's name, phone number, physical address or account number available. 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.

Can You Dig It?



An underground utility line is **damaged once every few minutes** because someone didn't call 811.



Call 811, the "Call Before You Dig Number," at least **3 business days** prior to digging.



811 locators **do not detect** underground sprinkler systems, invisible fences, data communication systems, private water systems, or gas piping to a garage.



Even if you have previously had underground utilities marked, **utilities can shift**, so it's best to call before starting a new project.



Once **all of your utilities** have been located, then you can start your digging project!

Learn more at

**Safe
Electricity.org®**