



Editor, Patsy Whitehead, CCC

Featured above: Nolin RECC Member Services Administrative Assistant  
Michelle Rogers, 17 years of service

## News you can use

# Testing the smart grid

Electric co-ops are figuring out the risks and rewards of new technology

**W**e all know people who get excited about the latest gadget. It might cost extra, but they just have to have it. I never quite understood that excitement—until now.

You may have heard of the latest utility gadget called the “smart grid.” While Nolin RECC has been careful not to get caught up in the hype, this new technology could greatly improve electric service.

The North American electric grid—the largest interconnected machine on earth—moves electricity from power plants to your home. About 3,000 utilities operate 10,000 power plants nationally. More than 1 million megawatts flow across 300,000 miles of high-voltage transmission lines. And while the way we use electricity has changed drastically over the decades, most of the grid that delivers power was built 50 years ago.

As we talk about upgrading the nation’s grid from a me-

chanical system to a digital network, there’s plenty of room for improvement—and miscalculations. While a smart grid can help control costs, it can also be abused by big power companies and others to shift market risks onto consumers—something Nolin doesn’t want to see happen.

That’s why, with help from Uncle Sam, many not-for-profit, member-owned electric utilities across the country are testing these technologies. More than \$600 million will be invested to study how digital grid technologies improve service for co-op members in 25 states, including Kentucky.

We will identify which technologies work and weed out those that may not deliver promised benefits.

Any smart grid needs to be flexible—some components don’t make sense everywhere.

Automated meters and self-repairing circuits may help reduce outages; in-home displays could increase member awareness of how much electricity they use. Nolin will employ some hometown smarts of our own in how we approach the smart grid.

We want to learn how to help you make wiser energy choices to keep your electric service reliable and your bill as affordable as possible.



**Mickey Miller**  
President & CEO



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# Cool Off Your Winter Energy Bill

You've budgeted for holiday gifts, meals, maybe a vacation—and with money tight, that doesn't leave much room for home energy-efficiency upgrades. Does that mean you're powerless to lower your electric bill? Not at all. Keep your energy bill cool this winter with these tips and tricks:

- **Drape Delivery:** Are you using your curtains to capture heat? Make sure drapes and shades are open to catch free solar heat during the day. Close them at night to keep the heat inside.

- **Thermostat:** Set your thermostat to 68°F (or lower if comfortable).

- **Got tape?** Though not as durable as foam, rubber, or vinyl, you can use non-porous tape (first aid cloth tape, for example) to keep cold air from squeezing into your home. Tape is good for blocking corners and irregular cracks, and can be used at the top and bottom of a window sash; door frames; attic hatches; and inoperable windows. Reinforce with staples if needed.

- **Fan it up:** Run ceiling paddle fans on low and reverse the rotation to blow air up in winter. This keeps warm air circulating without cooling you.

- **Free vents:** Your HVAC system will have to work twice as hard if your air registers and vents are blocked by rugs, furni-

ture, or drapes. Keep them clear to allow air to flow freely.

- **Garage Drain:** Leave your garage door down. A warmer garage in winter will save energy.

- **Rug Relief:** Have a spare rug? Use it to cover bare floors for added insulation.

- **Cool Food:** Don't make your fridge work too hard. Clean coils every year, and set the temperature between 34°-37° F; leave the freezer between 0°-5° F. Keep the freezer full—frozen food helps your freezer stay cool. When cooking keep lids on pots, and let hot food cool off before placing it in the refrigerator.

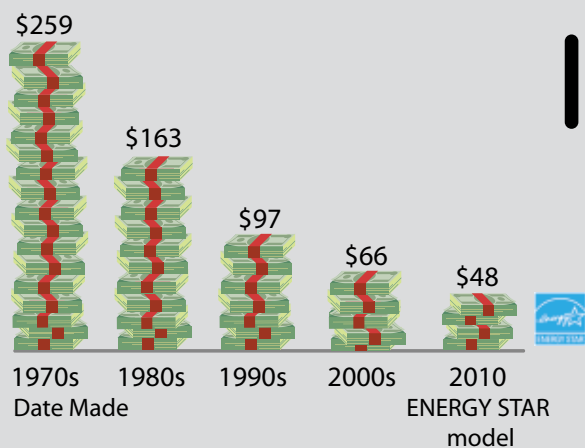
- **Hot Savings:** Heating water accounts for 12 percent of your home's energy use. Set your water heater temperature no higher than 120°F. For households with only one or two members, 115°F works.

There are other ways to conserve energy, too. Remember, you don't pay for what you don't use. When you're not watching TV or using lights, computers, and other electronics, turn them off. Lower your room temperatures a bit and wear a sweater to stay warm, or place an extra blanket on the bed at night. Find more ways to save at [www.TogetherWeSave.com](http://www.TogetherWeSave.com), or visit [www.nolinrecc.com](http://www.nolinrecc.com).

Source: *TogetherWeSave.com, Alliance to Save Energy, EnergySavers.gov*

## The Cost of Cool Food

If your fridge dates from the 1980s, you could save more than \$100 each year by replacing it with an ENERGY STAR-qualified model. Compare the average annual electricity costs for refrigerators manufactured in the following years:



Source: U.S. Department of Energy

## Final Chance to Register for Home Energy Makeover

You still have time to register for a free home energy makeover. Nolin will be drawing two names at the end of November and each of those members will have the opportunity to win one of two prizes: ENERGY STAR home appliances costing up to \$1,200, or home energy upgrades costing up to \$1,200. If you have not registered, please call the Nolin RECC office at (270) 765-6153 or visit [www.nolinrecc.com/makeover](http://www.nolinrecc.com/makeover) to enter your name in the contest. Deadline for entry is November 30, 2010.

# Nolin RECC's Operation Round-Up Benefits Members and Recipients

**N**olin RECC offers its members a unique program that allows them to voluntarily contribute to a special account earmarked to help worthy causes in the community. The program is appropriately called Operation Round-Up (ORU) because it rounds up electric bills to the next highest dollar. The extra change in the form of quarters, nickels, dimes, and pennies goes into the ORU account.

Member participation is voluntary and is open throughout the year. Although members may enroll at any time, the co-op periodically runs a campaign drive to inspire members to join ORU. In fact, any Nolin RECC member who signs up for the program before December 1, 2010, will earn a chance to win \$100, \$50, or \$25 in a cash drawing. Those who are already enrolled in ORU will automatically be eligible for the drawing, which is to be held December 10.

Rineyville resident and Nolin member Gayle Andrews was one of three lucky winners last year during the ORU enrollment campaign. Andrews' name was drawn for the \$100 cash giveaway last December. "This is a chance to help a lot of people and it doesn't take a lot of money from any one individual, it just takes a lot of people willing to come together and help," says Andrews.



One hundred percent of the ORU funds are put back into the community to help fund charitable and worthy causes. More than 4,000 Nolin members/employees participate in ORU, and since the program began in June 2006, more than \$56,000 has been collected.

Local citizens make up a non-profit board of directors that governs the program. "The board reviews applications for community projects and makes decisions on when, where, and how to utilize funds," says Mark Rock, ORU board chair. "The organization is always looking for special projects that will have a lasting value in the community." Rock says the ORU board appreciates all those who enroll in the program.

Recent donations include grants to LaRue County Schools, Lincoln Trail Family Resource Center, American Red Cross, Big

Brothers/Big Sisters, and North Hardin Hope.

After receiving funds in June, the Family Resource Center at Lincoln Trail Elementary School began work on a new nature explorer classroom, an outdoor play area for pre-school classes, and cradle school children. Family Resource Center coordinator Janelle Mason says the project is well under way and the students are getting very excited about their new classroom.

Sharon Thompson, American Red Cross Manager, says they put recent ORU funds to good use by purchasing much-needed shelving and a garage door.

ORU is currently accepting applications for local community projects that are in need of funding. Interested parties are encouraged to visit [www.nolinrecc.com](http://www.nolinrecc.com) to access an application, or call the Nolin office at (270) 765-6153, Ext. 1050 for additional information. Deadline for applications is 5 p.m., Wednesday, December 1, 2010.



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**ORU is  
currently  
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# How power is restored after an outage

## Restoring an outage

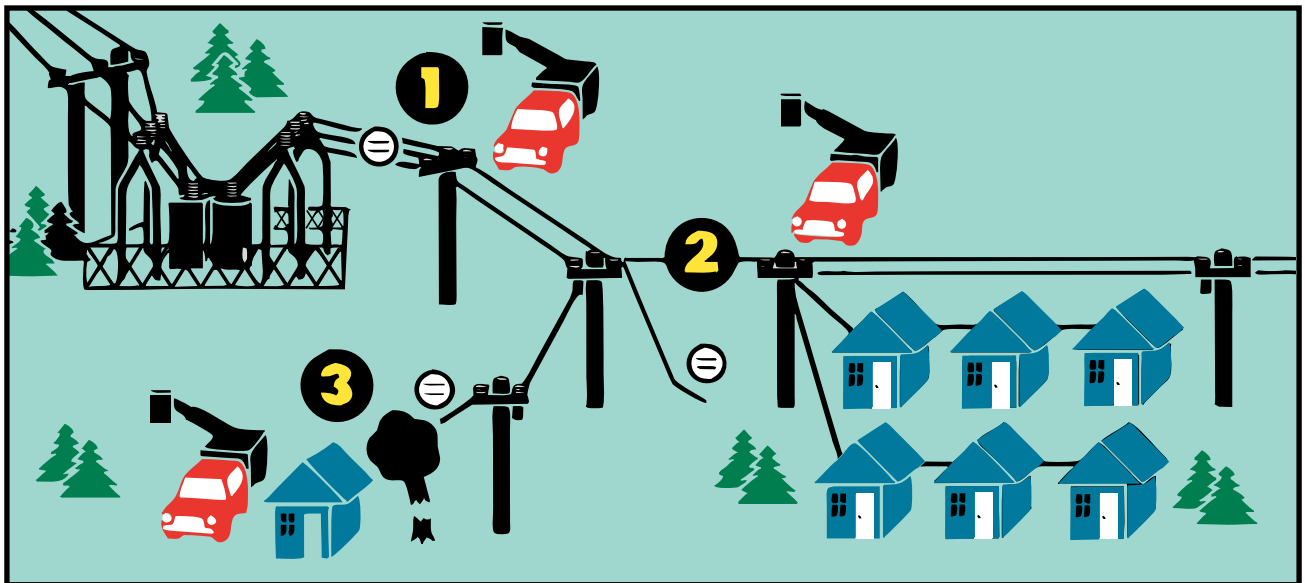
Most members use electricity every day without giving much thought to how it arrives at their home. Many types of generating sources are used and several steps are needed to create and deliver electricity to your home or business. By the time electricity reaches your home, it has most likely traveled hundreds of miles and visited a substation.

Nolin works hard to deliver the highest level of reliability to our members, but sometimes storms, animals, vehicular accidents, and other circumstances out of our control leave members without power. Having that in mind, we would like to share with you the sequence of how the cooperative restores power during outages.

Do not connect a generator directly to household wiring—the power from a generator can backfeed to power lines and injure or electrocute line workers making repairs. Call a licensed electrician to install all generators.

Make sure you report any outage to Nolin, even if you think a neighbor has already called. This will help line crews locate and repair the problem as soon as possible. To report an outage after normal business hours, call (270) 769-6396 (toll-free (800) 572-1147).

## Getting You Back Online



In any electrical outage, the first priority is to get the greatest number of people back online as quickly as possible. That's why electric co-ops follow a sequence of

repairs that restores power to large groups of consumers before tackling smaller groups and individual consumers. This fictitious example details a typical repair sequence.

- 1** The main distribution line from the substation must be repaired before anyone can have power.
- 2** Next, crews repair the lines that bring power to the greatest number of customers in a community.
- 3** After larger pockets of customers have power, crews repair service lines to individual homes.

# Sometimes your instincts are dead wrong

Lee and Ashley are survivors of what could have been a fatal accident involving a power line.

These students attended a high school program about power-line safety, and five days later were riding in a car that struck a pole and brought down a live power line.

If they hadn't learned what to do, Lee and Ashley would have relied on their instincts and gotten out of the car.

But they learned the safest place is in the car until power to the line is turned off.

They want you to learn from their experience, know how to survive car accidents involving power lines and share this vital information with those you love.

Their instincts didn't save them. Knowledge did. For more information, go to [www.safeelectricity.org](http://www.safeelectricity.org).

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## Can you tell if this power line is still energized?



The answer is NO.

**TLC** Teach what you know.  
Learn what you need to.  
Care enough to share it.



Learn from their experience.  
See their story at

**Safe  
Electricity.org**

# Farm safety is no accident

**D**id you know that the agricultural industry is one of the most dangerous? In 2000, it claimed more lives than any other industry, with 22.5 deaths per 100,000 people, according to the National Safety Council.

Proper use of safety devices that come with farm equipment can reduce the number of injuries and deaths that occur each year.

Especially at risk are children playing near and around farm equipment. Don't give children chores they can't safely handle and don't leave them unsupervised.

Steve Wooden has been farming in Hardin County his entire life—he stresses the importance of working safely around farm equipment.



## Safety tips for farm work

- All tractors should be equipped with a roll-over protective structure
- Don't let another person hitch a ride on the tractor
- If driving a tractor on the highway always post a "Slow Moving Vehicle" emblem
- Equip your tractor with a bypass starter cover
- Keep power tools in good condition and check cords and plugs for wear before using
- Power tools should be properly grounded or double-insulated



**Thanksgiving holiday closing**  
The Nolin RECC office will be closed for the Thanksgiving holiday November 25 & 26.

# HELP

**T**his winter, thousands of people all over Kentucky will suffer from the cold, because they simply can't afford to heat their homes. Help! Add \$1.00, \$5.00, or more for Winter-Care to your heating bill payment.

Every penny of your contribution will go toward keeping people warm.

Being cold is a terrible thing. Open your hands and your heart to warm others: it's a wonderful feeling to share.



# Affording Energy

## Things you can do to prevent disconnection

**A**lthough Kentucky is fortunate to have one of the lowest electricity rates in the nation, energy costs can still impact a family's budget during the winter when usage is higher than usual.

We understand in these tough times that budget crunching may have you juggling bills. No employee at Nolin likes to disconnect a member's electric service for non-payment. It's never pleasant, especially during the cold months. Nolin RECC collections coordinator Gwen McCubbin will be the first to tell you her job is not easy and can prove to be stressful at times.

"If you receive a cutoff notice in the mail, don't wait until the final day to call the office for help," says Gwen. "Members receive their cutoff notice in the mail around 10 days prior to the disconnect date. Often we can handle payment extensions over the phone, so it pays to call first and as soon as possible."

Gwen says she works with Nolin members to achieve a payment schedule that will fit their budgets. And some circumstances require a visit to the office to sign deferred or partial payment contracts. Gwen says, "Once a member is disconnected for nonpayment, they are required to pay with credit/debit card, money order, or cash to reconnect electric service. However, some of these types of payments can be completed over the telephone."



Payment assistance agencies in our area are listed on the Nolin RECC late notice statement. Members needing assistance are urged to contact these agencies for information and help:

**Cabinet for Health & Family Services (270) 766-5213**  
**Community Action of Central Kentucky**  
**Hardin Co. (270) 769-1927**  
**LaRue Co. (270) 358-3937**  
**North Hardin Hope Inc. (270) 351-4673**  
**Helping Hand (270) 769-3092**

Please call the Nolin office at (270) 765-6153, before your bill is late, to avoid unnecessary charges.

Nolin tries to use good judgment and common sense when we disconnect a member for failure to pay their electric bill, and we pay special attention to problems involving the sick and elderly.

## Nonpayment Service Charges

**If service has been disconnected for nonpayment, the following charges apply:**

**Service Charge to Disconnect: \$20.00**

**Connection and Reconnection Charges**

**During business hours \$20.00**

**After business hours \$50.00**

**Accounts subject to disconnect may be required to pay a deposit or an additional deposit if the usage has increased.**

## Here is an easy way to budget electric bills

**N**olin can't control the rising costs of fuels used to generate electricity, but we can help you manage your dollars so that your electric bill stays in line with your budget.

It's not a surprise that Nolin's budget billing for members has increased in popularity during the past few years. With the continuing increase in necessities like gasoline, food, and clothing, co-op members need all the help they get these days.

The appeal and popularity of budget billing is simple. The program allows members to pay an average dollar amount each month based on the previous 12 months' usage. In other words, members no longer receive higher bills in the winter and summer due to increased HVAC usage.

During the winter months, Nolin enrolls about 75 members a month in budget billing. However, don't wait until you see high heating bills to enroll—today is the time to sign up—when the high bills arrive, it's too late!

Budget billing makes bill paying affordable, but Nolin's automatic payment draft makes it simple. The automatic payment draft saves members time and money because the electric bill payment is deducted from your bank account or charged to your VISA or MasterCard account each month.

You don't have to visit the Nolin RECC office to sign up for budget billing or automatic payment draft—you can enroll over the telephone by calling (270) 765-6153, or visit [www.nolinrecc.com](http://www.nolinrecc.com) and click on "Residential Bill Payment."

## **We've Got Your \$25 Number! \$25**

**WIN \$25 Worth of FREE Electricity**

Nolin News features a contest called "We've Got Your Number." Hidden inside this issue are two randomly selected member account numbers. If you spot your account number, contact the Member Services Department at 765-6153, and **win a \$25 CREDIT on your electric bill.** You must identify your number and call by the 15th day of the month's issue containing your number. Account numbers could be anywhere in your *Nolin News!*

## **New Member Credits**

All members signing up for new service with Nolin receive a short survey. Members who return the completed survey to Nolin are automatically eligible to win a \$20 credit on their electric bill. Each month, one name is drawn and a lucky Nolin member receives a bill credit on their next statement. Congratulations to our latest winner, **Kathleen A. Merrick, of Elizabethtown.**

## **Online payments**

Access your Nolin RECC account through our Web site at **www.nolinrecc.com**. Click on "YourAccount" to check your consumption history and make payments by debit card, Visa, or MasterCard. To apply for budget billing and automatic draft online, click on "Residential Bill Payment."

## **May his light always shine**



**1st Lt. Eric David Yates**

*July 1, 1984—September 18, 2010*

Nolin RECC joins our community to pause and give thanks to Eric Yates of Rineyville. We especially send our prayers out to his brother, Nathan, who is employed by Nolin as a line technician, and the entire Yates family.

Eric Yates lost his life while serving his country in Afghanistan. He was a 2003 graduate of John Hardin High School and a 2008 graduate of the ROTC program at Western Kentucky University. He served in the U.S. Army's 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, and 101st Airborne Division from Fort Campbell.

Let us always remember the ultimate gift—the ultimate sacrifice—of 1st Lt. Eric David Yates and thousands of others who have died so bravely while serving their country.

### **HOW TO REACH NOLIN RECC**

#### **ELIZABETHTOWN OFFICE**

411 Ring Road, Elizabethtown, KY 42701-6767  
8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Mon-Fri • (270) 765-6153

#### **RADCLIFF OFFICE**

101 West Lincoln Trail Blvd., Radcliff, KY 40160  
8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Mon-Fri • (270) 351-2199  
(Office closed from 12:30-1:30 daily)

**TOLL-FREE BUSINESS CALLS — 1-888-637-4247**

**EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBER — (270) 769-6396**

**EMERGENCY TOLL-FREE CALLS — 1-800-572-1147**

Web site: [www.nolinrecc.com](http://www.nolinrecc.com)

e-mail: [comments@nolinrecc.com](mailto:comments@nolinrecc.com)

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