



**Jay County  
REMC**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

**484 S 200 W  
P.O. Box 904, Portland, IN 47371**

### PHONE NUMBERS & HOURS

Local ..... (260) 726-7121  
Toll Free ..... (800) 835-7362  
Fax ..... (260) 726-6240  
E-mail ..... remc@JayREMC.com  
Web Site ..... [www.JayREMC.com](http://www.JayREMC.com)

#### To report an outage or emergency

Call (260) 726-7121 or  
(800) TEL-REMC (835-7362)

**24 hours a day, 7 days a week**

Be ready to provide the following information:

1. Name under which the electric service is listed.
2. Map location number.
3. Your phone number in case we need to call you back.
4. The type of problem you are experiencing, e.g., flickering lights, complete power outage, etc.
5. Hang up when all information has been recorded — other members may be trying to contact the REMC, too.

**Office hours: 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.  
Monday-Friday**

### CO-OP NOTES

#### \$50 cash drawing winners

The \$50 drawing winners for the month of June were Ed and Mary Kellogg of Portland. Read *Electric Consumer* for your chance to win \$50.

#### Molly's Candles gift

The winner of the case of candles from Molly's Candles was Roger Snyder of Monroe. Thank you for reading *Electric Consumer*.

**Jay County REMC  
will be closed on  
Sept. 4 in honor of  
Labor Day**

## co-opNews

### Broadband expansion announced

Expanded network will enable access throughout county

Omnicity, Inc. will accelerate its plan to expand its high-speed broadband Internet network throughout Jay County to better serve areas in and around towns such as Dunkirk, Salamina, Bryant and southern Jay County. It will also increase its capacity and coverage in Portland and the surrounding rural areas. Omnicity has been providing broadband high-speed Internet services to Portland, Redkey, and the surrounding rural areas since March 2005. Omnicity's expanded service area will allow consumers and businesses to enjoy greater choice of services at affordable prices.

"We are ready to go," said Omnicity Chairman and CEO Michael E. Earley. "Our customers' acceptance and loyalty promote our investment in new networks and services in Jay County. The delivery of next-generation broadband Internet services is no longer at some distant point in the future. The future is now."

With the announcement, Omnicity will significantly accelerate its previously planned deployment schedule and now plans to reach nearly every Jay County home and business this year. The company will deploy a solution that will complement its existing network, while enabling access speeds over 6 Mbps if needed. The company indicated that telemedicine, homeland security, and distance learning applications, as well as other innovative broadband services could be delivered over its network. Company officials stated businesses having high bandwidth requirements will find Omnicity's solution as a cost-effective replacement for connections from traditional providers such as the telephone company. Other businesses may find it as an attractive redundant solution to their connections, enabling access when their current provider's connection is not in service.

Bob Quadrozzi, executive director of Jay County Development Corporation (JCDC), in-

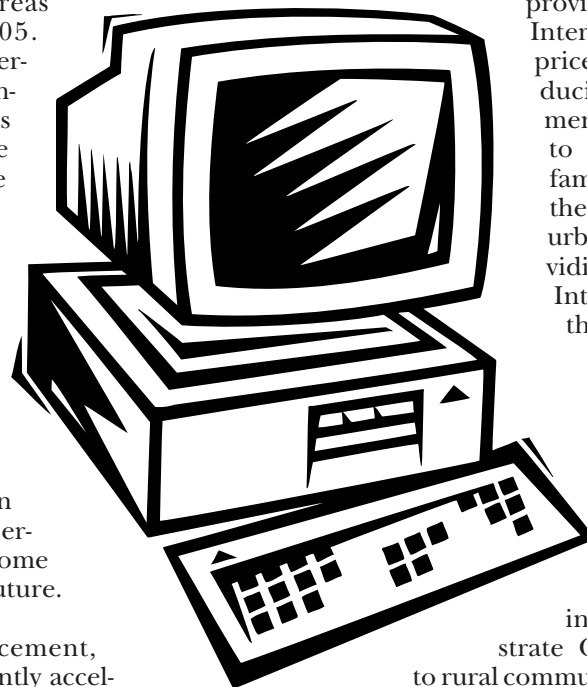
dicated, "Providing access to broadband and high-speed Internet service county-wide is important to the further growth and economic development of our community." Quadrozzi further explained, "Access to broadband has become a necessity for almost everyone."

Jay County REMC will begin to market Omnicity's services under the trade name "REMCinternet." Omnicity is the leading provider of rural high speed Internet services at affordable prices, and we will be introducing its services to our members. The REMC wants to help ensure that rural families and businesses have the same advantages as their urban counterparts, and providing access to broadband Internet is consistent with that goal.

"Omnicity is leading the way to provide consumers and businesses with high speed broadband Internet services in rural areas," said Earley. This is the latest in a series of our broadband initiatives in Indiana that demon-

strate Omnicity's commitment to rural communities. Our deployments of next-generation broadband technology will help boost jobs, investment and innovation in the communities we serve. Omnicity's network provides a vital ingredient for economic growth and development in Jay County, as our expanded network will enable unprecedented access speeds to the majority of businesses and households."

Headquartered in Indianapolis, Omnicity, Inc., delivers high speed Internet access to residents and businesses in rural communities. Omnicity offers broadband services in Tippecanoe, Montgomery, Fountain, Huntington, Wells, Wayne, Boone, Rush, Jay, Delaware, Wabash, and Hamilton counties and is scheduled to rollout in a number of other Indiana communities. Omnicity markets its services under "Omnicity" and "REMCinternet." Visit [www.omnicity.net](http://www.omnicity.net).



## SPOTLIGHT ON BUSINESS

# Local business grows; offers new product

by Cindy Denney

A commitment to the community, loyalty to the family, a pledge to the employees and a promise to the customers drives Jay County REMC members Dru Hall, Selena Hall and Stan Pitman, owners of S.D.P. Manufacturing, to success. S.D.P. manufactures a unique piece of equipment for the utility industry. This family-owned manufacturing company, once located in Albany, has called the Dunkirk Industrial Park its home since 2004. The new building, located at 400 Industrial Drive, was built to maximize productivity with ease and safety in mind.

"We are also mindful of how important a local industry can be to improve the quality of life for area residents" said Vice President Dru Hall. S.D.P. strives to demonstrate a strong commitment to the community. Its involvement with Albany Boy Scouts, Optimist Clubs, John Jay Center for Learning, West Jay Community Center, and Dunkirk Junior League, to name a few, makes S.D.P. a true corporate citizen.

A visibly friendly working atmosphere keeps the 18 team members performing their assigned duties, ranging from accounting to welding, in a proficient manner. A pledge to do everything necessary to ensure job security has 60 sales reps and distributors visiting every state and Canada promoting the EZ Hauler equipment. One factor a sales representative needs to take into consideration when placing orders for the EZ Hauler is production time. It takes approximately one week to produce one unit.

According to Dan Ingle of NESCO, a nationwide sales and rental company of utility equipment, "The service we receive from S.D.P. is extremely good as well as the dependability of the equipment. Some of our customers own three or four units and Florida Power & Light own over 30 units."

It was the promise to the customer that



**A friendly work environment exists at S.D.P.**

generated a new member in the EZ Hauler family. "Listening to what our customers wanted from our equipment in the field propelled us to design the EZ Hauler 3800" said president of S.D.P., Stan Pitman. Derek Mays, plant manager, worked on the design of the EZ Hauler 3800, a mini-digger derrick, for two years.

Features of the EZ Hauler 3800 include:

- 3800 pound lifting capacity with overload protection
- 3000 pound carrying capacity
- 34 horsepower diesel engine
- 41 foot sheave height
- Insulated to 46 kv category C
- Full continuous rotation and work zone non-limited
- Auger stored on side of boom

The EZ Hauler 3800, EZ Hauler 2500 and the EZ Hauler Aerial are intended for backyard easement. Electric companies are the majority purchasers of the EZ Hauler. The equipment is utilized in areas where a digger or bucket truck could not possibly maneuver.

Such was the case for the Jay County REMC during the ice storm of 2005. The location of a transformer pole was hindering restoration efforts. With the assistance of the EZ Hauler, our crews were able to go through a side privacy

gate to reach the downed lines and restore power without damaging the yard. The member would have been without electricity for several additional days if not for the EZ Hauler 3800.

S.D.P. management plans to expand its operation by increasing the number of units made in the next year. Curious about the EZ Hauler? Visit S.D.P.'s Web site at [www.sdpmfg.com](http://www.sdpmfg.com).

*Cindy Denney is director of marketing and customer service at Jay County REMC.*



**Dru Hall points to the latest location to receive the EZ Hauler 3800.**



**S.D.P.'s offices are located in the Dunkirk Industrial Park.**



**S.D.P. is the home of the EZ Hauler**



**Stan Pitman and Derek Mays discuss new ideas.**

# The rising cost of doing business

By Reed Karaim

Gasoline prices have soared. Heating oil and natural gas prices are taking flight. The last thing consumers want to hear is more bad news about their energy costs. But, despite the best efforts of electric co-ops to hold the line, monthly electric bills may also be on the way up.

The good news for co-op members is the increases, on average, shouldn't be as severe as those at the pump. The bad news, most analysts agree, is we could see several years of upward pressure on electric rates.

A complicated set of factors — everything from increased demand for power to dramatic increases in fuel costs in the United States, to long-term economic growth in the Far East — seems to be conspiring to increase the cost of making and delivering electricity.

There are ways the power industry, the government and consumers can help reduce costs. But much of the problem is simply a new era of increased global competition for limited energy and other resources.

"You can always find fault for things, if you want, but this is largely driven by global issues where you can't really blame anyone," said Roger Gale, CEO of GF Energy, a consulting firm that publishes the *Electricity Outlook* report.

The new reality starts with much higher costs for natural gas, which will make it more costly not only to stay warm in the winter, but also more expensive for Americans in some regions of the country to keep the lights on. Natural gas is the fuel used to generate more than 17 percent of the electricity in the United States.

The U.S. government's Energy Information Administration estimates that will grow to 20 percent by 2010. Almost all of the new power plants built during the last decade in the United States burn natural gas to generate electricity. The reason is simple: when the plans for those plants were on the drawing board, natural gas was one of the great energy bargains, costing about \$2 per million Btu as recently as 2002.

## Natural gas no longer a bargain

Unlike oil, the United States and Canada produced almost all the natural gas they used, so the supply seemed less dependent on the whims of world markets and, in particular, the ups and downs of Middle Eastern politics.

But in 2005, natural gas went as high as \$14 per million Btu. That was a spike, but analysts project prices will stay at least in the \$6 to \$8 range, an increase of as much as 400 percent in only a few years.

The fuel that seemed to be a bargain was always subject to the basic laws of supply and demand. The United States and Canada now use all the natural gas they can pump out of the ground and more, leaving no slack in the system.

"We've been living on this razor's edge where any change in supply, any change in demand — any significant weather event — makes a differ-



Photo by Associated Press

ence," said Chris McGill, managing director, policy analysis for the American Gas Association. "We had a summer (in 2005) that was 19 percent warmer than normal. We had much more natural gas going to power generation. In the critical weeks of the summer cooling season, we were consuming up to 30 percent more."

And 2005's hurricanes will dampen the outlook for oil and gas production well into 2006. In a tight market, that can send prices skyrocketing.

To make up for shortfalls in domestic supply, the United States has imported natural gas from Canada and Mexico, as well as a small amount of liquefied natural gas, or LNG. Several nations that used to export natural gas have started importing as their needs have grown. Efforts are underway to expand LNG import capability, but competition has also increased for LNG.

Countries such as India, China and Brazil are rapidly industrializing. World energy consumption is projected to increase by 57 percent from 2002 to 2025, according to the Energy Information Administration.

Here in the United States, which still uses the most power of any nation in the world, the demand for electricity is growing more modestly. Rising natural gas costs here could be partially offset by an increased investment in nuclear or coal-fired plants — although both face regulatory and environmental hurdles — and by increased conservation by consumers.

That's why it's important for consumers to know what's happening in the electricity markets, said David Mohre, executive director of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's energy and power division. "If they know this is coming, they may choose to purchase a substantially more efficient air conditioner," he said.

## Another problem remains

Smart homeowner choices, along with more investment in alternative energy sources such as solar and wind generation, can all help reduce dependence on world energy markets. But unfortunately, another problem remains. The nation's high-voltage electricity transmission network needs some updating.

Many analysts agree attempts to deregulate the electric industry contributed to the reluctance to invest in transmission. To complicate matters, power plant construction in the last

two decades and new players in the power market have resulted in more than a 100-fold increase in activity on the transmission grid.

"Throughout the 1990s, there was a significant slowdown in investment in transmission," said Alan Beamon, director of the coal and electric power division of the U.S. Energy Information Administration. "Utilities are going to have to invest in updating their transmission as new generation comes on line."

Part of that new generation, according to Mohre, will come from electric cooperatives, which will have to invest heavily in new capacity over the next 10 years — some \$28 billion worth.

## How much are rates going up?

But even with increased conservation and the pursuit of alternative sources of power, the price of electricity is still going up for many Americans. The Energy Information Administration's forecast shows energy costs falling back from last year's highs, but not to previous lows, and then increasing more slowly over several years.

For consumers the big question, of course, is, "how much are my rates going to go up?" The answer varies even by community, because the cost of generating and delivering power varies across the country. In some parts of Texas and California, power companies are requesting increases in the 14 to 17 percent range to cover fuel costs. A large utility in the Midwest has requested an 11 percent increase in its base rate, and in New England, one utility has proposed a 60 percent increase in industrial and commercial rates. But in other areas, increases will be modest or may not occur immediately.

Luckily, it doesn't look as bad for co-op members as it does for most consumers. Most of the power used by the nation's electric cooperatives comes from coal-fired generating plants. The United States has plentiful amounts of coal, and the price is less susceptible to the sharp ups and downs of oil and natural gas.

The generation and transmission cooperatives that supply much of the power to the co-op network generally have access to federally guaranteed loans for construction projects. Most also are highly rated by Wall Street. This means they can raise money for needed improvements more affordably than many utilities.

Historically, electric co-ops have not been as dependent on the spot market, where prices can be highest, for electricity. Co-ops tend to take a long-term view and build solid systems that provide stability for their consumers.

Still, even co-ops will not be able to escape all the nationwide pressure on electricity costs completely. Some co-ops will have to make adjustments in their rates to deal with the new reality.

Electric cooperatives, however, hold one important advantage. They're owned by and run for the people they serve.

*Reed Karaim is a contributing writer for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.*

## SIDE LINES

Courtesy of Portland Chamber of Commerce

**Aug. 23-27: Antique Engine and Tractor Show.**

Jay County Fairgrounds.

Largest vintage tractor and engine show in the world. Admission charge. Info: (765) 369-2656

**Aug. 24-26: Annual Quilt Show.** Arts Place in Portland. Beautiful quilt displays, raffle, vendors and demos. Sponsored by Stitch and Chatter Club. Admission charge. Hours vary. Info: (260) 726-8995.

**Aug. 24-26: Jay County Public Library Book Sale.** Thursday and Friday, 8 a.m.-7 p.m.; Saturday 8 a.m.-noon. Info: (260) 726-7890.

Courtesy of Winchester Chamber of Commerce

**Aug. 3-5: Union City "State Line Heritage Days."** Entertainment, games, contest, midway, antique tractors, arts and crafts, flea and farmers market. Info: (765) 964-5658.

**Aug. 12: YMCA Annual Bicycle and Motorcycle Fun Ride.** 10 a.m. Info: (765) 584-9622.

**Aug. 19: Mom, Baseball and Apple Pie Festival.** Games, contests, entertainment, sidewalk sales, auction located on the Courthouse Square. Info: (765) 584-3731

## Stressed? Try some relaxation exercises

You've had a long day at work, your head is pounding and you're stressed out. One of the most important things you can do for yourself is also one of the hardest. You must learn how to relax. First, find a quiet location, a comfortable body position and a good state of mind. Try to block out worries and distracting thoughts. Then try some of these relaxation exercises:



- Deep and rhythmic breathing – Slow your breathing down by taking long, slow breaths. Inhale slowly then exhale slowly. Breathe into the spot just below your navel, filling your abdomen with air. Let the air fill you up and then let it out like deflating a balloon.

- Mental imagery relaxation – Create peaceful and positive images in your mind. Let go of things you can't control. Tell yourself you are healthy and strong.

- Progressive muscle relaxation – Working from head to toe, tense each muscle as tightly as possible for a count of five to ten seconds and then slowly release and relax. Maintain a slow, deep breathing pattern.

The next time life has you frazzled, just remember to take a deep breath and relax.

## Free Automatic Payment Plan now available

The Automatic Payment Plan (APP) is a service that draws funds from your checking or savings account to pay your monthly electric bill.

The payment is made automatically each month. This service is available to any customer, including those enrolled in the budget billing plan. There is no charge for this service from Jay County REMC or your financial institution.

Once you are enrolled in the APP, you will receive a bill each month that says, "Bank draft do not pay." We will withdraw payments from your account one to three days prior to the due date on your bill.

If you are interested in the APP, fill out the

authorization form below and *attach a check marked "VOID," or a deposit slip* from your bank account. Mail these items to Jay County REMC at P.O. Box 904, Portland, IN 47371.

*The enrollment process may take approximately two billing cycles to complete. Meter readings are still required. Please read your meter and send or phone reading to the REMC by the 5th of each month.*

If you have questions concerning the Automatic Payment Plan, contact Carla Sibery, billing coordinator, at (260) 726-7121 or (800) 835-7362.

### Authorization for enrollment in the Automatic Payment Plan

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone no. ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Jay County REMC Account No. \_\_\_\_\_

Your Financial Institution \_\_\_\_\_

Account No. \_\_\_\_\_ Checking \_\_\_\_\_ Savings \_\_\_\_\_

I authorize Jay County REMC to draw monthly bank drafts on my account shown above for the payment of my monthly electric bill. I understand that I can discontinue my participation in the APP by notifying Jay County REMC in writing. Both Jay County REMC and my financial institution may also terminate this agreement with 10 days written notice. I understand that Jay County REMC reserves the right to limit participation in the APP to customers whose accounts are in good standing.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



Visit our Web site at  
[www.jayremc.com](http://www.jayremc.com)

**\$50 monthly drawing for bills dated  
Aug. 20 and paid by Aug. 31.**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ACCOUNT NO.: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NO.: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: To be eligible for the drawing, your coupon and payment must be in the office by 4:30 p.m. on the last working day of the month.