

Rates Increase Next Month

Boone Electric Cooperative has implemented a rate increase effective with this month's kilowatt-hour (kwh) usage. This increase will be reflected on the bills members receive in April. The actual amount of the rate increase will vary for each member depending on the amount of electricity used. With that, a typical member using 1,200 kwh per month will see an increase of \$12.10 in their electric charges.

In addition, the service availability fee for each meter will also increase from \$15 to \$17.50. A service availability fee is charged for each meter and represents the cost of the wire, poles, meter and right-of-way maintenance necessary to get electricity to the member's location. Even with the increase, our service availability fee does not cover the actual cost of these services to the Cooperative. The actual cost is closer to \$25 per meter based on a rate study that was completed in January 2008. Most of the co-ops in the mid-Missouri area already charge a \$25 per month service availability fee. We may have to do the same in the future, but for now, the cooperative can maintain its good financial position with only a \$2.50 increase to this fee.

The Cooperative's board of directors has done everything possible to keep this rate increase to a minimum. In April 2007 our wholesale power suppliers, Associated Electric Cooperatives, Inc. and Central Electric Power Cooperative, increased the price we pay for electricity by 5.3 percent. The Cooperative absorbed that increase without raising the rates we charge to you, the member. But in April 2008, they will increase our rates again - this time by 25 percent. Unfortunately, BEC can't afford to absorb that entire amount. Therefore the board had no choice but to raise rates.

There are several factors which have caused such a large increase. Energy prices are all over the news, including our own *Rural Missouri* magazine. It's no secret that the price of everything is raising and your cooperative is not immune to those increases either.

Our employees drive thousands of miles each month to build and maintain your electric service, so fuel costs are a significant part of Boone Electric's operating budget. The price of copper, steel, envelopes and postage are all increasing.

The price of coal has also skyrocketed because of higher demand, both domestically and abroad. Just four years ago the base price of coal was \$16.72. That price climbed to \$24.11 by 2006 and is expected to reach \$28 this year. AECI burns approximately 10 million tons of coal each year to generate the majority of the electricity cooperatives use. The price increase translates to \$7,000,000 more per year in production costs.

AECI has watched the price to transport coal quadruple over the past few years. It costs nearly as much to get coal to the power plant as the price of the coal.

Another issue facing the power plants is the additional environmental controls mandated by Congress. Thomas Hill, just one of the plants owned by AECI, will spend \$330 million to meet and exceed these mandates.

As cooperatives look into the future, additional rate increases appear unavoidable. Be sure that the Board of Directors and employees at Boone Electric Cooperative will do everything in their power to keep increases to a minimum by taking a hard look at ways to save money on our operating expenses and to help you find ways to use electricity more efficiently.

New Boone Electric Rate Structure

Residential

<i>Service Availability</i>	<i>\$17.50</i>
<i>First 600 kwh @</i>	<i>8.1¢/kwh</i>
<i>Next 1,400 kwh @</i>	<i>7.1¢/kwh</i>
<i>Excess kwh @</i>	<i>6.3¢/kwh</i>

Dual Fuel Home Heating

<i>Submetered Heating</i>	<i>4.5¢/kwh</i>
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Dusk-to-dawn Lighting

<i>100 watts HPS @</i>	<i>\$6.75/month</i>
<i>400 watts HPS @</i>	<i>\$13.75/month</i>

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Member Information

Community Support
Programs
You Can Add to
Your Bill

Round-Up
Helps fund the Boone
Electric Community Trust
which provides financial
assistance to charitable
organizations in BEC's
service area.


C.A.S.H.
Provides utility assistance
to low-income senior
citizens and persons with
disabilities. Funds adminis-
tered by City/County
Health Department.

H.E.L.P.
Provides utility assistance
to low-income families
with children. Funds
administered by
City/County Health
Department.



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BEC Linemen Help Power Sudanese Village

Three Boone Electric Cooperative linemen stepped back in time in January, then changed the lives of hundreds of people living in huts of mud and straw.

Linemen Steve Baumgartner, Jamie Conrow and Jimmy Goodnight volunteered three weeks of their time in the village of Yei, Sudan, Africa, building electrical line to power streetlights above the city's red dirt roads. Two linemen from Cuivre River Electric Co-op, based in Troy, Mo., and another from a cooperative in the state of Nevada, also traveled to the region.

The six linemen traveled as part of National Rural Electric Cooperative Association International, a program that has been building electrical infrastructure to developing countries for 35 years. In addition to Sudan, NRECA International also sends linemen to countries such as Costa Rica, Haiti, Bolivia and the Dominican Republic.

The linemen were scheduled to help local workers build 1.5 miles of line through this remote village of 200,000 people. They set 22 poles the first few days, all manually, then spent two days stringing and tightening the line. This finished stretch of line turned on streetlights serving a large number of the local citizens.

"Yei had 138 working streetlights when we left," Goodnight said. "Juba, a capital city in Southern Sudan, only has two. Everyone gathered under those street lights at night."

Once the string of streetlights was operational, the linemen worked on a three-phase line that will power, among other things, a medical facility, a school and a

church, all under construction on the edge of the village. Each of those new structures is being built by other non-Sudanese volunteer groups who are helping to develop the area. The city's first radio station will also be powered by the new line.

"By the time we finished, we helped raise 40 poles and string 20,000 feet of wire, all by hand," Conrow said. Five local cooperative workers known as groundmen first dug a hole as deep as their body length and three feet wide. The group then used pike poles, two or three men to a pole, to push each electric pole into place before refilling the hole with dirt. Three pike poles generally raised a 35-foot power pole, but six were needed to raise the 45-foot power poles with cross arms used for the three-phase line.

"We worked an eight-hour day (because that's when the local linemen worked), but it felt like 12 hours with all of that manual work," Goodnight said.

The American linemen worked alongside the groundmen and six Yei linemen employed by the newly founded cooperative. Working for the new cooperative is a lucrative job, as these men earn more than most other men in this poverty-stricken area. Breakfast and lunch are provided to each employee, making them among the healthiest residents as well.

The linemen stayed in some of the only concrete structures in the area. With no



Six American linemen pose with the linemen and groundcrew employed by the new electric cooperative in Yei, Sudan. The American linemen attended the first ever meeting of the cooperative's Board of Directors. BEC linemen Jimmy Goodnight, Steve Baumgartner and Jamie Conrow are on the back row, each wearing a hard hat. A lineman from the state of Nevada stands to Conrow's left on the back row. Two linemen from Cuivre River Electric, based in Troy, Mo., pose kneeling in the front row and on the back row, far left.

BEC Linemen with local groundmen helped the village that will power



Lineman Jamie Conrow works atop a power pole in Yei, Sudan, with local cooperative lineman Hakim James. Six American linemen and local linemen power streetlights and build a three-phase line to power a school, medical center and church.

electricity to their compound, the men took cold showers and boiled water for meals by candlelight. They ate a variety of ready-made meals, as eating the local fare often was not advised.

In the middle of their stay, the six linemen enjoyed a safari to Murchison Falls in Northern Uganda, near Lake Albert and the southern beginning of the Nile River. They saw a plethora of African wildlife on a boat ride up the river and a vehicle excursion through the surrounding national park.

People have come to Yei from all over Sudan because of the electricity. The vast majority of local homes aren't powered, due primarily to the cost, but the power to the

streetlights has had a tremendous impact on the entire community.

"Those people are so happy now," Baumgartner said. "They've never had this before. They don't have much, but they're happy. I said right after we got there that I would never, never, never go back, but now I can't think of a reason why I wouldn't."



BEC Lineman Steve Baumgartner, on the far left, helps Yei utility workers raise a power pole. The line construction is completely manual since the local cooperative has no access to bucket trucks or digger derrick trucks. The men are using pointed pike poles to help push up and steady this 45-foot power pole to help carry a three-phase electrical line.

For more information about NRECA's International programs, log onto www.nrecainternational.org.

Where in the World is This?



Huntsdale Baptist Church

At the front of the church is a pulpit used by the original church and carved from lumber off Birch Wilhite's farm. Carpet and new pews were added in the mid 1970s. In 2002 the church hosted a 100-year celebration.

Moving on to our next mystery location. One lucky person to correctly identify the location below will receive a \$25 credit to their electric bill. Sorry, but BEC employees and their families are not eligible.

We traveled to the edge of the service territory for the December Mystery Photo and stumped most of you. Congratulations to Lori Meyer of Rocheport, who correctly identified the Huntsdale Baptist Church.

Boone County farmer Birch Wilhite built the first Huntsdale Baptist Church in 1902 in this tiny railroad community. He donated the land and the building to the congregation upon his death. The building was used for many civic and local activities and was even a two-year high school for a time. But by the early 1940s the building was in disrepair.

A second, and much smaller, church building was completed in 1946. The basement was dug by a team of mules. Sand from the river bogged the team down, however, so the basement is only 4.5 feet deep.

The current church building is built so tightly that little water seeped in during the floods of the early '90s. The basement of the church was used as a shelter and by the Red Cross during the floods.

Where in the world is this?



Touchstone Energy

Boone Electric Cooperative is a member of Touchstone Energy, a national alliance of local, member-owned electric cooperatives providing a high standard of service to customers large and small.

In order to qualify as a Touchstone Energy partner, electric cooperatives must be active members of their community and be dedicated to serving all customers with integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to their community.

Where is our Mystery Photo? (Please be specific)

Photo location

Your name

Address

City/State/Zip

Phone

Equity number (found on your bill)

Return this form by April 10 to:

Communications Department * Boone Electric Cooperative
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