



# The Light Issue

of the Current Communicator

March 2012

News for the member-owners of Central Virginia Electric Cooperative



## 2012: Milestones and Transitions

### An Anniversary!

CVEC will celebrate 75 years of service in 2012, marking the anniversary of when rural leaders joined together to create their own electric utility. They changed the quality of life for their families and increased rural opportunities by overcoming tremendous challenges.

We honor them today as we enjoy the benefits of their efforts. What was once unavailable is now irreplaceable.

### New Rates:

In addition to celebrating an anniversary, 2012 is a time to focus on energy efficiency. **The reason?** CVEC energy rates are going to rise to about the state average, due to a change in CVEC's wholesale energy contract. The average residential member will pay about \$1 per day more for electric service. Still a great bargain for what we receive, but a better bargain with a little effort to become more energy efficient. Visit [www.mycvec.com](http://www.mycvec.com) to learn more about saving energy.

### What to look for:

**Wholesale power costs increase June 1 of this year.** CVEC will pass through the amount of the rate increase by placing it directly on the PCA line item on your bill. If your bill is higher, look at the PCA line item to find how much the new wholesale rates have affected your monthly bill.

**CVEC will also file a formal rate case with the State Corporation Commission in June** to change our rate structure to include the new wholesale power costs. While the rate case is under review you will continue to find the amount of the rate increase on the PCA line of your bill. Once the rate case is approved, likely in the next twelve months, the PCA line will return to normal and the new energy rates will be reflected under the Energy Supply Charges section of your bill.



## CVEC Payment Options

### Each year, CVEC receives and processes more than 400,000 payments from Cooperative members

at an average cost of \$1.00 per payment. Some payments are less expensive, such as an Automated Electronic Bank Draft, while walk-up window payments are the most expensive.

Two out of three (67%) members pay by mailed check. In the past those checks have arrived at CVEC and our Member Service Representatives have processed each one. Recently CVEC changed the process so that the checks would go directly to the bank,

allowing us to receive one daily payment report. This will free up our Member Service Reps to better serve members who want to discuss energy efficiency options and other programs.

**Automatic Bank Draft** accounts for 11.4% of our payment methods and the cost is only 8¢ per transaction. Signing up for electronic funds transfer is easy and it helps your Co-op. In addition, it is one of the payment options that works well with a new feature, **Paperless Billing!** Check out both options at [www.mycvec.com](http://www.mycvec.com).

CVEC also accepts credit card payments (*about 10% of total*) through **Speedpay**, a third-party payment service that charges a \$3.95 convenience fee. As a not-for-profit, member-owned utility, the question of how to fairly allocate the credit card processing fees has been difficult to resolve. If CVEC received payments directly, it would result in a transaction cost of about \$2.50 for everyone's \$100 in payment. Currently, the Speedpay method contains costs compared to a direct credit card option but it is less convenient for members who prefer to use credit or debit cards, particularly with online payment.

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Other payment options not mentioned include **Bank Transfers** (6%) and local, third-party payment sites that use a system similar to Speedpay to transfer funds. Some sites, such as Wal-Mart, offer a low convenience fee (88¢) for members who are in no rush and also offer an option that will ensure that the payment is transferred directly to CVEC when time is of the essence. The express fee options starts at \$3.95.



Keeping the  
Lights On

## Consider the poles and wires that deliver electric service to your home or business.

That equipment owned by you the member is part of a rural distribution system... 4550 miles of electric line... emanating from 30 substations... along 56,000 utility poles. With a little less than 35,000 total members, that means that there are less than 8 members per line mile and a whole lot more trees on both sides of the line.

To ensure the most reliable service possible in a rural area, CVEC has an aggressive right-of-way (ROW) maintenance program, spending more than \$1.3 million annually to keep the area below and along the lines clear from trees that could interrupt service. If you receive a direct mail piece about our ROW maintenance program, know that we should be visiting your area in the near future.

**NOTE:** CVEC does not trim yard trees, those trees under and around the low voltage service line attached to your home. Other than the additional expense, concerns about lawns, pets, children, and septic fields drove the decision to focus on the three-phase and single-phase distribution lines. Also, CVEC does not chip branches after trimming. Crews move larger branches to the side of the right-of-way and then return at a later date to bush hog the remaining smaller limbs.

## New Member Numbers in April



## Take a look at your April Electric Bill to locate your new member number

which will replace your old CVEC account number.

Keep it handy for when you contact CVEC.

You will also be receiving a membership card that will entitle you to discounts on prescription medications and other medical services.

The **Co-op Connections Card** is a benefit of our membership with Touchstone Energy, offering discounts for retail products and services around the country.

Remember to enter your CVEC membership number on the back when you receive your Co-op Connection Card.

## Update your records:

## CVEC would like to have your most current contact information as soon as possible so that we may better serve you.

We use your **telephone number** and your **cell phone number** to help identify your account during outages. We also use your phone number to contact you when we have a scheduled outage or if you accidentally missed a payment.

Also share your e-mail with us so that we can stay in contact with news updates and energy efficiency information.

Thank you in advance for visiting [www.mycvec.com](http://www.mycvec.com) and selecting **The Latest** tab to update your contact information.



**2012 CVEC Records Update Form**

1.

Central Virginia Electric Cooperative is in the process of updating our records to include the Physical address following to help us update our records.

CVEC also wants to help our members save money and will send you energy efficiency information from time to time. If you share your cell phone number the Co-op will use that number to contact you with information during outages. As always, CVEC will not sell your personal information and the Co-op will not share your information unless you give us your permission.

#1. Account Number

#2. Name on Account

#3. Physical Address (service location address)

#4. City (service location address)

#5. State