

Duck River Electric Allocates Up To \$70,000 To Match Federal Funding For Energy Assistance

For the second year Duck River Electric Membership Corporation's Board of Directors has taken action that will provide the necessary funding to match federal dollars to assist needy members with payment of this winter's energy bills and issued a challenge to other energy providers within its service area to do the same.

Meeting this week, the DREMC Board allocated up to \$70,000 to match federal funds that have been made available through the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and will be administered in most of the local area by the South Central Human Resources Agency (SCHRA). The amount of money appropriated for each county varies, but when matched with local private or public funds, provides \$2 for every \$1 matched. The \$70,000 authorized by Duck River Electric qualifies as private funds that can be applied toward this match. Duck River Electric's contribution will be a minimum of 25 cents per member up to a maximum of \$1 per member served by the cooperative in each of the counties it serves, with the exact amount dependent upon the level of participation by other heating providers in those counties.

County funds available to be matched throughout the DREMC service area include: Bedford - \$16,894; Coffee - \$22,515; Franklin - \$15,615; Marshall - \$10,752; Maury - \$28,152; Moore - \$1,817 and Giles - \$12,300. When these dollars are matched, a total almost \$325,000 will be available through SCHRA to assist families with their heating expenses.

Duck River Electric is only one of several utility providers in most of these counties which supplies home heating resources to homeowners. Municipal electric and gas utilities, private gas utilities, public gas utility districts and others also provide heating fuels and Duck River Electric is challenging these energy suppliers to also provide matching funds for their customers so the full available amount of almost \$325,000 can be reached and all federal funding can be used.

“This federal matching program through SCHRA was first initiated in 2009 and proved to be very helpful to residential energy users that have a hard time meeting their basic heating requirements during the winter months,” DREMC President and CEO Jim Allison explained. “And as with last year, it will require participation by all the municipal, investor-owned and utility district energy suppliers in order for the full funding amount to be available. With this \$70,000 commitment from DREMC, we are challenging our neighbors to provide the equivalent match from their utility to make certain needy families in our areas gain full access to all these available funds. With the extremely cold weather that all of us have experienced this January, energy use is at an all time high as are the resulting monthly bills. These funds will be needed more than ever.” Allison said.