



DREMC NEWS

JANUARY 2024

Adapting to serve you better

The Duck River Electric team works very hard to improve our performance to serve you better today than we did yesterday. The team demonstrates this perspective, and it is my pleasure to share some of their successes from the past few years with you.

For many years, more phone calls were coming into DREMC than could be answered efficiently. In those cases, calls either continued to ring as the callers waited to be answered or the caller would hang up from not being answered promptly. Those phone calls are logged by the phone system as “an abandoned call.”

Historically, the DREMC abandoned call rate was between 40 to 60%. As a result of more innovation and collaboration over the past few years, DREMC has reduced this rate to less than 1%. This success was

a team achievement that involved multiple departments being open to adapting to new technology and procedures that improve the experience you receive when calling DREMC.

DREMC receives 2,400 calls during an average week. When storm events cause widespread outages, this number can often grow to 3,900 calls or higher. However, with Automated Meter Infrastructure (AMI), members no longer need to call DREMC to report an outage. Furthermore, outages can be tracked on our app or live on the DREMC website at drenc.com.

DREMC has also added automated phone menu options to accept payments by credit/debit card or check.

The success of our team’s efforts improves your experience when calling DREMC. While the team is available to assist members in person or by phone, technology has impacted the



Scott Spence
Duck River EMC
President & CEO

way many choose to interact.

The DREMC team is committed to enhancing the level of service we provide to benefit you and be respectful of your time. The improvement in the caller experience allows our team the daily opportunity to serve you better. Please join me in congratulating them on their latest achievement.





PICK THE WORKSHOP YOU WISH TO ATTEND!

COLUMBIA	CHAPEL HILL	DECHERD	MANCHESTER	SHELBYVILLE
March 12 ● 6:00 p.m. DREMC Office 798 New Lewisburg Hwy.	March 14 ● 6:00 p.m. United Methodist Church 316 N. Horton Pky.	March 19 ● 6:00 p.m. DREMC Office 1738 Decherd Blvd.	March 21 ● 6:00 p.m. DREMC Office 209 E. Fort St.	March 26 ● 6:00 p.m. DREMC Office 1411 Madison St.

Don't miss out on this opportunity to learn how a few simple improvements can increase efficiency, lower monthly energy bills, and create a more comfortable home! Our team will also introduce DREMC's programs and services that are designed to help members get the most from their energy dollars.

Join us for a light supper and educational program presented by DREMC's residential energy advisor. For attending, each household will receive a FREE Home Energy Kit to begin your improvements.



When attendees were asked what they liked most about DREMC's Home Energy Workshop, they said:

- "Great education and practical tips!"*
- "The explanation of how temperature changes affect your electric bill."*
- "Excellent presentation. Very thorough."*
- "The phantom load explanation."*
- "Learning about HVAC filters - the different types and when to replace or clean them."*
- "Much more informative and entertaining than I expected."*

TO RESERVE YOUR SEAT, CALL 931-680-5880.

VISIT DREMC.COM/WORKSHOP FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER ONLINE.

Tired of the ups and downs with your electric bill?

Levelized Billing



Levelized Billing is designed to help residential members anticipate what their bills will be each month. The billing plan works to defer bill increases during heating and cooling seasons to other months when bills are typically lower.

To enroll in Levelized Billing, please complete and return the enrollment [form](#) via email or at your local Duck River Electric office.

Want to know more? Contact your local DREMC office to see if Levelized Billing is right for you.

Give *and* receive through Project HELP

With colder temperatures arriving, bills typically increase with the additional electric use to keep your home warm. Duck River Electric's Project HELP program offers emergency electric bill assistance to qualifying members who face financial hardships and are unable to pay the bill.

"One member spoke with us recently about not being able to pay his bill," said Amy Holcomb, DREMC office manager in Decherd. "He worked odd jobs to always have the money to keep his account current. Unfortunately, the weather kept him from working, and he did not have the funds to pay his bill. After visiting the local Good Samaritan office, he was approved for Project HELP assistance and able to make the payment needed."

Holcomb shares that stories like this demonstrate the importance of the Project HELP program, and its ability to assist DREMC members is only made possible thanks to the generous donations the program receives.

Last year, nearly 600 families and individuals received emergency assistance through the program to help them stay current on their electric bills and avoid service disconnection. Project HELP makes a difference!

Please join us in donating to the program to ensure



that when someone in your community needs emergency assistance, Project HELP is able to assist them this winter or any other month.

Donations can be made by signing up to donate through your monthly electric bill, at [dremc.com](#) or by donating spare change when visiting any DREMC office.

All donations, regardless of the amount, is appreciated!

If you or someone you know needs assistance paying their DREMC electric bill, Project HELP is available. Contact your [local community partner agency](#) for more information and to qualify for assistance.

STAY CONNECTED!

DREMC's app, daily energy use notifications put information at your fingertips

The Duck River Electric mobile app offers members quick and easy access to your electric account 24/7/365! With just a few taps on your mobile device, you can:

- Check your account balance.
- Make a payment.
- Set alerts and reminder notifications.
- View current and historical account billing and payment data.
- View outage locations that are updated in real-time.
- And more!

Don't have the app? Search for DREMCmobile in the Android or Apple app store and download the FREE app.

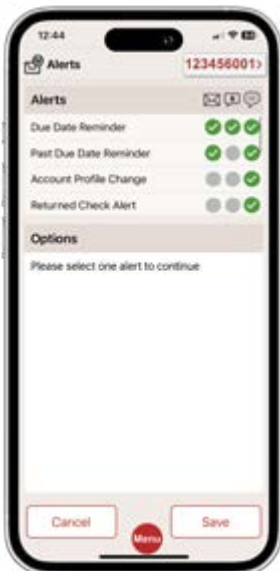
Members should ensure their email address and cell phone number are updated using DREMC's online account portal at dremc.com. Log in to the portal and the app using your full DREMC account number and a 10-digit alphanumeric password.*

Get reminders for:

- Payment due dates
- Past due payment
- Arrangement installment dates

Receive alerts for:

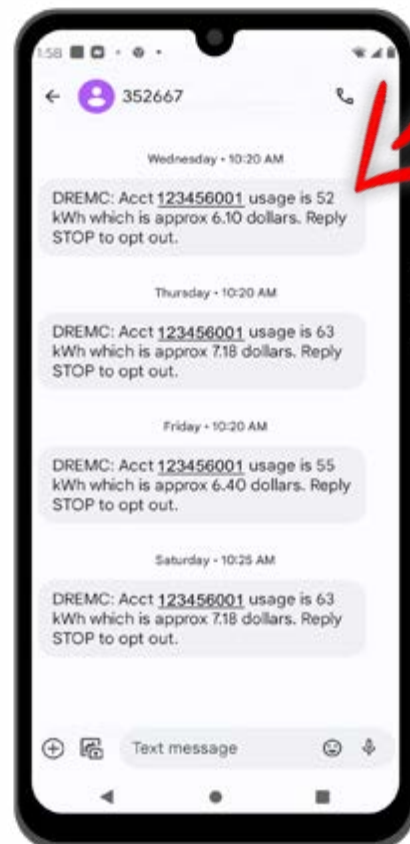
- Daily energy use
- Payment confirmations
- Profile changes
- Outages



**Members may need to update their passwords using DREMC's online account portal to meet the 10-digit alphanumeric criteria when logging into the new app. If you need assistance with using the online account portal or mobile app, please call any DREMC office during regular business hours.*



Opt in to receive daily energy use notifications. Text JOIN to 352667, and then reply START to your first text message.



Receive EnergyRight rebates for qualifying home energy efficiency upgrades

Improving the energy efficiency of your home means a lower monthly bill and increased indoor comfort year-round. To help residential members achieve these benefits, Duck River Electric gives you easy access to [rebates](#) and [financing](#) on qualifying home energy efficiency upgrades through TVA's EnergyRight program.

Get your home energy rebate in 3 easy steps:

1 Find a contractor.

Search the Quality Contractor Network (QCN) to find a TVA-vetted, licensed and insured contractor to perform your upgrade. All TVA EnergyRight rebate-eligible upgrades must be completed by a QCN member.

2 Complete the upgrade.

Once the upgrade is complete, your contractor will submit the rebate request to EnergyRight for processing.

3 Claim your rebate.

Watch for an email from TVA EnergyRight with a redemption code to claim your rebate.

HVAC financing available

- **EASY APPLICATION PROCESS**
- **AFFORDABLE MONTHLY PAYMENTS**
- **NO PENALTY FOR EARLY PAYOFF**

For more details and how to begin the process, click [here](#) or call DREMC at 931-680-5882.



Energy evaluations can lead to energy savings

For residential members of Duck River Electric, a **free** home energy evaluation is a good first step in lowering your energy bill. An energy evaluation provides recommendations from your trusted energy advisor on ways to make your home more comfortable and energy-efficient.

DREMC offers convenient options for completing the evaluation. Whichever energy evaluation you choose,

you'll begin by registering with the TVA EnergyRight program at [energyright.com](#).

Click [here](#) for more details about the **free** home energy evaluations.

If your business is looking for ways to reduce energy costs, DREMC can help through the [Comprehensive Services Program](#).

COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES PROGRAM

Need energy solutions?

Click [here](#) for more information about energy services offered to DREMC business members.



Grant funding helps bridge the digital divide

A message from Kristin Jackson, CFO of United Communications

In today's hyper-connected world, high-speed internet is no longer a luxury but a necessity. Fortunately, bridging the digital divide has become a strategic priority, with federal and state governments stepping up through grant initiatives.

As a company deeply rooted in Middle Tennessee for over 75 years, United Communications' mission of connecting our community is at the heart of everything we do. That's why I'm so proud we've made grant funding a cornerstone of our expansion efforts.

After securing more than \$53.4 million in state and federal grants through Project UNITE, the question is frequently asked about how these funds are being invested. In this issue of Duck River Electric's DREMC News, I'd like to share our answers and vision.

We consistently pinpoint areas in need.

Our dedication to closing the digital divide starts with meticulously identifying underserved areas. We proactively analyze the FCC Broadband Data Collection maps and regularly engage residents through Project UNITE, ensuring our grant proposals address the most pressing needs. While our initial focus was on communities with internet speeds under 25/3 Mbps, we are now also targeting areas with internet speeds under 100/20 Mbps, reflecting our commitment to continuous improvement.

We foster a collective approach in grant applications.

At United Communications, securing grants is a team effort. Our "all-hands-on-deck" philosophy ensures every department contributes its expertise. Everyone at United plays a crucial role, including our finance team which

ensures financial accuracy, and the engineering and deployment teams that guarantee our system growth and construction plans meet grant requirements. This collective dedication, evident in the six- to eight-week application window and ongoing public comment periods, leads to well-rounded proposals that stand out from the competition.

We maintain a dedicated approach that ensures timely completion.

Once grants are awarded, the work continues. In most cases, it can take up to four months to finalize contracts, and the entire grant process—from application to construction—can sometimes take eight months to a year. Nonetheless, once the green light is given, we prioritize swift and efficient execution. The United team meticulously manages timelines to fulfill our commitment to customers and maintain compliance with grant programs. This ensures timely project completion and the rapid delivery of high-speed internet to every corner of the target communities.

The United Communications team is committed to continuing our efforts to bring high-speed internet service to rural areas in Middle Tennessee and keeping you updated on our endeavors to make it happen.

Visit [United's website](#) for more information about the Project UNITE initiative and plans for future expansion in Middle Tennessee.

Stay informed!

GET DREMC NEWS SENT TO YOUR INBOX!

Opt in to receive the next issue by sending your preferred email address to DREMCNews@dremc.com.