



STEUBEN RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

A Message From The General Manager

CALLING YOUR COOPERATIVE OFFICE AFTER HOURS

As many members already know, when you call the Steuben Rural Electric Cooperative (SREC) office number after hours, you are connected to our call center, CRC, which stands for Cooperative Response Center.

CRC is a national company providing software and services to electric utilities, including a round-the-clock call center, dispatch and safety monitoring for line crews. Because CRC is organized as a cooperative just like we are, SREC is a member of CRC, along with 430 other electric utility members in 45 states, representing over 8 million consumers. Founded in 1992, CRC has steadily increased in the size and scope of its operation with offices in Austin, Minnesota, Dunlap, Tennessee, and Abilene, Texas.

Every once in a while, we hear from a member that they would prefer to speak to an SREC employee, rather than speak to a call center employee based in Minnesota, Tennessee, or Texas. We can certainly understand why members might feel this way. At the same time, it is my hope that this article will help demonstrate the vital role our call center plays in helping us meet our mission of providing our members with low cost, reliable electricity and related services in a safe manner.

With approximately 5,300 members and over 6,400 meters, it would be impossible for SREC to staff our own call center, and still remain fiscally responsible to our members. It is easy to understand this when considering the significant power outage events that we experienced last summer, especially in July 2017. Over the course of a one-week period, violent microbursts caused CRC to take 216 calls from members on July 17th, 422 calls on July 20th, and 185 calls on July 21st. On July 20th in particular, CRC helped us manage 17 major power outages simultaneously,

affecting over 3,000 members. With hundreds of members calling in, even doubling our staff of employees would not have enabled us to handle that volume of calls without members having to wait for hours on hold, or continually calling back just to get a busy signal. In these particular severe events, CRC also helps us communicate up-to-date restoration information to members when they call back.

Quite often we experience outage events during the day, and in this case, all five of our office employees take calls from members one right after another. Even in the case of a small outage affecting say 30-50 members, the volume is often too much for our internal staff. Thankfully, when the volume of calls gets to a certain level, or when we see from the software CRC provides us with that the outage is significant, we can switch one or all of our phone lines over to CRC, so that members calling in will have their calls answered. In addition to helping us handle emergency and power outage calls, CRC also does the following:

- CRC continually monitors weather events all over the country and shifts its highly trained staff to meet the demands of areas under threat of power loss due to weather events.
- CRC has the flexibility to immediately meet our needs, when unexpected outages occur that have nothing to do with weather, causing us to suddenly need extra manpower to answer member calls.
- CRC provides the Cooperative with a sophisticated software system that allows us to see where our member calls are coming in from so that we can organize our crew response by area, as well as by severity. CRC provides us these services all while their customer service representatives are continuing to take member calls.
- CRC has a highly trained team of dispatchers, who are experienced in navigating the complexities of each

Board of Directors:

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Office Closings:

February 19, 2018
March 30, 2018

utility's procedures on line crew assembly. CRC will actually dispatch the crews for us so that our line department staff and line crews can concentrate on supporting our work in the field.

- Our line department staff provides CRC with estimated restoration times, which they can then communicate to members when they call back to find out the status.
- CRC makes periodic calls to our line crews out in the field as a vital safety check.

Over the course of one year, we pay CRC an average of \$2,000 per month for the services I have described above. This very reasonable fee provides us instantaneous access to extra manpower in the blink of an eye, and enables us to ensure that our members speak to a real person, any time day or night, should they experience a power outage or other emergency. CRC is not a substitute for our expert, dedicated, and conscientious internal staff; they are there to help our employees provide the best support and service possible to you, our members.

Pay the Way You Want

We understand that, in today's society, people like to have options. SREC offers multiple ways to pay your bill based on your preference. Start the new year right with one of SREC's convenient payment options:



- ⇒ **Auto Pay** is a time-saving option that will automatically deduct your electric bill payment from your Visa, MasterCard or Discover debit or credit card on the 20th of each month. You will still receive monthly statements in the mail showing your kilowatt-hour usage and the amount due. Please note, the auto-pay program takes one billing cycle to begin the automatic payment process. To sign up for auto-pay go to our website at www.steubenrec.coop, and click on the SmartHub icon to register as a new user.
- ⇒ **Pay by Phone** is an easy way to pay your bill over the phone : 607-776-4161 or 1-800-843-3414. You may make a payment by phone between 7:30 am and 4:00 pm on business days. Have your credit or debit card ready when you call. Please remember that privacy rules prevent SREC employees from providing account information to anyone but the member unless a member consent form is on file at the office.
- ⇒ **SmartHub Online** allows you to securely pay your bill from your computer or mobile device. You may also check your electric energy usage and manage multiple aspects of your account. To sign up, just visit our website at www.steubenrec.coop, and click on the SmartHub icon to register as a new user. If you prefer to manage your account from your mobile device, you can download the SmartHub iOS app for iPhone or the SmartHub Android app for Android devices. Need help using SmartHub? Call 607-776-4161 or 1-800-843-3414 during regular business hours to speak with a billing representative.
- ⇒ **Pay In Person** at the Bath or Cherry Creek offices. SREC accepts personal checks, credit or debit cards (Visa, MasterCard or Discover), money orders and cash for payment. The Bath office is open week days from 7:30 am - 4:00 pm and the Cherry Creek office is open week days from 7:00 am - 3:30 pm. Please remember that privacy rules prevent SREC employees from providing account information to anyone but the member unless a member consent form is on file at the office.
- ⇒ **Mail Your Payment** in the envelope enclosed with your bill. If you are mailing in your payment, please allow plenty of time for delivery before the due date.
- ⇒ **Drop Box** is available at each office location for those times when the offices are closed. The drop box is for check and money order payments only. Please do not place cash in the drop box. Payments dropped off in the drop box will be processed the following business day. Payments dropped off on holidays or during weekends are processed on the next business day.
- ⇒ **Bill Pay Through Your Bank** is offered by most banks. You specify when the bank sends the payment to SREC and from which account. Please allow 7-10 business days for SREC to receive your payment to avoid any unwanted late fees.

ROW UPDATE

It won't be long before line clearance crews begin the 2018 seasonal trimming cycle. Crews will be working on Steuben right-of-ways to clear lines and minimize outages caused by vegetation in both Bath and Cherry Creek this spring.

Efforts will be made to contact members directly, prior to commencing work on member owned property. Questions can be directed to Nick Hess, SREC ROW/ Operations Supervisor at 716-560-3002.

Asplundh and Strauss Tree Service Inc., will once again field the primary line clearance crews working on our system.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and support of Steuben Rural Electric's ROW program. We look forward to doing our part to keep your power on!

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Can you be reached during an emergency?

With the growing number of people moving away from landline phones to cell phones, we want to make sure we know how to reach you. Always be sure to update Steuben Rural Electric with your current phone number(s) so that you can be reached during outages or other cooperative related circumstances.

Having more than one number on the account is best to ensure communication during more urgent situations. Please call Steuben Rural Electric today at (607) 776-4161 or (800) 843-3414 to confirm the phone number(s) we have on file for your account and to update if necessary. You can also update your information on our website at www.steubenrec.coop, and click on the SmartHub icon to register as a new user. The information you provide is kept confidential and will not be shared.

For Sale by Sealed Bid

Steuben Rural Electric Cooperative is selling by sealed bid:

2004 Chevrolet Silverado 2500HD 4x4 Pickup Truck

- * Extended Cab
- * 6.0 liter gasoline engine
- * Automatic transmission
- * Power windows and door locks
- * 228,645 miles

FOR SALE!

Bids will be accepted until 4:00 pm on 3/20/18. Bid forms are available at the Bath office or on our website at www.steubenrec.coop. Bids will be opened by the Board of Directors at their regular meeting on 3/21/18. The truck may be inspected by contacting the Bath office at 607-776-4161 from 7:30 am to 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday.

Winter Storm Watch: Keep Clear Of Fallen Utility Lines

Downed power lines can look relatively harmless, but don't be fooled. They likely carry an electric current strong enough to cause serious injury or possibly death. These tips can help you stay safe around downed lines:

- Assume the downed line is energized and stay as far away as you can.
- If you see a downed power line, move away from the line and anything touching it.
- The proper way to move away from the line is to shuffle with small steps, keeping your feet together and on the ground at all times. This will minimize the potential for a strong electrical shock. Electricity wants to move from a high voltage zone to a low voltage one and it could do that through your body.
- If you see someone who is in direct or indirect contact with the downed line, do not touch the person. You could become the next victim. Call 911 instead.
- Do not attempt to move a

downed power line or anything in contact with the line by using another object such as a broom or stick.

- Be careful not to put your feet near water where a downed power line is located.
- Do not drive over downed power lines. Even if they are not energized, downed wires can get entangled with your vehicle and cause further damage.
- If you are in a vehicle that is in contact with a downed line, stay in the vehicle. Honk your horn for help and tell others to stay away from your vehicle.
- If you must leave your vehicle because it's on fire, jump out of the vehicle with both feet together and avoid making contact with the energized vehicle and the ground at the same time. This way you avoid being the path of electricity from the vehicle to the earth.

Please allow SREC and emergency personnel to manage the dangerous site.

2018 Legislative Youth Tour Washington D.C.



Who's Eligible?

SREC member 11th grade students.

When is the trip?

April 7-11, 2018

Where do I get an application?

The application is available at your local SREC offices or on our website at www.steubenrec.coop.

When is the deadline?

March 8th, 2018 by 4 pm at the Bath SREC office.

What is the Legislative Youth Tour?

Annually, SREC sponsors a "Legislative Youth Delegate". If selected, the student will travel to Washington D.C. to meet with our nation's political leaders and learn about our nation's legislative process. This is an excellent learning opportunity for students. He or she will gain first-hand experience in how our national government works. Time will also be reserved for visits to historical sites in Washington. This opportunity is an "all-expense-paid" trip except for general spending money that the student may elect to spend on souvenirs and incidentals.

Questions?

Please call the SREC office at 607-776-4161 or 1-800-843-3414 or email kleveland@steubenrec.coop.



**STEBEN RURAL
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE,
INC.**

Bath Office
9 Wilson Ave
Bath, NY 14801

Phone: 607-776-4161
Phone: 800-843-3414

Office Hours: (M-F) 7:30-4

Cherry Creek Office
5966 South Rd
Cherry Creek, NY 14723

Phone: 716-287-3602
Phone: 800-883-8236

Office Hours: (M-F) 7-3:30

We're On The Web

www.steubenrec.coop



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Happy Hunting!

In the body of this newsletter are five (5) account numbers. If you find your account number in this newsletter call the office within fifteen (15) days and your account will be credited \$10.00.

To advertise in the next issue of The Energizer, please mail or email your ad by April 17, 2018 to:

Steuben REC, Inc.
9 Wilson Ave
Bath, NY 14810

Attn: Kristen Cleveland
kcleveland@steubenrec.com

The Trading Post

For Sale

Wood locust posts; industrial tires with wheels off 2800 Kabota, will fit others; parts to build a people trailer for behind a 4 wheeler. Call 607-776-6570.

Two 12' car lifts, 220 volt, 10,000 lb. capacity. Can see operate, about 7 years old, good condition; 1999 Acura, 32 TL, 4dr, automatic 6cyl, front wheel dr., 115,000 miles, heated leather seats, inspected, runs good, check engine light on, "selling as is" - \$1600.00; Kenmore electric dryer, large capacity w/cord, white, works great - \$100; 1960 International Harvester, low boy tractor w/5' belly mower, 12 volt, chains - \$1800, 1985 Chevy 22' box van, large block V-8, "selling as is" - \$1500.00. Call 607-661-6348.

Animal lures & baits, deer lures & cover scents, hunting/trapping supplies.

Supply catalog - \$1. Bill Russ Trading Post Store, 25 William St, Addison NY 14801.

Trapping Supplies. Grandview Fur Center, Bill Bowdoin, Bradford, NY. Call 607-583-4600.

Miscellaneous

The Cala Lily Yarn Shop is open! Beautiful yarns, notions, and gift items. 10% off all regularly priced yarn to members with Co-op Connections Card. Country Shop open March-December, Wednesday & Saturday, 10-3 and Thursday, 4:30-8:30. Closed Jan & Feb. Call 716-397-9478.

Welder hats & doo rags. Hand made in many patterns including sports. Embroidery also available on plain colored hats. Many designs, including IBEW and fist with lighting bolts. Have your local # and name embroidered on your hat or doo rag. Call

or text for pricing, free shipping is available. SEW MANY THINGS By Judy. Call 912-655-8336. Also search for me on Facebook.

ANN's Housekeeping & Cleaning Service, "Old Fashion Cleaning, We Get In All The Corners". References and reliable! Homes, offices, cottages, parties & seasonal cleaning. Call 607-329-4906. Gift certificates available.

Custom Welding - aluminum, stainless and brazing. Light fabrication & repair. Call for appointment at 607-776-8018.

Wanted

8ft drag, 3pt would be best; also 1 bottom 3pt 16" plow. Call 607-776-6570.

Raw fur and deer hides. Grandview Fur Center, Bill Bowdoin, Bradford, NY. Call 607-583-4600.

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**Never Overload
Electrical Outlets**



The electrical systems of many older homes are not properly equipped to respond to today's increased power demands. Periodically check your outlets and switches to see if they are hot to the touch. If so, have a licensed electrician conduct a safety check on your entire electrical system. Worn wiring can cause electrical fires that start in the walls and burn for some time before they become obvious.

In accordance with the provisions of the New York Codes, Rules and Regulations, the Steuben Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc. is required to permit a residential customer to designate, in writing, a third party to receive a copy of every notice of discontinuance of service to the customer, provided that such third party indicated in writing a willingness to receive such notices. If you wish to designate a third party to receive these notices, please contact the main office at (607) 776-4161 for a copy of the applicable paperwork.