



Powell Valley Electric Cooperative News

A message from your CEO



Mike Knotts
Interim CEO

POWELL VALLEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

420 Straight Creek Road
P.O. Box 1528
New Tazewell, TN 37824

Office Hours: M-F 8 a.m.–5 p.m.

Tazewell Office:

Service Requests: (423) 626-0707
Billing Inquiries: (423) 626-0706
Outages/Trouble: (423) 626-5204
Other Inquiries: (423) 626-5204

Jonesville Office:

Service Requests: (276) 346-6003
Billing Inquiries: (276) 346-6003
Outages: (276) 346-6065
Other Inquiries: (276) 346-6016

Sneedville Office:

All Inquiries: (423) 733-2207

Calls to all PVEC locations will be answered by emergency operators after office hours, on weekends & holidays.

Visit us at pve.coop

You may also contact us at info@pve.coop

Mike Knotts
Interim CEO

Ronnie Williams
Tazewell Area Supervisor

Jason Stapleton
Jonesville Area Supervisor

Joey Southern
Sneedville Area Supervisor

Powell Valley Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

The Power of a Vote

A recent Pew Research Center survey found that most Americans believe that voting is a fundamental part of American democracy. When asked what was required to be a good citizen, voting polled higher than following the law, helping others and knowing the Pledge of Allegiance.

Our nation is a representative republic, not a direct democracy, and our Founding Fathers' wisdom in establishing our system of government continues to be evident 242 years later. Your vote elects fellow citizens to represent us in the city council, the state legislature, the United States Congress, and the White House.

Casting a ballot is a small action with mighty consequences.

On Tuesday, Nov. 6, Virginians will yet again cast their ballots. This is a powerful opportunity to influence the direction of our state and nation, and I hope that you will join your neighbors and me at the polls. On Election Day my co-workers always check my lapel for the "I voted" sticker the poll workers often hand out, and I hope you will proudly wear it too. Voting is an essential part of being an American citizen.

Voting is also fundamental to your electric cooperative. It is what makes Powell Valley Electric Cooperative (PVEC) different than most any other company you do business with.

PVEC is led by a board of directors composed of members of our community

— people like you who buy their energy from the co-op. The board establishes and oversees our policies and procedures and has the ultimate responsibility to listen to the needs and desires of the communities we serve.

Our co-op needs wise and conscientious decision-makers to serve on the board, and this means that your vote at the co-op is essential as well.

Just this past month, co-op members like you voted to elect three of the nine members of our board of directors. Over 1,200 people came to Hancock County High School to make their voices heard. Despite long lines to cast their ballots, I observed lots of smiles and people spending time catching up with neighbors and long-lost friends. It was a great day.

Voters re-elected Roger Ball from Tazewell, Tennessee, David Kindle from Blackwater, Virginia, and Michael Shockley from Kyles Ford, Tennessee, to serve three-year terms on the board. If you are unsure of which district you live in or want to know which director represents you, check out our website at pve.coop.

I sincerely appreciate the members of our board for the time and counsel they provide, but, more importantly, I want to thank each person who took the time to learn about the candidates and cast a ballot.

Voting has power — for our country, our community AND our co-op.

— Mike Knotts

Holiday Closings

In observance of the upcoming holidays, our offices will be closed on these days:

Nov. 22 – Thanksgiving Day

Dec. 24 and 25 – Christmas holidays

Jan. 1 – New Year's holiday

As always, cooperative dispatchers will be on duty to take your emergency calls during the holidays.

Powell Valley Electric Cooperative's board of directors, management and employees would like to wish you and your family a joyous and safe holiday season!

2018 Annual Meeting!

At Hancock County High School in Sneedville, Tennessee, on a picture-perfect September day, over 1,250 members registered at this year's annual cooperative meeting. It was a beautiful day of fellowship among cooperative members and their families, PVEC employees, as well as special guests representing the Tennessee Valley Authority and Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association.

There was something for everyone at this year's annual meeting and many took advantage of the free health services that were available throughout the day. Hancock County Hospital and Amedisys Home Health administered blood pressure checks. Hancock County Health Department provided very beneficial wellness information for our members. The Hancock County Sheriff's office shared a very nice display titled "Friends for Children." Kids met "Louie the Lightning Bug" and enjoyed children's activities at a table designated just for them.

Throughout the day, many folks enjoyed taking rides in the cooperative's bucket trucks for a great aerial view of the area. Everyone enjoyed a delicious lunch, and inspirational music was provided by Tennessee 90. And, as always, all of the cooperative members present at the annual meeting were eligible to win the many terrific door prizes that were given away.

During the morning session, Director of Finance and Benefit Administration Mike Watson presented the annual financial report.

Highlights of the manager's report presented to the membership by Interim CEO Mike Knotts follow:

I am pleased to tell you that you can be quite proud of Powell Valley Electric Cooperative.

My name is Mike Knotts and I am the interim CEO here at Powell Valley Electric. I have only recently been asked to assume this role, because the cooperative's longtime general manager, Randell Meyers, has announced his retirement. Some of you may remember that I have spoken here at this meeting in the past as a guest from the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association, or perhaps have read my column in the Tennessee Magazine, but today I feel honored to provide this report in a new role as the caretaker of your cooperative. Over the coming months, I look forward to helping lead the cooperative into the next chapter of its history — and there is lots of work to do!

First and foremost, my role is to assist the board of directors as it recruits and selects the next general manager of the cooperative. Perhaps that person is in the room with us today, or perhaps that person will come from somewhere else, but one thing is for sure, it will be difficult to do because Randell Meyers has left an indelible mark on the history of Powell Valley Electric.

I have been fortunate to work with electric cooperatives across the country, and one thing is universal. The people who work for co-ops are dedicated to serving others — they see their job as a mission, not just a paycheck.

Why else would our linemen work outside in the midst of the strongest storms, while we seek shelter, to ensure that the electric power we all depend upon stays flowing to your home? In fact, hundreds of Tennessee and

Virginia linemen are living up to their billing of "volunteer" at this very moment working to restore power to our friends and neighbors in South Carolina who have been devastated by Hurricane Florence. Some of the very people in this room are packed and ready to go help also, just as soon as the remnants of the storm pass through our area. Say a prayer for those who are so selflessly in harm's way right now.

The mission of our co-ops is simple, but it is vital. Provide the power we depend upon, but do it in a way that makes our communities better. It takes good, honest, decent, hardworking, dedicated people to make that happen.

So, yes, the people of America's co-ops are great, but it is not very often we see the type of dedication that Randell has displayed. He began work at PVEC in 1964. How many people today can say they have worked at one place for so long?

But just showing up doesn't get the job done. For over 50 years he has worked by the sweat of his brow, and later by the skill of his brain, to ensure that Powell Valley Electric keeps the lights on, keeps costs down so your electricity is as low as possible, and works to make the community a better place. The strong financial report that you just heard did not occur by accident, it was based on years of good decisions by Randell and the excellent team of employees at Powell Valley.

His loyalty to a cause greater than himself deserves my humble admiration, and I hope you'll join me in giving him a round of applause.

But as all of you know, change is inevitable. My preacher often makes this point very directly — he challenges us to think about the answer to this question. In 100 years, how many people will be new? The answer, all of them!



From left: Bucket truck rides. Porter Campbell, 98 years young, recognized as the oldest person present. Youngest person present, 5-year-old Christian Fanney. One of many great prizes!!!

So change is coming to Powell Valley Electric, and I'm privileged to lead the first-next chapter of PVEC's history.

And your cooperative is in a great place. The excellent financial position that the cooperative finds itself in makes it more likely that we can do big things to make your lives better. Electric co-ops across the country are discovering that a new way to enlighten our communities is becoming apparent — some are even calling it “the next greatest thing.” While I can't make any announcements today, I hope that PVEC will be able to share some really exciting news in the very near future — stay tuned!

In terms of operating the electric grid, Powell Valley is a leader. We were an early adopter of remote meter reading, but much of what affects our work we cannot control — things like the weather, or even our most awful nemesis ... squirrels ... so utilities all across the country have been investing in building a “smart grid.” Some of you may have heard the term, which refers to utilizing new technology to reduce the length and intensity of power outages — or even prevent them to start with. But did you know that one of the most advanced smart grids in the country is right here in Hancock County?

Yes, it is true. But many of you may not even notice, because when the lights stay on, instead of go off, why should we notice? And that is just the way we like it. We take great satisfaction in doing such a good job that you don't often think about your electric service.

But this excellent operational record

doesn't mean much if you can't afford to pay your bill, and I'm thrilled to report that your cooperative makes each and every decision with an eye toward how it will affect the rates you pay. If you are looking for ways to save energy and lower your electric bill, PVEC is here to help. Check out our website, pve.coop, and look for information about eScore — a program that will help you reduce your usage through easy steps that can save you real money. Also, we provide tips and tricks each month in the pages of Cooperative Living and the Tennessee Magazine.

But it can be difficult to keep rates low, though. As you learned in the financial report, more than 75 cents of every dollar you send to Powell Valley is used to pay TVA for wholesale power, and while PVEC values its longstanding relationship with TVA, TVA does continue to incrementally increase its rates and we have little choice but to pass those increases along to all of our members.

This is true again this year. TVA's increase will cause the average PVEC member to see a larger power bill of about \$1.83 per month.

I am excited, however, to announce that PVEC is not adding any additional increase to this amount. We will continue to work with the 17 cents of each dollar you pay us, and will stretch each and every penny you pay us. You deserve it.

As I conclude, I am happy to report to you that your cooperative is strong and the future is bright, but none of that is possible without the great people of PVEC.

We were delighted to have with us several special guests at this year's annual meeting. Visiting from the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association was David Callis, executive vice president and general manager. Due to the unpredictability of Hurricane Florence, representatives from the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives were unable to attend as they hoped.

We were also happy to have with us from the Tennessee Valley Authority, Robbie Ansary, Knoxville customer service manager.

One of the most enjoyable moments of the annual meeting is recognizing the youngest and oldest person present. The youngest person present this year was 5-year-old Christian Fanney of Tazewell. The prize for the oldest cooperative member present was given to a World War II veteran of the Pacific Theater, Porter Campbell, who is 98 years young.

After the votes were tallied in the election, incumbent directors Roger Ball of District 2; Mike Shockley of District 7; and David Kindle of District 8 were re-elected to the board of directors.

Annual Meeting day gives PVEC staff an opportunity to visit with those whom we serve, many we can count on seeing just about every year at our annual event, and others we meet for the first time. We appreciate so many of you coming out to be with us, and hope all of you enjoyed this very special day of the year.



From top, left: Grand prize, an LED Sanyo 50" TV, won by Ida Robinson. Free health fair. More great prizes!!! Bottom: “Louie the Lightning Bug.” Music by Tennessee 90!

Jonesville Area Supervisor Jason Stapleton shares safety tips



Space heaters can work wonders on the coldest winter days to warm rooms that your central heating system doesn't keep comfortable. But while manufacturers have worked to build more safety features into this alternative heating source, users should still take precautions to ensure these cozy heaters don't become fire hazards.

Space heaters are designed as a supplemental source of heat, not as the main source. So you shouldn't use them constantly, especially in rooms that you don't use much.

Follow these guidelines for safely using space heaters:

- Keep space heaters at least 3 feet away from drapes and furniture that could catch fire.
- Don't use extension cords with space heaters unless absolutely necessary.
- Inspect the heater's cord periodically for frayed wires or damaged insulation. Don't use a space heater with a damaged cord.
- Check for a secure plug/outlet fit. If the plug gets hot, the outlet may need to be replaced by a qualified electrician. This could be the sign of a home wiring issue.
- Place your heater on a flat, level surface. Don't place heaters on furniture, as they may fall and break or even start a fire.
- Unless the heater is designed for use outdoors or in bathrooms, don't use it in wet areas.

Winter Peak

Every month of the calendar year has a peak hour. Demand charges set during the 60-minute period influence the wholesale power bill. This is why we want to share with you information about the winter peak months.

The winter peak months, November through March, will soon be here, so we want to offer tips for these months. Winter peaks are most likely to occur during the morning hours between 6 a.m. and 9 a.m. when you are getting ready for school and work. There are several things that we can do to lower the peak that will not change our way of life.

Here's a few ways to Beat the Peak

1. **Dial down the heat.** Adjust your home's thermostat down a degree or two between 6 a.m. and 9 a.m. After these peak hours, set your thermostat back to its normal setting.
2. **Delay use of appliances.** Postpone certain household chores that involve major appliances like washing machines, clothes dryers and dishwashers. Wait until after 9 a.m. before doing laundry or washing dirty dishes.
3. **Flip the switch.** Turn off all unnecessary lights during peak hours.

Billing Corner

The hustle and bustle of life can make keeping up with everything we need to do a little stressful, especially during the holiday season. We offer the alerts and reminders program that can reduce a little bit of that stress by making it easier to keep up with your electric bill! This program allows us to send an alert or reminder message as a text to your cellphone; a phone call (to your cellphone or home phone); an email to your personal email account; or a combination of these options.

A message or phone call can be sent up to 10 days before your bill's due date to remind you when your bill is due and the amount of that bill. A payment-confirmation alert once a payment is processed on your account will give you a little peace of mind that all is well! As a back-up plan, you may also have an alert message sent if your account happens to go past the due date. Call your local office or go online at pve.coop to sign up for a little less stress in your life. This is a free service from Powell Valley; however, applicable text messaging and call rates apply from your phone carrier.

What's a-Cooking?

Administrative Assistant Sandy Smith shares her recipe for Beef Stew. Sandy has worked in the Tazewell area since 1987.

Ingredients

- 1½ lbs. beef chuck, cut in 1½-inch cubes
- 6-8 potatoes, pared and quartered
- 6 carrots, pared and quartered
- 6 small whole onions or 1 medium onion, sliced
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- 2 cans tomato soup
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce

Directions

Combine all ingredients, stir well. Place in 2-quart baking dish. Cover and bake at 300 degrees for 2 hours.