



Bristol Tennessee Essential Services

Electric • Internet • Telephone • Cable

News

Spring 2014 ~ For Customers of Bristol Tennessee Essential Services

Monthly Budgeting Made Easier with BTES' Levelized Monthly Billing Program (LMB)

The winter of 2014 proved to be very cold and miserable for many, many days. In fact, three record-setting low temperatures were recorded in January alone — Jan. 6 with a low of 2 degrees, Jan. 7 with a low of minus 2 degrees and Jan. 29 with another low of minus 2 degrees.

The Tennessee Valley Authority, which supplies electricity for BTES, set five of its top 10 energy usage days in TVA history during January, including its top usage day ever recorded — Jan. 7.

“During these extreme weather days and per a request from TVA, BTES employees initiated our Emergency Load Curtailment Plan,” explained BTES CEO Mike Browder. “We reduced power usage at our facilities by adjusting our thermostats down to 60 degrees, reduced lighting, and took other measures to reduce electricity consumption.”

Despite BTES and our customers taking these measures, we still hit our all-time peak record for energy usage on Jan. 7.

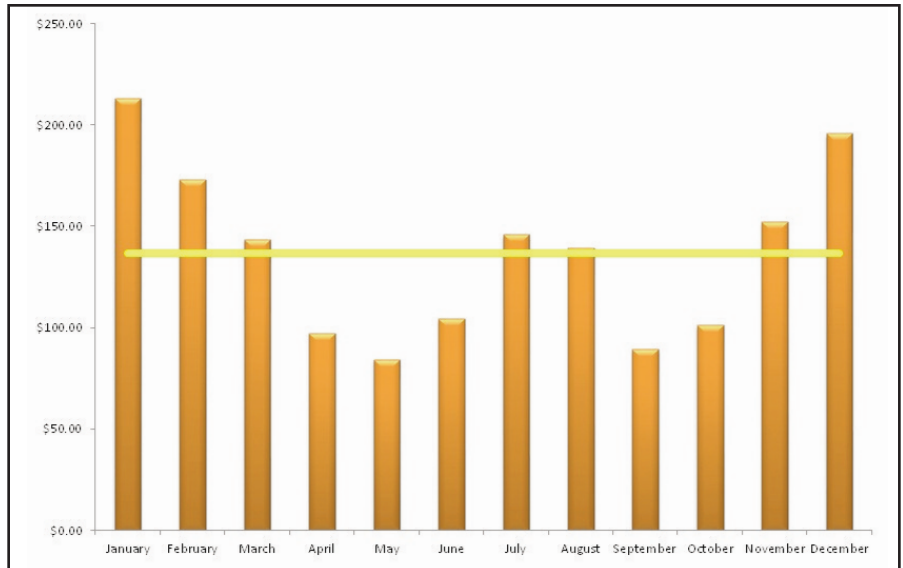
Additional power usage by our customers also meant higher electric bills.

“If the outside temperature is 50 degrees, heating systems might only have to run a few minutes each hour to maintain the inside temperature,” Browder explained. “But when the temperature drops to near zero and below, the system runs more often and longer to maintain the comfortable inside temperature set by the customer.”

Many customers received record-setting electric bills in the months of January and February.

To help even out higher electric bills over a 12-month period, BTES offers a Levelized Monthly Billing (LMB) Program.

“Levelized Monthly Billing helps customers budget,” explained Diane Smith, BTES supervisor of customer service. “Instead of



Monthly budgeting is easier when you know the approximate amount of your electric bill. If you have been a BTES customer for at least 12 months, you are eligible for our Levelized Monthly Billing Program.

paying lower bills in the spring and fall, and higher bills in the summer and winter, LMB takes an average of the customer's annual usage and they pay that amount year-round.”

There is no annual settlement period with the LMB program. Therefore, at no point in the year does the customer have to pay the difference between the amount of electricity used and what they paid. The LMB amount is recalculated each month, using a 12-month rolling average of your energy usage.

“We currently have more than 7,400 customers who take advantage of this program,” Smith said. “It is our hope that other customers will see the huge benefit of this program before they receive higher summer and winter bills.”

Customers interested in signing up for the LMB program can visit www.btes.net/customerportal or call BTES at 423-968-1526.

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As I take pen to paper (old fashioned, I know), it is Saturday afternoon on South Holston Lake. The weather's great — a few scattered clouds with a slight breeze and 75 degrees. We have been through the coldest winter in many years. BTES set a new electric demand, along with our highest bill ever from TVA, for the power our customers used in January. I joined a lot of our customers by getting the largest power bill that I have ever received. TVA had several of its all-time peak hours as the cold wave stretched across the entire Tennessee Valley.

We experienced almost no problems from wet snow, sleet or hail. Our employees do a good job in preparing for these events. We kept almost all customers' power on almost all of the time. Other local power companies did not fare as well and experienced wet snow, sleet and hail, resulting in power line problems.

Several members from our construction team volunteered to go to Chattanooga, Tenn., to help with power outages. The combination of water and cold temperatures, and its effects on power lines and trees near power lines, caused 80,000 of their customers to lose power. About half of those were automatically switched and were back on very soon. Almost 40,000 outages required linemen to make repairs before power could be restored to customers. Our linemen helped with that process.

From where I am sitting at the lake, I can see the Holston Mountain and the Cherokee National Forest. The dogwoods and redbuds are blooming, and the dark green of pine trees stand out. I love trees!

When I was a teenager, I planted 1,000 pine trees with some help from my two younger brothers, Greg and Lee. This helped me receive recognition as the outstanding forestry student that year in Cherokee County, Ala. I still love trees. BTES employees planted more than 30,000 trees a few years ago. This effort was set forth to help remove carbon dioxide that is put into the air when power is generated by burning coal. Not one of these trees has needed to be trimmed due to being too close to a power line! If the right tree is in the right place, no trimming is required. Trimming trees is one of our largest expenses. The cost of power is by far the largest, but tree trimming is very significant. We use guidelines developed by the National Arbor Day Foundation.

A few years ago, a friend sent me a note concerning his displeasure about how we had trimmed his tree. I went to see the tree. It didn't look very pretty to me, either, but it had been trimmed to the correct standard. The house and its power line were about 40 years old. The tree was not nearly 40 years old. It was the wrong tree for the location or the wrong location for the tree. No thought had been given regarding how that 3- to 5-foot tree would grow 80 feet tall and 50 feet wide. If planted in the right location, this tree could grow to its full splendor. Instead, it becomes our nightmare and your nightmare.

Less than two weeks after the above communication, we had a big, wet snow. I received a note from another customer saying, "If you had cut the trees further from the power line, my power would not have been off three days." She was right, but with the right trees in the right location as shown on page 3, trees can stay natural and power can be more reliable, which costs all of us less.

Working together, we can keep trees natural, power reliable and costs down.

Have a great day and....

Good Luck!

Mike Browder

BTES News

Owned and published by
Bristol Tennessee Essential Services,
serving more than 33,000 electric customers
and more than 14,000 fiber customers.

Dr. R. Michael Browder
Chief Executive Officer

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Our Mission

To provide service to our customers,
employees and community that exceeds
their expectations.

Our Vision

To be the best electric, Internet,
telephone and cable television provider.

REMINDER

Please be sure to have your account number readily available when conducting business at BTES. This will ensure the quickest and most reliable service for you!

All payment transactions require your account number. If you choose to use our drive-thru lane or inside window to pay your BTES bill, please provide the cashier with your bill payment stub or your account number along with your payment.

Your account number is located on the upper left hand side of your bill.

Thanks for allowing
us to serve you!



BTES Named Tree Line USA Award Recipient

The Arbor Day Foundation has named BTES a 2014 Tree Line USA recipient in honor of its commitment to proper tree pruning, planting and care in the BTES service area. This is the 14th year that BTES has received this honor.

Tree Line USA, a partnership between the Arbor Day Foundation and the National Association of State Foresters, recognizes public and private utilities for pursuing practices that protect and enhance America's urban trees. Tree Line USA promotes the dual goals of delivering safe and reliable electricity while maintaining healthy community forests.

"Trees are a critical part of urban landscapes all across the United States," said John Rosenow, founder and chief executive of the Arbor Day Foundation. "Service providers like BTES show that taking care of urban trees is good for business, good for customers and good for the community."

BTES achieved Tree Line USA by meeting five program standards: 1) Utilities must follow industry standards for quality tree care; 2) Provide annual worker training in best tree-care practices; 3) Sponsor a tree-planting and public education program; 4) Maintain a tree-based energy conservation program; and 5) Participate in an Arbor Day celebration.



"BTES, our employees and Asplundh are excited to receive this award for the 14th year," said BTES CEO Mike Browder. "We work hard to maintain trees while providing safe and reliable electric service to our community."

BTES' tree care and maintenance policies and procedures are available at www.btes.net/trees.

More information about Tree Line USA can be found at www.arborday.org/TreeLineUSA.

Tall trees, such as:

- Maple • Oak
- Spruce • Pine

Plant the right tree in the right place

Plant taller trees away from overhead utility lines

Arbor Day Foundation™
arborday.org

Medium trees, such as:

- Washington hawthorn
- Goldenrain tree

Small trees, such as:

- Star magnolia
- Crabapple

BTES Launches New Customer Website

BTES has upgraded its customer information website, now called the Customer Portal, which has additional capabilities and more information than the previous site.

Customers can still access the same information that was provided on the previous site, such as the balance of their bill, due date and billing history, as well as make payments using a credit/debit card or e-check. The new site, however, offers a range of services not available on the previous site, such as signing up for Levelized Monthly Billing, Bank Draft, E-bill and Alerts — all without having to make a single phone call to BTES! Once you have signed up, these features begin automatically on your account.

“The new Customer Portal website gives our customers access to information that they would have needed to call us about before,” said Diane Smith, BTES supervisor of customer service. “We strive to make things as easy as possible for our customers, and this is just another step in that direction.”

To sign in to the website, you will need your account number and password — both of which are located on the upper left-hand side of your bill. If you have changed your password from the original one assigned, the password will no longer appear on your bill.

Visit www.btes.net/customerportal for more information.

Visit
www.btes.net/customerportal
to access these services!

View your bill

Get your current balance owed

See your due date

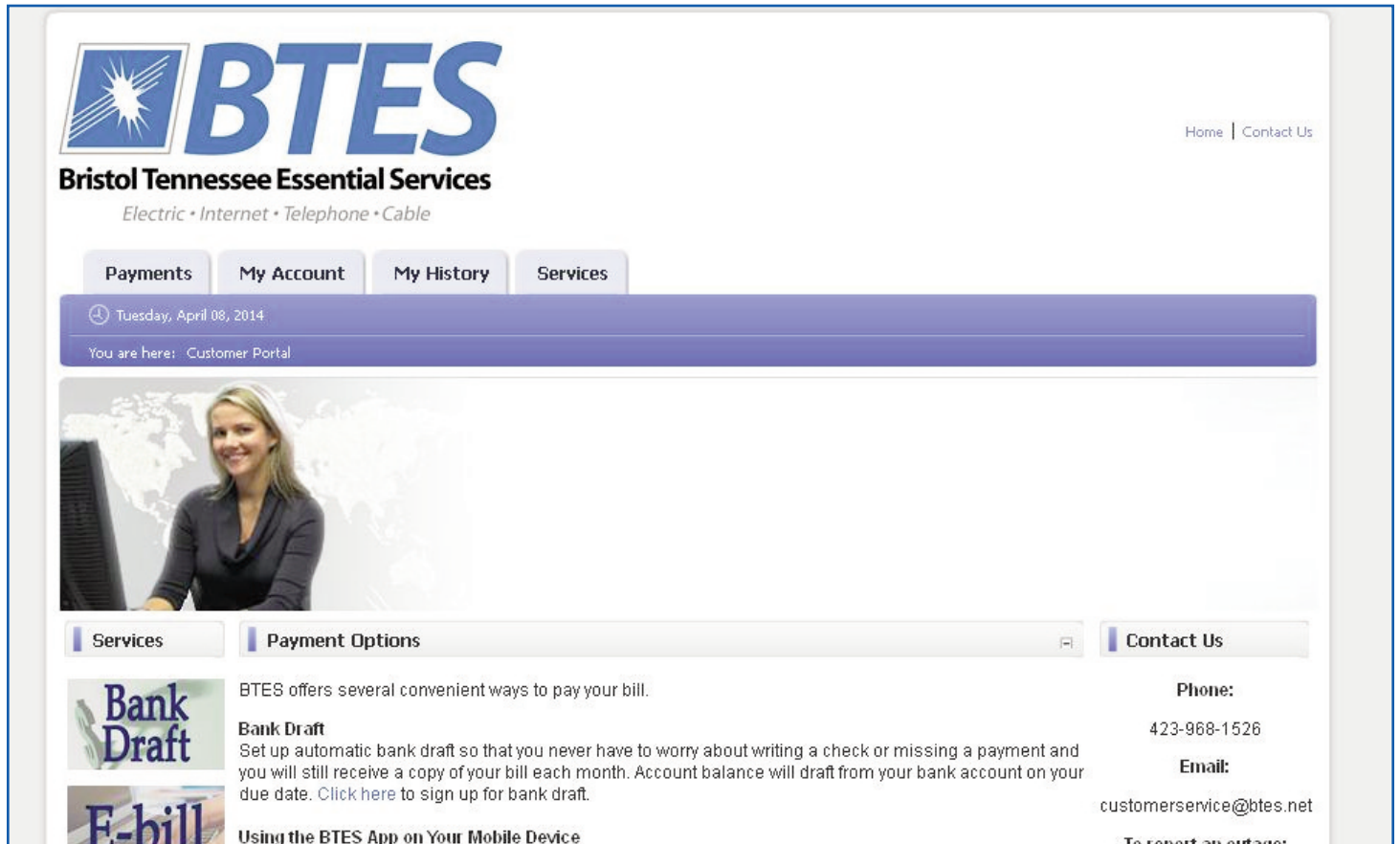
Pay your BTES bill by credit/debit card

Pay your BTES bill by e-check

View your billing and payment history

Update your password

Sign up for our Bank Draft Program,
 Levelized Monthly Billing Program,
 E-bill and Alerts





Quality Contractors Best for Spring Remodeling

BTES recently recognized its Heat Pump Quality Contractors Network Members for providing great service and high quality to our customers.

We surveyed every BTES customer who purchased an electric heat pump through the Energy Savings Loan Program (although you do not have to take the loan to experience the benefits of this program), and the results were tremendous! Our customers are satisfied with the contractors, their staff, the quality of work, BTES' staff and our entire program.

Each heat pump installed through the BTES program goes through a 40-point inspection, which can prevent most problems. Contractors know up front what is expected and do their best to meet this high standard of excellence.

Through the Energy Savings Loan Program, BTES provides no-money-down financing and a free inspection for the following items:

- ◆ **Energy-efficient heat pump**
- ◆ **Attic insulation and ventilation**
- ◆ **Floor insulation and ventilation**
- ◆ **Insulated replacement windows**
- ◆ **Insulated exterior doors**
- ◆ **Insulated garage doors (automatic garage door openers can be included)**
- ◆ **Electrical service upgrades**
- ◆ **Storm doors**

Payments can be added to a customer's BTES bill if the customer qualifies for financing. Contact Kevin Frederick, BTES energy advisor, at (423) 793-5547 to make plans for your home improvements!



BTES Energy Advisor Kevin Frederick (L) presents Mike Jennings (R) of J&M Heating and Cooling with an award for the highest volume of heat pump sales, new construction sales and existing homes sales. In addition, J&M Heating and Cooling, Air Movers, Inc., and John Legg's Heating and Air Conditioning Co., Inc. all received awards for achieving 100 percent in quality.

BTES/TVA Quality Contractors Network Members

Air Movers, Inc.
423-764-2424

J&M Heating and Cooling
423-878-4600

John Legg's Heating & Air Conditioning
423-323-5020

Dolan, Clarke Named to BTES Board of Directors



Mayor Michelle Dolan

Bristol Mayor Michelle Dolan and Larry Clarke were recently appointed by the Bristol Tennessee City Council to the BTES Board of Directors. Dolan will serve as the city council representative.

Dolan is vice president of Lighthouse Supply Company, located in Bristol, Va., which she owns with her husband, Kevin.



Larry Clarke

A native of Sullivan County, Dolan graduated from East Tennessee State University (ETSU) with a Bachelor of Science degree in speech communications and a minor in marketing. She was elected to city council in 2011, and was selected by the council to serve as mayor from July 2013 through June 2014.

Dolan is a 2011 graduate of LEAD Bristol! and the 2011 Citizens Municipal Academy, and she currently serves on the executive committee for the Tara Hills homeowners association.

Clarke is safety director for J.A. Street and Associates, handling on-site training and safety and management of workers' compensation claims.

Clarke is a native of Bristol and a graduate of Virginia High School. He obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in business management from ETSU and an associate degree in claims from Insurance Institute of America.

Clarke attends Central Presbyterian Church, where he serves as an elder. He has served the Bristol community in numerous ways over the years, serving as a member of the Bristol Jaycees, Bristol Host Lions Club, Holston Habitat for Humanity, Boy Scouts of America, Veritas Drug Program, and the Children's Advocacy Center.

Other members of the BTES Board of Directors include Chairman Pat Hickie, Vice Chairman Bryan Boyd and Scott MacMorran.

Why English is Hard to Learn

We'll begin with *box*, the plural is *boxes*,
But the plural of *ox* is *oxen*, not *oxes*.

One fowl is a *goose*, and two are called *geese*,
Yet the plural of *moose* is never called *meese*.

You may find a lone *mouse* or a house full of *mice*,
But the plural of *house* is *houses*, not *hice*.

The plural of *man* is always *men*,
But the plural of *pan* is never *pen*.

The *cow* in the plural may be *cows* or *kine*,
But the plural of *vow* is *vows*, not *vine*.

If I speak of a *foot*, and you show me two *feet*,
And I give you a *book*, would a pair be a *beek*?

If one is a *tooth* and a whole set are *teeth*,
Why shouldn't two *booths* be called *beeth*?

If the singular's *this* and the plural is *these*,
Should the plural of *kiss* be ever called *kese*?

Then one may be *that*, and three may be *those*,
Yet the plural of *hat* would never be *hose*.

We speak of a *brother* and also of *brethren*,
But though we say *mother*, we never say *methren*.

Then the masculine pronouns are *he*, *his* and *him*;
But imagine the feminine...*she*, *shis* and *shim*!

So our English, I think, you all will agree,
Is the craziest language you ever did see!



Unbelievable Chicken

By BTES Customer Te-Kai Shu

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1/4 cup cider vinegar | 1/2 cup brown sugar |
| 3 cloves garlic, peeled and minced | 1 1/2 tsp salt |
| 1 lime, juiced | ground black pepper to taste |
| 1/2 lemon, juiced | 6 tbsp olive oil |
| 3 tbsp prepared coarse-ground mustard | |
| 6 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves | |

In a large bowl, mix cider vinegar, mustard, garlic, lime juice, lemon juice, brown sugar, salt and pepper. Whisk in olive oil. Place chicken in mixture. Cover and marinate eight hours. Preheat an outdoor grill for high heat. Lightly oil the grill grate. Place chicken on prepared grill and cook six to eight minutes per side, until juices run clear. Discard marinade.

The Lighter Side

An elderly woman had just returned to her home from an evening of church services when she was startled by an intruder. She caught the man in the act of robbing her home of its valuables and yelled, "Stop! Acts 2:38." (Repent and be baptized, in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven.)

The burglar stopped in his tracks. The woman calmly called the police and explained what she had done.

As the officer cuffed the man to take him in, he asked the burglar, "Why did you just stand there? All the old lady did was yell a scripture to you."

"Scripture?" replied the burglar. "She said she had an ax and two 38's!"

Grilled Chicken Tenderloins

- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into strips
- 1 cup zesty Italian dressing
- 2 tsp lime juice
- 3 tsp honey

Combine all ingredients in a gallon Ziploc® bag. Seal and marinate for at least one hour. Pour all ingrediients into large skillet, and cook over medium heat until liquid evaporates and remaining marinade becomes thick and caramelized.





Tree Care and Maintenance

Trees have many practical benefits. They are natural air filters — removing dust and greenhouse gases. They can trim your energy bills up to 20 percent!

They provide wildlife habitats and shelter, reduce soil erosion, promote a healthy environment and enhance quality of life.

There are many different types and shapes of trees. They grow at different rates and need differing types of soil and nutrients.

It is very important to take power lines into consideration when planting a tree. The future size of the tree is very important. When planting a tree, always ensure that the future size will never interfere with power lines. Trees can retain their natural beauty if they don't have to be

trimmed to protect the safety and reliability of the power lines.

Tree trimming is one of BTES' major expenses. You can help us reduce this cost, which must be borne by all our customers. Choose the right tree and the right location — which is not under or near power lines.

BTES' tree-trimming policy is in place to ensure the reliability of our services while considering the safety of the general public, BTES employees and contractors. This policy also helps control costs associated with emergency repairs to downed lines.

BTES' tree-trimming policy is listed below. For further information, please visit www.btes.net/trees.

BTES' Tree-Trimming Policy

- 1. The lateral-pruning method shall be employed by BTES and its contractors in all trimming operations performed on BTES' right-of-ways.**
- 2. Final trimming and right-of-way clearing shall provide a minimum of ten (10) feet of unobstructed space (any direction) from BTES' overhead conductors, including the system neutral.**
- 3. BTES shall place an emphasis on tree removal(s) in lieu of periodic maintenance and recurring trimming operations.**
- 4. BTES does not remove tree stumps when removing a tree. BTES will cut the stump at a height to allow removal of the stump by the customer or will cut the stump as low as possible.**
- 5. BTES may offer customers a low-growing replacement tree in exchange for the removal of a fast-growing existing tree that is obstructing or otherwise endangering a BTES overhead power line. In such case, BTES shall make suitable arrangements with an approved tree nursery to provide and professionally install a 3- to 4-foot Dogwood tree at a location satisfactory to both BTES and the affected property owner.**
- 6. Customers may, at their own expense, elect to arrange for a professional, independent contractor to trim or remove trees on their property, in lieu of BTES or its contractor(s) performing the same services where said trees will pose a threat to BTES' overhead power lines if neither trimmed nor removed. Contractors need to be insured and certified to work near high-voltage lines.**
- 7. BTES' Tree-Trimming Program does not include provisions for trimming trees which overhang or are otherwise growing near low-voltage service wires. However, in the interest of safety, BTES may, with prior arrangement, de-energize these lines and temporarily lower them to the ground to allow the customer to trim or remove the trees. Once the customer has finished, BTES will reconnect the customer's service line.**



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Your Comments Are Important

Please list the articles you found most interesting in this issue of **BTES News**, then clip out this form and mail it with your electric bill to the address below. (Spring 2014)

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Other comments, story ideas or questions.

Please return to:
BTES News, P.O. Box 549, Bristol, TN 37621
Phone (423) 793-5511

Name and address (Optional)

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