



Bristol Tennessee Essential Services

Electric • Internet • Telephone • Cable

News

Summer 2015 ~ For Customers of Bristol Tennessee Essential Services

BTES Celebrates 70 Years!

On Thursday, July 9, BTES employees invited more than 33,000 of our closest friends and neighbors to join us at BTES as we celebrated serving our community for the past 70 years.

The celebration began at 3 p.m. and included tours of BTES, music entertainment provided by Lightnin' Charlie, face painting, inflatables, free hot dogs and much more.

The tour began at the front door, where attendees were directed upstairs to our engineering department to learn about our new automation system, see how calls are handled through our help desk department, and understand the process we go through when outages occur. Attendees also toured the headend facility, which houses the equipment that provides our Internet, telephone and cable television services. Additional stops along the way helped attendees learn about our Water Heater Program, meters past and present, electric line safety, outdoor lights, electric cars, bucket trucks, surveying and much more.

BTES employees were responsible for the entire event, including planning, working tour stops, cooking and serving food, collecting and distributing door prizes, and everything in between! Planning began more than a year prior to the celebration to ensure a successful event.

In addition, employees put together a history book highlighting BTES' 70-year history (copies are available at the BTES office). The book tells the story of our electric utility, beginning with Tennessee Eastern Electric Company's 1912 incorporation.

We take pride in all we have accomplished over the past 70 years, but that pales in comparison to the pride we have in our employees and customers. It truly is the people who have made BTES the great organization that it is today. We thank you for allowing us to serve you, and look forward to serving you for the next 70 years and beyond.



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Thanks to Each of You!

"When checking for success, it doesn't matter where you are, it's how far you have come that matters."

The source of this quote is not known to me. I think it is appropriate, however, especially for BTES and the area residents and businesses we serve.



Throughout our country in 1945, everyone was focused on WWII. Most young men were off fighting. Those at home were working hard to support their effort. The war ended that year, and that was when BTES was formed — after the surrender of Germany and before the surrender of Japan.

All manufacturing efforts had been dedicated to supplying the fighting men and not much was being made for civilian consumption. No refrigerators, washing machines, stoves or other appliances were produced during war time ... not even automobiles. Men began coming home to houses that had never had electricity. They were ready for a better life ... a life that included electricity.

In BTES' first three years, the number of customers doubled. Just three years and as many additional people had the benefits of electricity as had been served during the previous 70 years! This dedication to higher service has been a trait of the BTES team from its beginning in 1945. Thanks to all of those who have been a part of BTES' history and heritage.

The economic well-being of our area has grown along with increased use of electricity, cable, Internet and TV over the years.

Electricity, just like any other resource, should not be wasted. Electricity saves labor and provides comfort, convenience and entertainment — all of which add to the quality of our lives. We like providing these services and we hope you enjoy receiving them.

Those living in our service area ... our customers ... have been our reason for being. We want to thank you for giving us the opportunity to serve you. Thank you for providing us with helpful information by returning surveys, writing notes and making your thoughts known. This helps us serve you better. Both compliments and feedback on opportunities for improvement are appreciated.

In our 70 years of operation, we have come a long way. Both BTES and the community we serve have made much progress. A special thanks goes to our customers and our BTES family for making our beautiful little area of the world a better place to live. May the future be even better and brighter!

Good luck!

Mike Browder

BTES News

Owned and published by
Bristol Tennessee Essential Services,
serving more than 33,000 electric customers
and over 16,000 fiber customers.

Dr. R. Michael Browder
Chief Executive Officer

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Editor: Leslie Blevins

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.

Customer Comment

I want to commend BTES for your excellent service during a recent disaster at our house. This past Wednesday, right after we headed to church, a BIG pine tree broke and fell at our home, taking out the pole and all of our services. When we arrived back home an hour later, BTES men were already here at our house, working in the dark and bad weather to restore our electric service. Although we spent the night elsewhere, I understand that you restored our electric service about four hours later, and that seems to me to be a miracle. Early Thursday morning, more men showed up to clean up the oil that spilled out of the transformer. And later that morning, two men came and restored our cable, Internet and phone service. I am so thankful for all you did to get us back in service and cannot say enough about how great the people you have working for you are! Thanks so much! You are the best!

— Mary Jane McClellan



BTES Receives Outstanding Survey Results from Customers

The BTES Board of Directors initiated a Customer Satisfaction Survey to determine how customers perceive BTES and their overall satisfaction with our services.

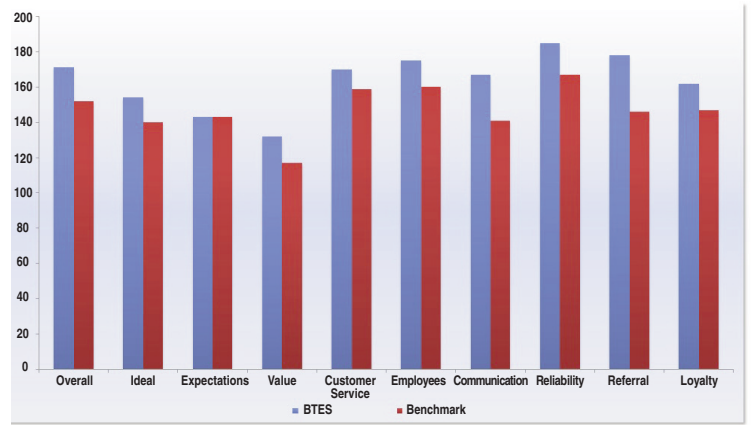
The survey was conducted by SDS Research, an independent survey organization located in Salt Lake City, Utah. SDS Research was the preferred provider of these services to Hometown Connections, a wholly owned subsidiary of the American Public Power Association (APPA), which is an association of more than 2,000 public power entities in the United States, including BTES.

The survey compared BTES to an industry benchmark that was derived from data collected from top-performing utilities across the U.S. BTES exceeded the benchmark in nearly every category!

“Having results that exceeded our industry benchmarks in almost every category is extremely rare,” says SDS Research President Dan Inkley. “This made my job of delivering those results very easy.”

SDS Research used the Net Positive Index (NPI) as the scoring mechanism for survey responses. Our customers rated BTES on a scale of 1 to 5 for each question. The NPI compares the number of responses with a perfect score of 5 to the number of responses rated 3, 2 and 1. Since responses with a score of 4 are considered neutral, they are removed from the equation.

“Customers rated BTES 18 points higher than the industry benchmark in providing reliable service,” says BTES CEO Mike Browder. “Reliability is a top priority of BTES, and we are continually



looking for ways to provide the most reliable services to our community.”

Other top results included scoring 32 points higher than the benchmark in referral and 15 points higher than the benchmark in loyalty.

“It was an honor to present BTES with the SDS Research Pinnacle Award, which is the highest award that our company gives,” Inkley says. “Only eight companies from around the United States received that award this year, and BTES was one of them based on their excellent results in their Customer Satisfaction Survey.”

BTES thanks the customers who were contacted to participate in the survey for taking time to answer the questions. We continually look for areas of improvement and appreciate all the feedback we received.

Thomas Named to BTES Board of Directors



Bristol native Connie Thomas was recently appointed by the Bristol Tennessee City Council to the BTES Board of Directors.

A graduate of East Tennessee State University, Thomas previously worked as a medical representative for Genentech and currently co-owns CeLa Medical Resources.

“I want to see our city and region progress and grow in positive directions,” Thomas says. “I want our community to be a place to which our children will be able to return after completing their education and find meaningful

employment, as well as raise their own families. I'm looking forward to being a part of the BTES Board of Directors as it represents a vital component in keeping our community connected.”

Thomas is an active member of our community and currently serves on the board of directors for Appalachian Sustainable Development and on the advisory board for Morrison School. She has previously served on the boards for Theatre Bristol and Sullins Academy, and was a member of Bristol Regional Medical Center’s physician recruitment committee.

She is married to Dr. David Thompson and has four children and five grandchildren.

Other members of the BTES Board of Directors include Chairman Bryan Boyd, Vice Chairman Larry Clarke, Michelle Denise and Pat Hickie.

BTES Receives National Recognition

Bristol Tennessee Essential Services (BTES) is one of 191 of the nation's more than 2,000 public power utilities to earn the Reliable Public Power Provider (RP3) designation from the American Public Power Association (APPA) for providing consumers with the highest degree of reliable and safe electric service. BTES received the top award — the Diamond Level — for 2015.

The RP3 designation recognizes public power utilities that demonstrate proficiency in four key disciplines: reliability, safety, workforce development and system improvement. Criteria within each category are based on sound business practices and represent a utility-wide commitment to safe and reliable delivery of electricity. The RP3 designation now lasts for three years (up from two), so the 97 utilities that earned the designation this year join the 94 that received it last year, for a total of 191.

"Utilities that have earned APPA's three levels of RP3 designation are implementing best practices for the industry, and are a testament to public power's commitment to serving their community," says Kenneth Stone, energy services and accounting manager at Braintree Electric Light Department.

This is the 10th year that RP3 recognition has been offered.

"We're honored to receive the RP3 Diamond Level designation," says BTES CEO Mike Browder. "Our utility staff puts in a lot of hard work to serve this community. RP3 represents a much-appreciated recognition of this hard work."

In addition to the RP3 award, BTES earned the APPA First Place Safety Award of Excellence for safe operating practices. BTES



Kenneth Stone (far left), energy services and accounting manager at Braintree Electric Light Department, and Mike Hyland (far right), APPA senior vice president of engineering services, present the APPA Diamond Level RP3 Award to Clayton Dowell (second from left), BTES director of engineering, and Kenneth King (second from right), BTES director of operations and safety.

currently has more than 815,707 safe working hours without a lost-time accident.

"In our line of work, safety is the top priority," says Kenneth King, BTES director of operations and safety. "Without adhering to strict safety practices, we can't serve our customers and employees to the best of our abilities."

APPA is a national organization representing more than 2,000 not-for-profit, community- and state-owned electric utilities. It is located in Arlington, Virginia.

Browder Receives Award of Honor from ETSU



Dr. R. Michael Browder, BTES CEO, was one of three individuals to receive the 2015 Award of Honor from the East Tennessee State University (ETSU) National Alumni Association.

To receive the high honor, the individual must have earned one or more degrees from ETSU, demonstrated significant accomplishments in their chosen field of work, and demonstrated moral and/or financial support to the university since graduation.

"I am honored to receive such a high recognition and join the ranks of the previous recipients of this award," Browder says.

Browder graduated from Auburn University with an electrical engineering degree in 1966. A few years later, he received a

master's degree in administrative science from the University of Alabama-Huntsville. In 1972, he and his family moved to Bristol, where he began working as the director of engineering and operations for BTES. Five years later, he was named CEO of BTES.

Being a lifelong learner, Browder returned to school and received his doctorate of educational leadership and policy analysis from ETSU in 1993. During his time on campus, he discovered a real passion for the university. He is currently a member of the ETSU Foundation, the ETSU College of Business and Technology Board of Advisors, Dean's Advisory Council and the Bristol Advisory Council. He has served on the Roan Scholars Leadership Steering Committee, ETSU Athletic Task Force and the ETSU Advisory Ambassadors. Browder is also a former president of the ETSU National Alumni Association, where he served in several officer roles. In addition, he has been called on numerous times to serve as the Bristol chair and spokesperson for the ETSU PRIDE program.

We congratulate Dr. Browder on receiving this prestigious award!



Electric Engineering Department Highlight

BTES' electric engineering department performs all phases of engineering, planning and designing of facilities required for electrical loads; heat pump certification; street lights, dispatching, energy efficiency advising and certification functions; customer damage claims; and outage management. They design substations and the transmission and distribution system up to and including 161 kV facilities. They plan, design and control the maps, records, computer and system studies; investigate customer service requests; negotiate and secure right-of-ways; and assist customers in more efficient usage of electric energy.



"As the director of engineering, I am responsible for overseeing the electric engineering, fiber-optic engineering and networks departments. I most enjoy working with a wonderful team to provide the best possible service to our customers. We work diligently to find the best, most reliable and cost-effective ways to meet their needs."

— Clayton Dowell, 6 years



"My job as energy advisor involves implementing the TVA energy right programs, including heat pump inspections, new home inspections and home energy evaluations. I enjoy identifying problems that could potentially cause electric bills to be higher than they should be. One of the benefits of having a heat pump installed through our program is the full inspection, even if the customer doesn't need financing."

— Kevin Frederick, 27 years



"As engineering assistant, I help engineer electrical and fiber-optic needs for residential and commercial customers, and perform emergency underground locates. Each BTES employee strives to give the best service possible, no matter the size of the project."

— George Williams, 13 years



"As the supervisor of electric engineering, I oversee the design of our electric and fiber-optic infrastructure. I work with all of our customers, from residential to industrial, and enjoy finding solutions that best solve any issues they may have."

— David Hacker, 16 years

"As senior engineering assistant, I work with customers who request new service, want changes in existing service or have questions pertaining to their service. Part of this is preparing all necessary contracts, easements and work orders; providing data for proper equipment sizing; and promoting BTES' services. We are very proactive in our outage management efforts and hold weekly discussions on actions for preventing outages."

— Guy Hardin, 36 years



"My roles as system engineer are to plan, design and maintain automation projects, substation updates, distribution projects and surveying projects. We are currently designing a one-of-a-kind project that will enable BTES to minimize large system outages and restore power very quickly."

— Chris Kibler, 3 years

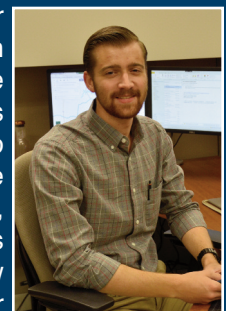


"In my role as dispatcher, I am responsible for dispatching, GIS mapping and outage management. I enjoy working cohesively with the crews and engineers to quickly restore power when issues occur. Reliability is so important to us, and we have someone here to monitor dispatch 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year so we can be as reliable as possible."

— Nick Fleenor, 9 years

"A system engineer typically deals with bigger-picture items, such as customers who need a large amount of power, as well as planning out new power lines. Other duties include marking placement for streetlights and designing where power lines run for new businesses and housing developments. We continue to add new technology to ensure the power stays on with as few outages as possible."

— Chris De Troye, 4 months



"As the secretary to engineering and operations, I serve as the primary contact for energy-saving programs offered by TVA and BTES. My favorite part of the job is the variety of tasks for which I am responsible, and the co-workers and customers I interact with daily. I enjoy seeing how efficiently the engineering team works together during an outage to quickly restore services."

— Vickie Ballard, 12 years



Lessons for my kids

Hold the door.

Pick up what you saw fall, even if you didn't drop it.

Smile and make eye contact.

Be strong enough that people know not to mess with you, but soft enough that people know they can hug you.

Don't sneak extra items in the 12-items-or-less-line.

Be light in your heart and steady on your feet.

Trust your gut.

Take chances that won't hurt yourself or others.

Remember how good your life is.

Think before you act.

Get mad, but don't get even.

Admit to your mistakes.

Do the work it takes to make a good life.

Don't take advantage of the kindness of others.

Tell people when you are proud of them.

Play to win, but play fair.

When you lose, don't whine about it; learn from it.

Return library books on time.

Give credit where credit is due.

Patience and practice will help you learn all the other hard things you want to conquer.

Let him (and only him) know his fly is down.

Stand up to bullies by being smart and kind.

Learn tact.

Learn what all the basic tools do.

Drink water.

Enjoy that cupcake.

Be the kind of person your mom always knew you could be.

— By Kim Bongiorno



Summer Pasta Salad

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1 pound dry pasta | 1 large cucumber, chopped |
| 1 small yellow, red and orange bell pepper (seeds removed and diced) | 1 cup balsamic dressing |
| 1 pint grape tomatoes, halved | 1/3 cup finely chopped basil |
| 1 cup crumbled feta cheese | |
| Salt and black pepper to taste | |

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the pasta and cook until tender, drain, then rinse with cold water to cool.

In a large bowl, combine pasta, peppers, cucumber and tomatoes. Add balsamic dressing and gently stir to combine. Add the feta cheese and basil and stir again. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Chill until ready to serve.

Roasted Summer Squash

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 2 lbs diced summer squash (about 7-8 squash) | 8 garlic cloves, thinly sliced |
| 1 red onion, thinly sliced | 1/2 cup fresh basil, finely diced |
| 1/4 cup coconut oil | |
| Salt and black pepper, to taste | |

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. In a large mixing bowl, toss together the squash, onions and garlic with the coconut oil, salt and pepper. Spread the squash evenly on a baking sheet and bake in the center of your oven for 30 minutes. Make sure to stir the mixture half-way through the cooking time. Toss the roasted squash with the diced fresh basil and serve. Try with a squeeze of fresh lemon.

The Lighter Side

It was a terrible summer for Humpty Dumpty, but he had a great fall!





BTES Named Tree Line USA Award Recipient

The Arbor Day Foundation has named Bristol Tennessee Essential Services (BTES) a 2015 Tree Line USA recipient in honor of its commitment to proper tree pruning, planting and care in the BTES service area. This is the 15th year that BTES has received this honor.

Tree Line USA, a partnership between the 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," says 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 received its Tree Line USA designation 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 15th year," says 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 can be found at www.btes.net/trees.

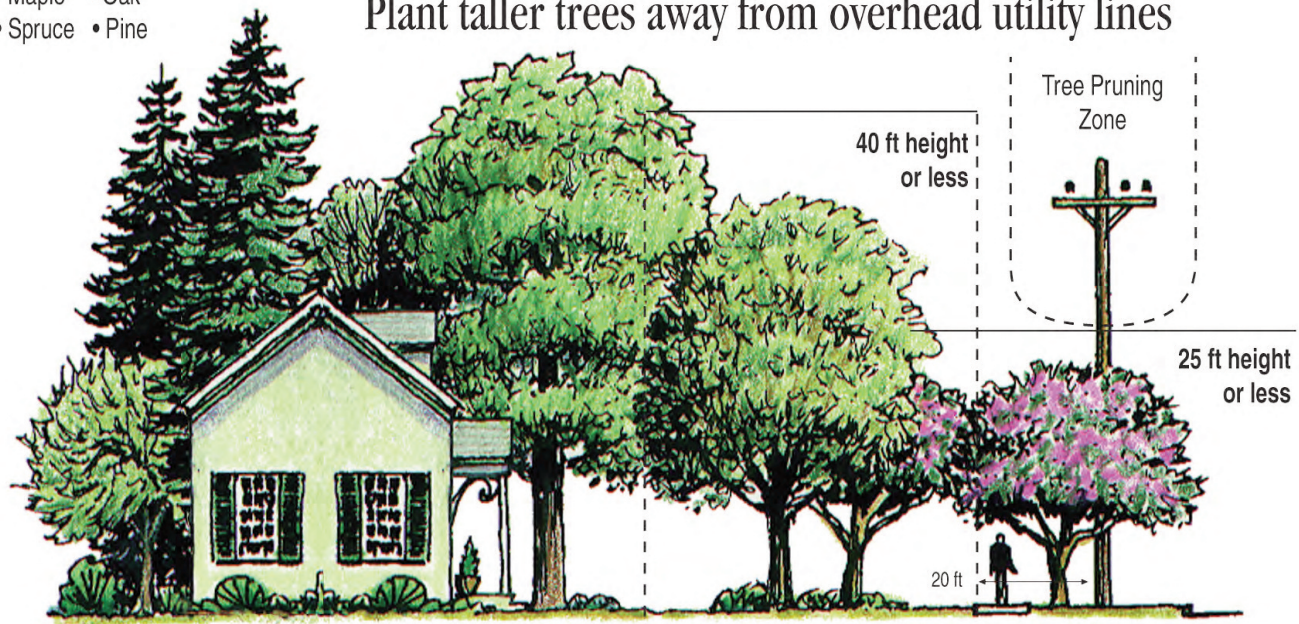
More information about Tree Line USA is available at www.arborday.org/TreeLineUSA.

Plant the right tree in the right place

Plant taller trees away from overhead utility lines

Tall trees, such as:

- Maple • Oak
- Spruce • Pine



Medium trees, such as:

- Washington hawthorn
- Goldenrain tree

Small trees, such as:

- Star magnolia
- Crabapple



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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 BTES bill to the address below. (Summer 2015)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Other comments, story ideas or questions.

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Name and address (Optional)

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