



# BTES NEWS

**Bristol Tennessee Essential Services**

*Electric • Internet • Telephone • Cable*

Fall 2023 - For customers of Bristol Tennessee Essential Services

## CYBERSECURITY & ONLINE SAFETY BASICS

It is extremely important to keep your sensitive data and computer systems locked down. Cybersecurity does not have to be intimidating or require a large investment of time or money! Here are 10 tips to help you stay safe online:

### KEEP A CLEAN MACHINE

Keep all software updated on Internet-connected devices. This includes personal computers, smartphones, and tablets. If you want to “set it and forget it,” configure your devices to automatically update or to notify you when an update is available.

### CREATE LONG, UNIQUE PASSWORDS

Length trumps complexity. Strong passwords are at least 12 characters long and include letters, numbers, and symbols. Ideally, your password is not a recognizable word or phrase. And, yes, you should have a unique password for each online account. If that sounds hard to remember, use a password manager. Otherwise, come up with a password that is actually a “passphrase,” which is a sentence that is at least 12 characters long. Use sentences that are easy to remember, such as *ILov3StayingSafeOnl1ne!* (but don't use that one).

### USE A PASSWORD MANAGER

It's time to ditch the notebook and post-it notes to keep your passwords, as well as the Notes app or word processing document. Instead, the simplest, most secure way to manage unique passwords is through a password manager application. A password manager is software created to manage all your online credentials like usernames and passwords. Password managers store your passwords in an encrypted database (think of it as your personal data vault). These programs also generate new passwords when you need them.

### THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK

What's the most common way for cybercriminals to get your sensitive information? It's when you click on something you shouldn't have. Malicious links in emails, texts, posts, social media messages, and malicious online advertising (known as malvertising) are a direct way for hackers to get your sensitive information. Don't make it easy for them. Be wary of clicking on links or downloading anything that comes from a stranger or that you were not expecting.

### REPORT PHISHING

One of the best ways to take down cybercriminals is by reporting phishing attempts. If the email came to your work email address, report it to your IT manager or security team as quickly as possible. If you're at home and the email came to your personal email address, do not click on any links (even the unsubscribe link) or reply back to the email. Most email programs and social media platforms allow you to report phishing attempts. But don't keep that phishing message around – delete it ASAP. You can further protect yourself by blocking the sender.

### ENABLE MULTI-FACTOR AUTHENTICATION

Multi-factor authentication (MFA), sometimes called 2-factor authentication, adds another level of security to your accounts. MFA includes biometrics (think face ID scans or fingerprint access), security keys or apps that send you unique, one-time codes when you want to log on to a sensitive account. This adds another layer of protection to your accounts.



#### IN THIS ISSUE

Community Support

Energy Savings Word Search

*Continued on page 3.*

## PUBLIC POWER: SERVING OUR COMMUNITY



The fall season is upon us, and I was reminded once again of reasons why I am thankful to call East Tennessee home. We are blessed to get a taste of all four seasons without, for the most part, the extremes of any of them. With the cooler weather, October brings with it the celebration of Public Power Week.

BTES is considered a public power utility, but what does that mean? The term “public power” can admittedly be a bit unclear, but simply put a public power utility is a not-for-profit entity that is owned and operated by the community it serves. This means our primary purpose is to serve our community. This is very different from other types of utilities that are privately owned or publicly traded corporations that are for-profit. Their purpose is to increase profits for shareholders. There’s nothing wrong with that, that’s their purpose, but it is a different approach from public power utilities like BTES.

Public power week is celebrated the first week in October each year and our team at BTES wanted to engage with the community in different ways as part of this year’s celebration. An employee-led team identified three community non-profit organizations that needed some assistance with projects. Several of us helped with landscaping, brush and tree removal while others worked to sort and hang clothes. From what I experienced and observed, everyone enjoyed the opportunity to give back. It only took a little time and effort but produced huge results to those organizations that needed just a little extra help.

It’s experiences like these that make me proud of our BTES team and the community we get to serve. We are blessed with many amazing organizations, doing amazing work for our community. It also reminds me how important it is to be intentional about service. We all have talents and are gifted in different ways. Often, by using our individual talents and resources we can do things that may seem insignificant to us but can be life changing to someone else in need. We just have to be intentional, to reach out and help when we can.

My challenge to myself, and to you, is to be intentional about service. It truly makes a difference.

Blessings to you,

## BTES News

Owned and published by Bristol Tennessee Essential Services, serving more than 34,000 electric customers and over 19,000 fiber customers.

**Clayton Dowell, P.E.**  
Chief Executive Officer

Address changes, news items and suggestions should be sent to:  
PO Box 549, Bristol, TN 37621

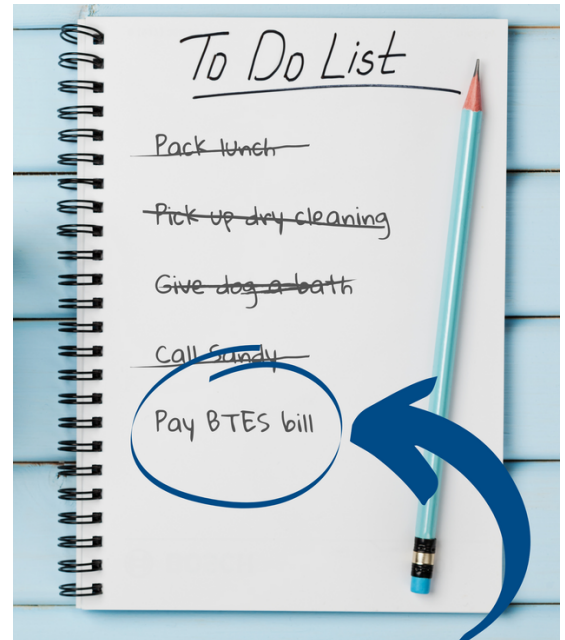
Editor: Leslie Blevins

### Our Mission

To provide essential services that enrich our community while striving to make tomorrow better than today.

### Our Vision

To be our community's trusted resource for energy and connectivity.



Easily mark one thing off  
your to do list each month!

Sign up for  
**BANK DRAFT!**

# CYBERSECURITY, CONTINUED

## USE SECURE WI-FI

Public wireless networks and hotspots are unsecured, which means that anyone could potentially see what you are doing on your laptop or smartphone while you are connected to them. Limit what you do on public WiFi. Especially avoid logging in to check your email and financial services. Consider using a virtual private network (VPN) or a personal/mobile hotspot if you need a more secure connection.

## BACK IT UP

The best way to protect your valuable work, photos, data, and other digital information is to make copies and store them safely. If you have a copy of your data and your device falls victim to ransomware or other cyber threats, you will be able to restore the data from a backup. Use the 3-2-1 rule as a guide to backing up your data: keep at least three (3) copies of your data, and store two (2) backup copies on different storage media, with one (1) of them located offsite. One of these storage possibilities can be backing up to the cloud, which are secure computer servers you can access through an account.



## CHECK YOUR SETTINGS

Every time you sign up for a new account, download a new app, or get a new device, immediately configure the privacy and security settings to your comfort level for information sharing. Regularly check these settings to make sure they are still configured to your comfort. Audit your apps, platforms, and games every few months and delete ones you no longer use.

## SHARE WITH CARE

Think before posting about yourself and others online. Consider what a post reveals, who might see it, and how it might affect you or others. Think twice before sharing posts such as "20 Facts About Me" or posts answering a long list of questions about yourself and family.

*Information from the National Cybersecurity Alliance.*





**BTES**  
Bristol Tennessee Essential Services  
Electric • Internet • Telephone • Cable

DO YOU HAVE THE  
**INTERNET SPEED**  
YOU NEED  
FOR THE HOLIDAYS?

**RESIDENTIAL INTERNET SPEEDS**

 <p><b>60 Mb / 15 Mb</b> \$49.95</p>	 <p><b>100 Mb / 50 Mb</b> \$59.95</p>
 <p><b>500 Mb / 500 Mb</b> \$79.95</p>	 <p><b>1 Gigabit / 1 Gigabit</b> \$99.95</p>



[WWW.BTES.NET/ORDERNOW](http://WWW.BTES.NET/ORDERNOW)

## BTES EMPLOYEES SUPPORT OUR COMMUNITY

### PUBLIC POWER WEEK SERVICE PROJECTS



In celebration of Public Power Week, BTES employees volunteered at area non-profits to further give back to the customers they serve. Public power utilities across the United States celebrate Public Power Week the first full week of October every year to help their communities understand how they can better engage with their utility and benefit from all its offerings.

In the evening of Tuesday, October 3, employees were busy cleaning up the areas around the United Way of Bristol which included including removing weeds, overgrown vegetation, and trees. On Thursday, October 5, employees spent their evening at the Salvation Army Thrift Store to help sort and hang clothes, clean the store, and organize items. In the cool morning hours of Saturday, October 7, a group of employees worked at Healing Hands Health Center to clear out overgrown bushes and trees and clean up landscaping, parking lots, and sidewalks.

BTES is committed to supporting its community and providing safe, reliable, affordable, and customer-focused service.

### FILL THE BUCKET CHALLENGE

When BTES employees heard that students in our local high schools were needing items such as deodorant, body wash, laundry detergent, and more, they created the FILL THE BUCKET challenge. Each week from August - October, BTES employees challenged our community to fill the bucket of a bucket truck with supplies requested from the high school we would be at that Friday evening for BTES Power 7's broadcast of Gridiron Gameday. BTES employees promoted the challenge and then collected donations for Sullivan East High School, Tennessee High School, and West Ridge High School throughout the football season.



### EGG DROP CHALLENGES



BTES always has an egg-citing time at the Egg Drop Challenges at Fairmount Elementary and Holston View Elementary. The goal of the challenge is to see if the students can take a raw egg and create a container that can successfully survive being dropped from a BTES bucket truck at 15-, 30-, and 45-feet. The students used science and mathematics to determine how quickly the containers would fall and whether the containers (and eggs) would survive. Students whose eggs survived the three drops win the challenge!

### HABITAT FOR HUMANITY



Earlier this year, BTES employees joined several employees from the Tennessee Valley Authority to work on a house for Habitat for Humanity. Habitat for Humanity is a nonprofit organization that helps families build and improve places to call home.

### CAREER DAYS AT LOCAL SCHOOLS



Many times throughout the year, BTES employees volunteer at College and Career Days at local schools and community Touch-a-Truck events to showcase the skills needed to work at BTES, as well as the specialized equipment and personal protective equipment used by BTES employees.

### SOUTH HOLSTON LAKE CLEAN UP



On Saturday, July 15, BTES employees joined other community volunteers to pick up trash and other debris along the shorelines of South Holston Lake. BTES employees have volunteered for the event since its inception to help keep our local streams, rivers, and lakes clean and enjoyable for our entire community.

# PINECONE BIRD FEEDER



## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- A PINECONE
- PEANUT BUTTER
- BIRD SEED
- STRING

## HOW TO DO IT:

TIE THE STRING TO THE TOP OF THE PINECONE FIRST. NEXT, SLATHER THE PINECONE WITH PEANUT BUTTER. YOU CAN ROLL THE PINECONE IN THE PEANUT BUTTER BUT USING A SPOON TO SPREAD IT WORKS BEST. AFTER THE PINECONE IS COVERED IN PEANUT BUTTER, ROLL IT IN THE BIRD SEED. HANG THE PINECONE IN A TREE AND ENJOY WATCHING THE BIRDS AS THEY COME BY FOR A SNACK!



## The Lighter Side

WHAT DO YOU USE TO mend a JACK-O-LANTERN?

A PUMPKIN PATCH!

# Favorite Recipes

## Ham & Potato Soup

- 2 large russet potatoes, peeled and diced
- 9 oz. cooked honey ham, diced
- 1/2 cup celery, diced
- 2 15-oz. cans chicken broth
- 1/4 cup and 1 tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/2 cup onion, diced
- 5 tbsp. butter
- 2 cups milk
- Salt, to taste

In a large pot, combine potatoes, ham, celery, onions, and chicken broth. Bring to a low boil and cook over medium heat until vegetables are tender. To make the roux, melt butter in a saucepan over medium heat and whisk in flour. Cook, stirring constantly until flour is golden, about one minute. Slowly add in milk, continuing to stir so that no lumps form and cook until mixture is thick, about 5 minutes. Pour flour and milk mixture into the soup and stir. Add pepper and salt.

## Pumpkin Dump Cake

- 30 ounces pumpkin puree
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 1 cup evaporated milk
- 3 eggs
- 1 box spice cake mix
- 1 cup melted butter

Preheat oven to 350 degrees and grease a 9x13 pan. In a large bowl, mix the pumpkin puree, evaporated milk, sugar, eggs, and pumpkin pie spice. Add the batter to the prepared pan and use a spatula to spread evenly. Sprinkle the cake mix on top of the batter until fully covered. Top the cake mix with chopped pecans. Pour the melted butter over the cake mix and pecans. Place into the oven for 1 hour. When the cake is finished baking, remove from oven and allow it to cool (it may still be jiggly when you first take it out of the oven). Once it has cooled, place it into the fridge to cool completely before slicing. Enjoy with a scoop of vanilla ice cream and a drizzle of caramel sauce!

# ENERGY SAVINGS

Energy helps us do important things. Just like your family, Bolt buys energy from the local power company. So, Bolt can save money by using less energy. This helps protect the environment, too.



R	E	F	R	I	G	E	R	A	T	O	R	L	H	E
B	E	R	A	T	A	T	G	Y	B	D	R	C	D	R
W	N	N	B	P	L	J	K	L	K	S	Q	Q	U	L
D	O	L	O	D	P	R	U	Y	S	Z	I	Q	U	P
E	H	J	F	I	S	B	V	J	K	V	N	M	W	J
N	P	D	K	S	T	E	R	E	O	C	R	E	K	S
K	H	O	H	H	M	I	C	R	O	W	A	V	E	X
G	L	L	G	W	C	A	D	M	Q	R	S	H	X	K
D	U	I	Y	A	E	Q	P	N	B	T	C	E	P	R
E	L	P	H	S	I	U	I	S	O	G	V	B	F	Z
I	U	M	N	H	T	F	R	V	Z	C	N	L	I	Y
F	W	A	T	E	R	H	E	A	T	E	R	D	G	R
V	X	L	R	R	L	N	V	G	H	J	C	I	V	S
W	L	K	L	E	I	Q	E	H	T	E	L	B	A	T
F	I	M	N	G	F	X	L	M	X	W	Q	Y	X	H

Circle the words for things that use energy in Bolt's home.

LAMP, LIGHT BULB, DISHWASHER, REFRIGERATOR, WATER HEATER, AIR CONDITIONER, OVEN, STOVE, MICROWAVE, STEREO, TV, COMPUTER, PHONE, TABLET



**Bristol Tennessee Essential Services**

*Electric • Internet • Telephone • Cable*

U.S. Postage Paid  
Presort Standard  
Permit 72  
Bristol, TN



**Malcolm Baldrige**  
National Quality Award

2017 Award Recipient

### 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 to the address below. (Fall 2023)

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Other comments, story ideas or questions:

Please return to:  
BTES News, PO Box 549, Bristol, TN 37621

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name and address (optional)



**HELP YOUR  
NEIGHBOR  
PROGRAM**

## ROUND UP

to Help Your Neighbor

**Help your neighbors  
in need pay their  
electric bill.**

**SIGN UP TODAY!**

