

Get Connected

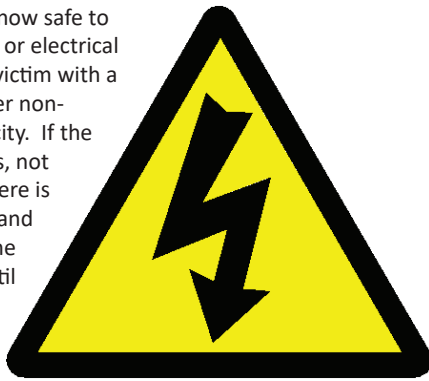
BrightRidge®

A Publication for Customers of BrightRidge

April - June 2018

www.brightridge.com

Don't touch an electrical shock victim as you may become a victim yourself! Instead, immediately turn off the main source of electricity and call 911. If the power source is now safe to touch, remove wires or electrical apparatus from the victim with a wooden stick or other non-conductor of electricity. If the victim is unconscious, not breathing, and/or there is no pulse, begin CPR and continue CPR until the person revives or until medical emergency personnel arrive.



May Is Electrical Safety Month

These electrical safety tips are common knowledge for most, but electrical injuries are a serious matter and all are at risk. Electrical currents can cause shock, fire, explosions, burns, and falls, which can be fatal or cause serious injury. There are about 2,000 residential fires each year associated with electric cords or plugs, killing 60 people (US Consumer Product Safety Commission). According to data from the National Safety Council, nearly one fatality occurs every day in the work place as a result of electrical hazards. Be sure to review these safety tips, and especially remind young children to "Play it safe around electricity!"



Please do not post signs on utility poles. Doing so creates hazards for line workers. Thank you for helping keep utility poles clean and safe.

Do NOT overload circuits or outlets.

Never overload outlets with too many extension cords. (Remember the movie, A Christmas Story?) Overloading can cause the insulation on the cord to overheat, melt and expose live wires. Live wires can spark and cause a fire.

Low voltage does NOT mean low hazard. There is enough electrical current in a small Christmas-tree bulb to stop your heart.

Stay clear of overhead wires. Be cautious when trimming or cutting trees near power lines. It's best to contact BrightRidge to disconnect electric service so tree work may be safely done. Also, advise young children to never fly kites near power lines nor climb trees that have power lines going through them.

Check extension cords and plugs. Items with exposed wires or "missing grounds" should be disposed and not used.

STAY AWAY FROM DOWNED POWER LINES! CALL BRIGHTRIDGE IMMEDIATELY AT 952-5000 TO REPORT.

Even though a wire may appear "dead" (no electric current or de-energized), the wire could be "live or hot" (energized). Touching energized wires can result in serious injury or death.

Never leave small appliances (space heaters, fans, toasters, etc.) on unattended.

Stay dry. Electricity and water do not mix. Wet conditions; such as, standing in water, wearing wet clothing, and working in high humidity can increase electrocution risk. Never use electric appliances near water. If you are standing on a wet floor, never touch an electrical switch or plug in an electric appliance. Water is a conductor of electricity.

Make sure outlet and switch plates are not hot to the touch. If they are, immediately unplug cords and turn off switches. Have a licensed electrician inspect ASAP.

Use GFCI's and three-prong plugs.



From the CEO

"It is our attitude at the beginning of a difficult task which, more than anything else, will affect its successful outcome."
-William James

In this newsletter, you can read about two of our employees who work hard to ensure power stays on through preventive maintenance measures. Joe Gouge and Tony Tipton work with BrightRidge customers and contractors daily in an effort to maintain our high standard of dependability. The trimming and removal of trees from power lines, while often a thankless job, is one which

directly impacts our reliability. Please contact Joe or Tony if you have concerns about trees in right-of-ways, or if you need to learn which trees to plant near right-of-ways. Joe and Tony are always willing to help.

Two years ago we began a journey which has led us to an opportunity that should positively impact our community. When we began a pilot test for high speed internet, our employees stepped up and took on the project in a positive, proactive manner. Failure was not an option. Each time an obstacle seemed to threaten the project, a member of our team stepped forward with a solution. Each day we have moved one step closer to providing broadband services for our community and customers.

We reached a significant milestone when our Board of Directors approved to offer broadband services to our customers. Our next steps are review and evaluation by TVA, approval by the State Comptroller, and submittal to the Johnson City Commission. Once BrightRidge receives all final reviews, we will finish the next phase, which is releasing RFPs for contracts for all the different phases and business components required to begin a new business. We appreciate your continued patience. We hope to make a formal announcement in the near future.

"In any given moment we have two options: to step forward into growth or to step back into safety". -Abraham Maslow

Jeffrey R. Dykes,
Chief Executive Officer



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Visit the BrightRidge website for
Board Member and
Administrative Staff Directories.

Angela Shrewsbury, Publication Editor

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SmartHub is a comprehensive e-commerce site equipped with conveniences that online users expect, such as paperless billing, power usage history graphs, report power outages, and more. Join thousands of others and sign up for SmartHub at brightridge.com.

Recipe or Quick Tip Exchange

Cucumber Dip

Submitted by Gail Franklin, Johnson City

- 3 small finely chopped cucumbers
- 1 8 ounce package cream cheese
- 1 green onion
- 3 tsp mayo
- 1 sprinkle garlic salt

Mix well. Refrigerate two hours. Serve with chips.



BrightRidge partners with Wolf Tree in an effort to maintain a safe, reliable electric system. Remember, look up and around before you plant.

Recipe Exchange

We would like to feature your recipes, quick tips, and comments in *Get Connected* and on our website at brightridge.com. You may submit these items by emailing them to energyservices@brightridge.com or by mailing them to:

BrightRidge
Attn: Marketing
PO Box 1636
Johnson City, TN 37605-1636

BrightRidge Tree Trimming Coordinators



Joe Gouge

Joe came to work at BrightRidge in 1994 as a Laborer on the construction crew. After several years serving in construction, Joe transitioned to the Tree Trimming Department. When not at work, Joe likes to spend time with his family. He also enjoys spending time in the mountains.



Tony Tipton

Tony began his career in 1988 as a Meter Reader. Tony later served as an Order Worker, and transitioned to Tree Trimming in 2011. In his free time, Tony enjoys farming and spending time on the river with his family. Tony will celebrate 30 years of service later this year.

Both Joe and Tony maintain a Category 6 spraying license in order to assist with spraying around guy wires, poles, and substations.

WE LOVE TREES - WE JUST HATE DOWNED POWER LINES

BrightRidge wants to provide dependable, reliable electric service to its customers. Trees that grow too close to power lines have the potential to threaten public safety and your source of power. Trimming and removing select trees from areas near power lines helps us maintain a 99.99% reliability rate.

Our utility has participated in the TreeLine USA Program for 15+ years. The TreeLine USA Program exists to ensure best practices in utility arboriculture -- safe power and healthy trees. The Arbor Day Foundation collaborates with the National Association of State Foresters on this initiative.

Utilities must comply to Five Core Standards to ensure enrollment in the TreeLine USA Program.¹

1. Quality Tree Care - Industry standards for pruning, planting, removals, trenching, and tunneling near trees must be consistently followed.
2. Annual Worker Training – Utility employees and contract workers must attend annual training in best practices.
3. Tree Planting and Public Education – Utilities must participate in tree planting and public education programs that demonstrate proper tree planting, placement, and pruning while expanding the community tree canopy.
4. Tree-Based Energy Conservation Program – Utilities must provide a formal tree-based energy conservation program to its customers.
5. Tree Celebration Events – Sponsor tree-related community events, which includes collaboration with other community groups.

Long-term Solution

Before planting any tree, look around the area you intend to plant. Consider the trees height at maturity. Trees that could potentially grow 25' or more should be planted at least 25' from any overhead utility lines. Visit brightridge.com for a recommended tree planting list.

Proper Trimming Style

BrightRidge tree trimming guidelines have been designed to reflect recommendations of urban foresters, as well as experts from the National Arborist Association and the International Society of Arboriculture. Crown reduction, or "topping," threatens the health of trees and is not recommended. If fast-growing trees are located directly under utility lines, they should be removed.

Lateral pruning is method followed by crews at most utilities. Lateral pruning cuts the branches back to the natural strong points. As with other trimming methods, regrowth occurs. However, experts carefully laterally prune to ensure new limbs grow away from power lines.

Tree Removal

Tree removal is a permanent solution. Repetitive trimming of fast growing trees located directly under utility lines is costly, and only provides a temporary solution. Trees that are excessively trimmed become unhealthy, and are more likely to decay, break, or fall. Such trees become a hazard to your safety and power supply.

Plant for Energy Efficiency

Properly planted trees can stop cold wind, provide cool shade, and possibly reduce energy usage. In winter, planting rows of evergreens on the North and West sides of your home can help minimize strong winds blowing against your home.

Shade trees can reduce summer energy costs. Plant deciduous trees on the East and Southeast sides of your home for shade during summer months. In the winter, when these trees lose leaves, the winter-sun may help provide natural heat for your home by allowing sunlight to filter through windows. It's also a good idea to plant deciduous shade trees near your heat pump to reduce summer cooling costs. Doing so may also extend the life of your heat pump unit.

If you have any questions about the BrightRidge Tree Trimming Policy, or you have tree-utility related questions, please call 952-5025.

¹TreeLine USA Program. Retrieved March 15, 2018, from <https://www.arborday.org/programs/treelineusa/summary.cfm>

Budget Billing Sign Up Ends May 31

Enrollment for Budget Billing is April 1 - May 31. Sign up Today!

Your energy bill is directly affected by outdoor temperatures. When it's extremely hot or cold outside, energy usage will increase. The BrightRidge Budget Billing Program minimizes bill fluctuations by offering two budget-friendly options, Rolling or Fixed Budget.

Rolling Budget Plan. With this plan, there is no settle-up month. Payment amounts vary slightly from month-to-month depending on the energy usage.

Fixed Budget Plan. Customers pay the same amount each month, as well as pays a debit or receives a credit during the settle-up month, June or July.

Program Details

- Enrollment: **April 1 - May 31.**
- Must have a zero balance.
- Must have a twelve-month account history.
- Monthly payments must be paid by the due date each month.

Sign up at brightridge.com or call Customer Support for more details at 952-5000.

Generator Safety

Electric service is typically very reliable for most utilities. The BrightRidge system-wide reliability rate is 99.99%. Given all the outside forces that could potentially cause power interruptions, keeping the power on 24-7 is no easy task. Unfortunately, power interruptions sometimes occur. Sometimes individuals choose to lessen the inconvenience of being without power by operating portable generators at their homes.

When operating a portable generator, it is essential to recognize the hazards associated and to follow strict operational instructions. The primary hazards to avoid when using a generator are carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning from the toxic engine exhaust, electric shock or electrocution, and fire.

Generator Tip #1
Carefully read the generator instruction manual before using.

Generator Tip #2
Generators are intended for outdoor use. Never use a generator in an enclosed, interior setting. You should also install carbon monoxide detectors at ground level.

Generator Tip #3
All permanent generator installs should be inspected by a certified State Electrical Inspector. You should not use the device prior to inspection.

Generator Tip #4
Never connect your generator directly to house wiring, unless you have a properly installed "double-throw-over open transition switch." These switches disconnect the house electrical service from BrightRidge's electrical grid. These switches must be in place to ensure the safety of our lines and to protect linemen from back-feeds from non-utility sources that may be on our system. A lineman could be severely injured or killed if a generator is connected without the proper safety switch in place.

Generator Tip #5
When connecting equipment to generators, always be sure cords are of sufficient size (current carrying capacity) for the load you are connecting. Use a separate cord for each piece of connected equipment. Check all cords to be sure the insulation is in place and that no wires are exposed.

Generator Tip #6
Turn the generator off and allow time to cool before refueling. Never refuel a hot engine.

Generator Tip #7
Avoid electrocution. Keep the generator dry. Do not use a generator in rain, snow, or wet conditions. Do not touch the generator with wet hands.

Generator Tip #8
Do not overload the generator. If necessary, stagger operating times, especially for large pieces of equipment, to prevent overload.

Generator Tip #9
Choose a generator that produces more amps than you need. (Determine the total amps you need by dividing watts by volts.)

Generator Tip #10
Make sure the generator is properly grounded. Without proper grounding, you could be electrocuted.

