



news & views

from Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Get outage notifications

Sign up for service alerts through SmartHub

AT Lincoln Electric Cooperative (LEC) we use SmartHub to help keep our members up to date on what's happening at LEC. Many members use SmartHub to view their electricity bill, go paperless, get payment reminders and view their usage.

Another great feature that SmartHub offers is service notifications that includes outage alerts. As an LEC member and SmartHub user you can be notified through the SmartHub app on your phone when LEC has a planned power outage. Being notified of a planned power outage before


the outage occurs allows you to plan and get your home in order prior to the outage. SmartHub offers several ways to receive notifications – via text message, push notifications through the SmartHub app and email. Lincoln Electric Cooperative strongly recommends enabling text notifications in addition to other methods, as some email providers may block SmartHub messages.

In addition to planned power outage alerts, you can subscribe to notifications for current power outages, power outage updates, and power restored

alerts.


The steps to signing up for service alerts are simple and can easily be done from your smartphone or computer. See how to sign up step-by-step below and on page 7.

Please note that if you don't have a smartphone or access to a computer, but still want to be notified via IVR-Robocall please contact the LEC office at 406-889-3301 to discuss options.

Coming in January's *Rural Montana*: Lincoln Electric's "Outage Map" is going live – stay tuned! 

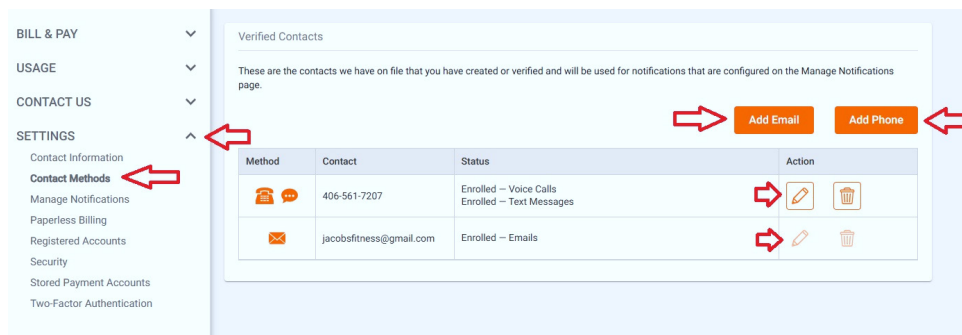
STEP 1







Login into SmartHub from your phone or computer. For accessing SmartHub from your computer login from the website at Lincolnelectric.coop in the top right-hand corner. For logging onto the phone app, open the app and log in.

Login to SmartHub 

STEP 2

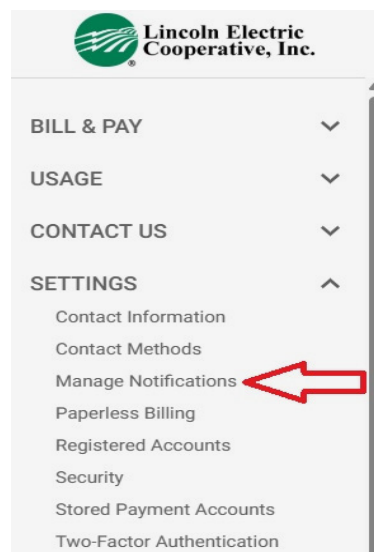
Once logged in go to **Settings**. Select **Contact Methods**, then add **phone**. It will text you a verification code to confirm your phone. Make sure all your other contacts are up to date.



Method	Contact	Status	Action
	406-561-7207	Enrolled – Voice Calls Enrolled – Text Messages	 
	jacobsfitness@gmail.com	Enrolled – Emails	 

STEP 3

Once your phone has been added as a contact method go to **Manage Notifications**.



SEE STEP 4 ON PAGE 7

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW	YEAR TO DATE SEPT. 2025	YEAR TO DATE SEPT. 2024
kWh SALES	95,398,417	96,537,321
REVENUE	\$11,136,965	\$10,635,452
COST OF POWER	\$4,579,723	\$4,432,407
OPERATING EXPENSE	\$4,368,313	\$3,937,434
MARGINS	\$754,271	\$851,411
NUMBER OF MEMBERS	5,365	5,266
NUMBER OF METERS	6,791	6,661
MILES OF LINE	1,022	1,019
TOTAL UTILITY PLANT	\$42,582,739	\$40,045,882
MEMBER EQUITY	\$16,226,535	\$15,239,144
SEPTEMBER AVERAGE RESIDENTIAL USE (KWH)	778	802
SEPTEMBER AVERAGE RESIDENTIAL BILLING	\$120.54	\$119.05

BUSINESS AND BOARDROOM BRIEFS

The regular meeting of the board of trustees was conducted on October 20. A quorum of trustees was present, and the board took the following actions:

- Tentatively approved the Wildfire Mitigation Plan pending legal review
- Approved Resolution 2025-13, adding a payroll account at Glacier Bank
- Approved Resolution 2025-14, issuing Rick Peterson signing authority on Covenants for RPS
- Approved the RLF loan application for \$250,000 for Stillwater Health

KEY REMINDERS

- Board of Trustee Elections are happening now with three trustee seats up for election in 2026. If you'd like to run for one of these seats, nomination petitions must be completed and returned by **5:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 11**. Petitions can be picked up in person at the LEC office or downloaded online at lincolnelectric.coop/cooperative/board-of-trustees
- To celebrate the holiday season LEC will be closed on Thursday, December 25 and Thursday, January 1.
- Subscribe to outage notifications through SmartHub. Download the app to get alerts or log on with your computer at lincolnelectric.smarthub.coop.
- Interested in learning more about how LEC provides programs and services to help its members? Visit our website at lincolnelectric.coop or call our office to speak with an LEC representative.



LINCOLN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

CONTACT

1-406-889-3301
info@lincolnelectric.coop
www.lincolnelectric.coop
Secure Payments: 1-833-890-6258

ALWAYS REPORT OUTAGES TO:

1-406-889-3301

OFFICE

312 Osloski Road
PO BOX 628
Eureka, Montana 59917

OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Thursday
7:00 AM - 5:30 PM

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Rick Peterson
President

Joel Graves
Vice President

Sandi Mason
Secretary-Treasurer

Myra Appel
Rodney Kane
David Purdy
Marianne Roose
Tina Taurman

Matt Quinn
General Manager

Lincoln Electric's Board of Trustees holds regular monthly meetings at the boardroom in the cooperative office. These are typically scheduled on the third Monday of each month at 4 p.m. Members are encouraged to attend. If you have any items of interest, please contact the general manager prior to the meeting.


NEXT MEETING DATE:
MONDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2025



**Lincoln Electric
Cooperative, Inc.**

HAVE A STORY SUGGESTION?

SEND YOUR IDEAS TO:
memberservices@lincolnelectric.coop

Use this page to sign up for notifications about activity on your billing account.
 Display Options (Advanced Mode)

Billing

Miscellaneous

Service

Alert Type	Description	Text Message	Email	Voice Message
Planned Power Outage	This is a notification to inform you when a power outage is planned.	<input type="text" value="406-"/>	<input type="text" value=""/>	Not Available
Power Outage	This is a notification to inform you when a power outage has occurred.	<input type="text" value="406-"/>	<input type="text" value=""/>	Not Available
Power Outage Restored	This is a notification to inform you when a power outage has been restored.	<input type="text" value="406-"/>	<input type="text" value=""/>	Not Available
Power Outage Update	This is a notification to inform you when a power outage estimated restoration date update has occurred.	<input type="text" value="406-"/>	<input type="text" value=""/>	Not Available

Reset

Save

STEP-BY-STEP SERVICE ALERTS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

STEP 4

Select the **Service** drop down menu and view all Alert Types, including **Planned Power Outage, Power Outage, Power Outage Restored, and Power Outage Update**. Each alert includes a short description and an option to choose text, email or both. Make sure your text number and email address are correct and make sure to click **SAVE** at the bottom of the page when you are done making your selections.

Generator backfeed

A hidden danger for linemen and you

WHEN the power goes out, many people turn to portable generators to keep their homes running. While generators can be a great source of backup power, **improper use can create a deadly hazard** known as *backfeed*.

What Is Backfeed?

Backfeed happens when electricity flows in the opposite direction of its intended path — **from a home or business back onto LEC's powerlines**. This usually occurs when a generator or solar system is connected incorrectly, allowing power to travel out through the service line instead of into the home.

During an outage, this can **re-energize lines** that our linemen believe are safely de-energized. Even one improperly connected generator can send thousands of volts back through the grid, posing a serious risk of **electrocution** to our crews working to restore power.

Why it's dangerous

Backfeed is invisible and unpredictable. It not only endangers utility workers, but can also cause:

- **Damage to your generator** by overloading or overheating it
- **Fires or wiring damage** inside your home
- **Expensive system damage** that can prolong outages

How to prevent it

Backfeed is entirely preventable with the right equipment and precautions:

- 1. Install a transfer switch.** Have a licensed electrician install a transfer switch before connecting a generator to your home's electrical system. This device isolates your generator from LEC's lines and prevents electricity from flowing back into the grid.
- 2. Never plug a generator into a wall outlet.** This practice — often called "backfeeding the house" — is extremely dangerous and illegal in

See backfeed explainer graphic on page 8


many areas. Instead, plug appliances directly into the generator using heavy-duty, outdoor-rated cords.

3. Follow manufacturer instructions. Always read and follow your generator's manual for proper use, ventilation and load limits.

4. Notify LEC. If you install a generator or solar array, contact us so we can ensure it's safely integrated and compliant with local requirements.

A shared responsibility

At Lincoln Electric Cooperative, keeping our linemen — and our members — safe is our highest priority. Using generators correctly helps protect lives and allows our crews to restore power more quickly and safely.

For more information, visit lincolnelectric.coop or call (406) 889-3301. 

Backfeed

Backfeed on power lines happens when electricity flows in the opposite direction from its intended path, typically from an improperly connected residential generator or solar array back onto the distribution system. It can be extremely dangerous for utility workers, particularly during an outage restoration, when crews may believe all lines are de-energized. Here's how backfeed works and some key ways to protect against it.

● Service drop

Sends power to residence from the grid, but can also be energized from the home.

● Lockout/Tagout

Crews lock main breaker and solar panel disconnects in "off" position.

● Solar panels

Distributed generation like rooftop solar can backfeed if improperly wired.

● Automatic anti-islanding inverter

Monitors grid and shuts off power output in an outage.

● Meter settings

Some newer meters can be set to automatically detect backfeed during an outage or maintenance work.

● Transfer switch

Ensures connection to grid through the service panel is severed when a generator is connected.

● Generator

Must be connected to a transfer panel to avoid backfeeding. Improper connection can cause short circuits, fire, damage to grid components like transformers, and injury to working crews or even neighbors in their homes.

● Line testing

Lineworkers test feeders to ensure they're de-energized, but may not expect power to be coming from the service drop.

.....Downed line

● Backfeeding danger

● Preventive measures