



## Enter to Win a \$300 KEC Bill Credit



Would you like a chance to win a \$300 KEC bill credit? Entering is easy, just register as a new user in SmartHub. SmartHub is KEC's free online account management system. It's available online or by downloading the app and offers a secure way for you to:

- Report power outages and receive outage notifications.
- Pay your bill.

- Monitor your electric use.
- **New this year:** Vote in the director election. Watch for details in the mail later this month.

### How to Start Using SmartHub

**To register as a new user you'll need the following:** the last name on your account, your account number and an email address. Use the instructions below to get started. If you are already registered in SmartHub you will automatically be entered into the drawing. Sign up by April 30, 2018 to participate.

#### Web Access

1. Visit [www.kec.com](http://www.kec.com) and click "Your Account Information."
2. Register as a new user.
3. That's it—you're now connected with SmartHub. [1835100]

#### Mobile Devices

1. Visit your device's app store (available at Apple's App Store or the Google Play Store).
2. Search for "SmartHub" and download the free app.
3. Search for "Kootenai Electric Cooperative" and confirm your selection.
4. Register as a new user.
5. That's it—you can now manage your KEC account on the go!

## Q&A THE TAX CUTS AND JOBS ACT

### The Impact of Tax Reform on KEC

President Trump signed the "Tax Cuts and Jobs Act" into law on December 22, 2017. The legislation includes substantial changes to the taxation of individuals as well as U.S. businesses, multi-national corporations and other types of taxpayers. You may be wondering: how will the new tax reform impact KEC? Our new Chief Financial Officer, Reed Christensen, addresses some questions below:



Reed Christensen

### What impact will the Act have on not-for-profit electric utilities like KEC?

The good news is the Act maintained the current tax treatment for not-for-profit electric cooperatives. As a not-for-profit, we are a tax-exempt entity as long as we abide by certain rules. None of these underlying rules changed in the recently signed Act. There were some rule changes in terms of limiting deductions on interest expense to 30% of taxable income, but these rules impact taxable, or for-profit, electric cooperatives—which KEC is not. [1696900]

### Will the Act have any impact on KEC obtaining financing?

Presently, it will not impact KEC's ability to obtain financing through

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## MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER



# We Clear Power Lines to Protect You and Your Service

Trees add tremendous value to our homes and communities.

They are a source of beauty in our landscapes, provide food and shelter for people and wildlife, shade our communities, provide oxygen and offer a multitude of other benefits. However, trees growing near power lines present some real challenges. They can cause power outages, fuel fires and can be deadly to our employees and members when not properly managed.

The primary cause of blinks and power outages on KEC's electrical system is trees contacting power lines. This happens most often

during windy or snowy weather. Some outages last only a second, causing a momentary blink, while other outages can last much longer.

### Reliability

We make every effort to provide you with safe and reliable electric service. At KEC we maintain a safe right-of-way of 15 feet of clearance on either side of the power lines. However, most of the trees that cause outages are not within our power line easements. While KEC has the authority to cut trees that grow within these easements, there are some restrictions that apply to trees growing beyond them. Before removing a tree growing outside our easement which threatens our power lines, landowner

permission is needed. Once we receive permission the trees will be removed at no cost to the member. Landowners who refuse to allow KEC to remove at-risk trees on their property which threaten our power lines will be notified in writing of their liability for damage those trees may cause.

### Safety

Both the National Electric Safety Code and Idaho Statute 55-2402 require that we maintain a safe clearance zone around wires not only for public safety, but to ensure reliable electric service.

If you have a tree of concern on your property that could fall into a power line, please don't cut it down yourself. If it's a risk to our power lines, we will be happy to remove it at no cost. In the event it's not, we can help you identify a qualified arborist who can help you remove it. [1439732]

You can contact us about problem trees using our website reporting form at [www.kec.com](http://www.kec.com). You may also call Kurt Lyon, KEC Right-of-Way Specialist, at 208.292.3216.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Doug".

**Doug Elliott**  
**KEC General Manager**



# Thank You to the 2017 KEC Board of Directors

The KEC Board of Directors determines policy and direction of the Cooperative. The seven-member board is elected by the KEC membership and spends approximately 60 days a year on Cooperative-related activities. Thank you to the Board for their dedication and years of service:



Photo above right (front to back, left to right): Roger Tinkey, Secretary; Dave Bobbitt, Audit Committee Chair; Terry LaLiberte, Vice Chair; Bill Swick, Chair; Todd Hoffman; Doug Elliott, General Manager; Jim Robbins and Tim Meyer.

- Bill Swick, Chair, 9 years
- Terry LaLiberte, Vice Chair, 8 years
- Roger Tinkey, Secretary, 8 years
- Jim Robbins, 6 years
- Dave Bobbitt, Audit Committee Chair, 4 years
- Todd Hoffman, 4 years
- Tim Meyer, 2 years

## Q&A THE TAX CUTS AND JOBS ACT

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debt instruments. We have borrowings that are not affected by the Act. However, going forward as of January 1, 2018, the Act did repeal Clean Renewable Energy Bonds, which was a tax-advantaged source of financing for new renewable energy projects. We used this source of funding for the Fighting Creek Landfill Gas Project, which was not affected by this. If the Cooperative were to ever consider doing another similar renewable energy site in the future, it would have to look elsewhere for funding, which assuredly would be more expensive.

## Safety Reminders

### Your Power Outage Pantry

We do our best to avoid power outages but, unfortunately, Mother Nature occasionally has different plans. Stay ahead of the storm by stocking your pantry with a variety of non-perishable items. Set these items aside for extended outages only, and your storm prep will be a breeze! [1819552]

- BEANS
- CANNED FRUIT
- CANNED TUNA
- CANNED VEGETABLES
- CEREAL
- DRIED FRUITS
- DRIED MEATS/JERKY
- GRAHAM CRACKERS
- PASTA
- RICE
- SPAM
- OATMEAL



Don't forget to stock up on disposable goods, like paper plates, napkins, plastic cutlery and cups.

# Back Up Generators and On-Site Generation

For the safety of KEC employees and the public, we track where backup generators are installed on our system and require members who have installed generators to contact us (this requirement includes any on-site generation, including wind and solar).

Generators can cause serious safety problems if improperly installed and could cause injury to KEC workers and the general public. All backup generator installations should have a transfer switch installed in accordance with the requirements of the National Electric Code. Transfer switch installations must be inspected by the State Electrical Inspector and we request that members provide KEC with a copy of the State Electrical Permit for the transfer switch installation. [1709520]

Traditional transfer switches are wired into your home's electrical panel. An alternative is GenerLink™, a transfer switch installed behind your meter. When you connect a portable generator to GenerLink™ and start it up, GenerLink™ automatically disconnects from the electric utility grid preventing the possibility of back feed. This device is approved by KEC and installed by a licensed electrical contractor. Unlike traditional transfer switches that require you to pre-select circuits the generator will service, with GenerLink™ you have access to every circuit in your panel. You can run 120 or 240 volt appliances up to your generator's capacity. GenerLink™ gives you the flexibility to choose how you use your power. For more information contact Scott at 208.292.3209.



## Take Our Member Service Survey

At KEC, our goal is to provide exceptional member service. We are currently evaluating extending the hours and days we offer member service in the office, over the phone and online and we'd like to get member feedback on this. Visit [www.kec.com](http://www.kec.com) to take the online survey. If you are unable to take the survey online you may also call 208.292.3270.

Members who take the survey by April 30, 2018 will be entered into a drawing for a \$100 bill credit.

## 2018 ANNUAL MEETING & ELECTION DETAILS

Watch your mailbox this month for your election packet and details about the Annual Meeting. The packet will include board candidate bios, proposed Bylaw changes and your ballot. This year you will have the choice to vote either online, by mail or at the Annual Meeting.

The Annual Meeting is scheduled for 6 p.m. on Monday, April 30, at Lake City Church in Coeur d'Alene.

## WIN A \$50 ENERGY CREDIT

Six KEC account numbers are hidden in this newsletter. If you find your number contact us at 208.765.1200 and receive a \$50 credit on your bill.

## KEC BOARD MEETINGS

Members are welcome to attend monthly board meetings. Meeting dates vary—please call Constance Felten at 208.292.3211 for details. [1594830]

