



# BTES NEWS

**Bristol Tennessee Essential Services**

*Electric • Internet • Telephone • Cable*

Spring 2017 - For Customers of Bristol Tennessee Essential Services

## BTES Upgrading Water Heater Switches to Provide Better Service

**BTES is currently in the process of upgrading our Load Management Water Heater Program!**

**More than 16,600 customers participate in this state-of-the-art initiative, which increases energy efficiency through the use of a new switch.**

**To date, more than 8,000 customers have received the upgrade, and those who have not yet been contacted will soon receive a call to schedule an appointment.**

“Our Water Heater Program is in the midst of receiving a major upgrade so that we will be able to serve our customers better,” explained BTES CEO Mike Browder. “Our new switch monitors temperatures inside each customer’s water heater tank, so that we have the ability to turn an individual water heater off and on based on temperature levels in that specific tank.”

This approach decreases the chance of customers running out of hot water — and, ultimately, helps to save money by keeping costs low.

“The program’s new technology includes setting a minimum and maximum temperature at both the top and bottom of the water heater,” explained Administrative Systems Analyst Jessica Waterman, leader of the project. “The new switch, installed by BTES, turns on the water heater to heat the water when the temperature has dropped below the pre-set temperature. The water heater will turn off again once the water has been heated to the appropriate temperature.”

During lower-cost periods, the water heater is recharged so that it is fully heated for the next usage period.

“We’ve been upgrading our existing water heater switches for about three years,” explained Waterman. “Our goal is to have all water heaters participating in this initiative upgraded to the new switch by September 2018, and we are working to make the upgrade process as simple as possible. Customers who have not

yet received a call to schedule an appointment for the upgrade will be contacted soon for a time that works best with their schedules. The upgrade takes about 45 minutes, and we only need access to the water heater and breaker box.”

In addition to saving energy and money, customers who have a load management switch receive a free warranty on elements and thermostats, and a six-year warranty on the water heater tank when a new water heater is installed through BTES. Customers also receive free emergency service calls as long as the load management switch is in proper working condition, replacement parts are readily available, and BTES is still participating in the cycling program.

**Customers who need a new water heater can call BTES.** We will install a high-efficiency water heater and expansion tank for \$425, plus tax and costs for any additional plumbing work that might be needed. For residents in the Bristol, Tennessee city limits, an additional \$25 is needed for an inspection permit. BTES also offers a financing option for up to 26 months with no down payment. The payments will be added to your BTES bill.

**Those who do not need a new water heater can still join the program.**

BTES will install the load-management switch on your electric water heater, free of charge, and still provide you with a free warranty on your elements and thermostats as long as the load-management switch is in proper working condition, replacement parts are readily available, and BTES is still participating in the cycling program.



### IN THIS ISSUE

No Posting Zones

BTES Department Highlights

Recipes

Tree Information

## Awesome Eagles Are Now Here

I enjoy seeing animals going about life. Where Linda and I live in Bristol, Tennessee, we see many different species of birds flying, feeding and nesting. There are squirrels running and jumping on the trees. They get still and quiet when there are black buzzards overhead. Squirrels cause short circuits on overhead power lines. That causes power outages. Squirrels are one of the biggest causes of power outages. I now have a built-in bias against squirrels on power lines. Since there are no power lines in the back yard, squirrels are okay there. We also have several deer in the back and front yards on most days. When apples and crab apples are in season, deer may be around any time. If Charger, our cat, is asleep and suddenly jumps up and hurries toward a window in a stalking or attacking move, I go to see the reason. Usually, I find a deer outside looking back at Charger.



I have always had an interest in eagles, but haven't had much up-close-and-personal experience. I have seen the Auburn University Eagle fly over the stadium before football games. What a spectacular sight! It is even pretty awesome seeing it on TV before an Auburn televised football game. Once I had the opportunity to see several eagles fly over a valley in the Colorado mountains. I parked the car and enjoyed the view for an hour. It was awesome!

In early November, 2015, we received a call from East Tennessee State University (ETSU) asking for an appointment for Fred Alsop, Ph.D, of the Biological Sciences Department. He wanted to discuss our assistance with viewing the nest of a pair of eagles for the upcoming season. After our meeting with Dr. Alsop and his team, our own team continued meeting a little longer. We determined a plan to video the nest, transmit the data over our fiber optic system to a computer in our office, and broadcast "Life in an Eagle's Nest" over the BTES cable system. We were excited about the idea and thought that many of our customers would be also. We had the capability to do this over our IPTV System. It is on Channel 1001, and a second camera is now on Channel 1002. Feeding growing eaglets is a big job. Sometimes Mommy gets mad when Daddy is not back with a large fish and little ones are hungry. With the fast-growing mouths to feed, sometimes Mommy has to go fishing also. Maybe it is just to get Daddy moving faster.

Charger loves to watch also. He has to tried to get to them as he watches the television. He has tried the front and back of the TV, but he doesn't know that he would be no match for the eagles. He is a big cat, but would be only one meal. He is usually okay with helping me watch.

As the number of eagles multiplies, we should regularly see them soaring over South Holston Lake. Now we may catch a glimpse of them getting food for their hungry family.

Have a great day and...

Good Luck!

*Mike Browder*

## BTES News

Owned and published by  
Bristol Tennessee Essential Services,  
serving more than 33,000 electric customers  
and more than 17,000 fiber customers.

**Dr. R. Michael Browder**  
Chief Executive Officer

**BTES News** is published four times a year.  
Address changes, news items and  
suggestions should be sent to:  
PO Box 549, Bristol, TN 37621  
BTES website: [www.btes.net](http://www.btes.net)

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.

**MOVE  
OVER**  
for utility workers  
in Tennessee.  
**It's the law.**





## Attachments to Utility Poles Can Pose Hazards

When nailed to a utility pole, signs — along with items such as bird houses, flags or basketball hoops — can make a lineman's job more difficult and dangerous.

The clamped safety boots used by linemen to climb poles are vulnerable to becoming snagged on staples and nails, and these foreign objects can injure workers despite the safety gear they wear to avoid contact with rough surfaces.

"Working on electric lines is a serious matter that requires the safest work environment possible," said BTES Director of Operations and Safety Kenneth King. "The nails and staples used to attach items to our poles can become safety hazards for our employees by punching holes in gloves and other protective clothing. This, in turn, can cause electrocution hazards.

"So not only does attaching objects to poles put the safety of our employees at risk, it also shortens the life of a pole, creating an unnecessary expense for BTES and our customers," King said. "Rather than posting anything on a utility pole, keep in mind the hazardous situation that it could create for the people working to ensure you have reliable electric service, or who may be trying to restore your power following an outage."

King noted that it is also important to avoid tampering with or disrupting the guy wires (the tensioned cables designed to add stability) that surround utility poles.

"Always teach children not to play with or swing on guy wires, and remember to be vigilant of these wires while performing yard work or spending time outside," King said.



*Photo of a pole in the BTES service area. Nails and staples pose a major concern for linemen.*

# BTES Mobile App

**View your bill  
Check your balance  
Make payments**

**Available on the app store**



# An Inside Look at BTES' Technical Operations

As a community-owned and operated network, BTES offers electric, Internet, cable television and telephone services to more than 33,000 customers in a 280-square-mile service area — all delivered with clarity and reliability.

It takes the efforts of multiple departments working together to keep services flowing to homes and businesses throughout BTES' service area. Here's a look at the employees working hard to provide customers with reliable, cost-effective electricity and other essential services.

## Meter and Substation Department

BTES' Meter and Substations Department maintains and operates all breakers, transformers, regulators, relays, batteries, metering, traffic controls, Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) and fiber optic equipment. They perform underground locating and fault detection, test and maintain meters, assist with investigation of electric current diversion and customer voltage problems, and monitor high energy consumption. These employees also install, maintain and troubleshoot the fiber optic system, which includes Internet, telephone and cable television services. Employees in this area have completed, or are in the process of completing, a four-and-a-half year, on-the-job Apprentice Meter and Substation Technician Program.



"My main job duties include supervising the Meter and Substation Department, Meter Reading Department, Ontrac and Asplundh. My favorite thing about BTES is working with my coworkers. Our department is responsible for many different aspects and we take pride in being successful. I hope that our community understands that BTES and our employees really do try to exceed our customers' expectations in all the services we provide and the jobs we do."

Steve Keesling  
Supervisor of Technical Operations



"Our department maintains 19 substations and all residential and primary metering, troubleshoots and splices all fiber, helps to maintain our Load Managed Programs, and maintains all traffic intersections inside the City of Bristol, Tennessee. The best part of my job is getting to do something different every day. One day I might be splicing fiber optics and the next wiring a substation. A lot of the public doesn't realize how much work goes into keeping the electricity on, dependable and affordable. We work hard every day to provide the best products possible."

Nathan Meade  
Working Foreman of Meter and Substations



"The Technical Operations Department has a lot of tasks associated with our jobs, as Nathan mentioned. During outages, we are also responsible for riding lines, troubleshooting, and helping to restore service to our customers. My favorite part of my job is wiring in the substations and control houses. I also enjoy working on the fiber optic network. It takes all of us working together — from the line crews to the staff in Meter and Substations — to keep our services up and running."

Jason Olinger  
Meter and Substations Technician



"We work hard every day to maintain and troubleshoot our substations, traffic signal systems and fiber optic network. I really enjoy splicing and troubleshooting our fiber optic network, and installing and wiring new relays in our substations. BTES works together as one team, and we are always looking for ways to improve. Our vision is to be the best, and we come together every day to get that much closer to our goal."

Justin Kinkead  
Meter and Substations Technician





### Purchasing and Stores Department

BTES' Purchasing and Stores Department includes the Department Supervisor, Storekeeper and Maintenance Man. They are responsible for the purchase, receipt, issuance, record keeping and proper storage of all materials and supplies; management of water heater installations and the load management program; and maintenance, housekeeping and repairs at the BTES service center.



"It is my responsibility to manage our materials and inventory, as well as ensure our facilities are properly maintained. My favorite part of my job is managing the logistics of materials, and negotiating with vendors to obtain the lowest price and best material for BTES and our customers. Our department is small, but runs very efficiently to provide the best service possible to our internal and external customers."

Cody Johnson  
Supervisor of Purchasing and Stores



"My main job duty is to manage our shipping and receiving and inventory counts for BTES and our contractors, like Ontrac and our water heater installers. I enjoy getting to interact with almost every BTES employee on a daily basis and frequently with members of our community. We may be a small department at BTES, but we pride ourselves on accuracy and efficiency."

Jordan Carrier  
Storekeeper



"I work in building maintenance here at BTES. I do the general cleaning of the Service Center, floor maintenance and minor repairs. I enjoy learning new skills. I've been with BTES for almost three years and am very grateful for the opportunity to work here. All the employees at BTES are the best."

Dennis Thomas  
Maintenance Man

### Transportation Department

Our Transportation Department maintains and repairs all moving equipment used by BTES, including hydraulic systems on derrick and bucket trucks. We are also responsible for the purchasing of supplies and parts, and provide assistance in the maintenance of the garage building.



Garage Mechanic  
Brian Campbell

"My main areas of focus are on keeping all BTES equipment running and looking good. I enjoy learning about new equipment. Something that our community may not realize is that we use electric/hybrid vehicles every day at BTES."

"As a mechanic at BTES, I am responsible for well over 80 pieces of equipment. For BTES to provide cost-effective and efficient power to our customers, it is my job to make sure that all of our equipment — from the awe-inspiring Digger Derrick trucks to our chain saws — are running at their peak potential and are ready for use at all hours of the day. Every piece of equipment that BTES owns has a purpose in keeping our customers' power on, and it's very important to me that it is ready to work when it is called upon. I enjoy learning everything I can about the equipment in our fleet."



Garage Mechanic  
Jeremy Woods

# 5 natural cleaning recipes



## ESSENTIAL OIL CLEANER (ALL-PURPOSE EXCEPT FOR GLASS)

- 3/4 cup water
- 1/4 cup rubbing alcohol
- 5-10 drops peppermint or lemon essential oil
- 1 squirt natural dish soap

Pour into a 16-ounce spray bottle. Mix well.

## GLASS CLEANER

- 2 cups water
- 2 tbsp. white vinegar
- 2 tbsp. rubbing alcohol
- 5 drops peppermint essential oil

Pour into a 24-ounce bottle. Gently shake to mix.

## HEAVY-DUTY KITCHEN SCRUB

- 1/4 cup natural dish soap
- 1/4 cup baking soda
- 5 drops clove essential oil
- 3 drops of water

Mix ingredients in a bowl. Use the gritty side of a kitchen sponge and scrub. Wipe up with a wet cloth.

## SHOWER CLEANER

- 1/4 cup white vinegar
- 1 cup water

Mix in a microwave-safe bowl and heat for 30-60 seconds. Pour into a 24-ounce bottle. Spray onto shower surfaces and let sit for 3-5 minutes. Wipe clean with microfiber cloth.

## HARDWOOD FLOOR CLEANER

- 1/2 cup white vinegar
- 1 gallon warm water
- 2-3 drops lemon essential oil

Mix ingredients in a 2-gallon bucket. Dip mop in the bucket and wring it out well so that it's barely damp. Apply to floors and repeat.



# Favorite Recipes of BTES employees and customers

## White Chicken Chili

By BTES Customer Service Representative Heather Sheets

- |  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|
| 1 lb boneless chicken breast, trimmed                    | 1 tsp. salt                      |
| 1/2 tsp. black pepper                                    | 1 tsp. cumin                     |
| 3/4 tsp. oregano   | 1/2 tsp. chili powder            |
| 1/4 tsp. cayenne pepper                                  | 1 yellow onion, diced            |
| 2 cloves garlic, minced                                  | 24 oz. chicken broth, low sodium |
| small handful fresh cilantro, chopped                    | 4 oz. cream cheese               |
| (1) 15-oz. can whole kernel corn, drained                | 1/4 cup half and half            |
| (2) 15-oz. cans Great Northern beans, drained and rinsed |                                  |
| (2) 4-oz. cans diced green chiles (1 hot, 1 mild)        |                                  |

Add chicken breasts to bottom of slow cooker. Top with salt, pepper, cumin, oregano, chili powder and cayenne pepper. Top with diced onion, minced garlic, Great Northern beans, green chiles, corn, chicken broth and cilantro; stir. Cover and cook on low for 8 hours or on high for 3-4 hours. Remove chicken to large mixing bowl; shred, then return to slow cooker. Add cream cheese and half and half. Stir, then cover and cook on high for 15 minutes or until creamy. Stir well and serve!

## Baked Chicken Parmesan

By BTES Spouse Jennifer Padilla

- |  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| 4 chicken breasts, trimmed, sliced in half to make 8 |                       |
| 3/4 cup seasoned bread crumbs                        | 2 tbsp. melted butter |
| 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese                       | 1 cup marinara sauce  |
| 3/4 cup mozzarella cheese                            | Cooking spray         |

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Prepare a large baking sheet with cooking spray. Combine bread crumbs and Parmesan cheese in a bowl. Lightly brush melted butter onto chicken, then dip into bread crumb mixture. Place on baking sheet. Lightly spray more oil on top and bake for 25 minutes. Remove from oven, spoon 1 tbsp. sauce over each piece, and top with 1 & 1/2 tbsp. of mozzarella cheese. Bake 5 more minutes and serve!

## The Lighter Side

*How much does a pirate pay for an ear of corn?*

*A buccaneer!*







## BTES Named Tree Line USA Award Recipient



**The Arbor Day Foundation has named Bristol Tennessee Essential Services (BTES) a 2017 Tree Line USA recipient in honor of its commitment to proper tree pruning, planting and care in the BTES service area. This is the 17th 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," said Dan Lambe, President of the Arbor Day Foundation. "Service providers like BTES demonstrate that it's possible for trees and utilities to co-exist for the benefit of communities and citizens."

BTES achieved its Tree Line USA designation by meeting five program standards: 1) following industry standards for quality tree care; 2) providing annual worker training in best tree-care practices; 3) sponsoring a tree-planting and public education program; 4) maintaining a tree-based energy conservation program; and 5) participating in an Arbor Day celebration.

"BTES, our employees and Asplundh are excited to receive this honor for the 17th year," said BTES CEO Mike Browder. "Our statistics show that the largest cause of interrupted electrical service is tree-related. Through our tree trimming and maintenance program, our goal is to reduce the number of outages and reduce the costs associated with restoring service while maintaining our area's natural beauty."

BTES' tree care and maintenance policies and procedures, as well as information on where to plant trees in relation to power lines, can be found at [www.btes.net/trees](http://www.btes.net/trees).

More information about Tree Line USA can be found at [www.arborday.org/TreeLineUSA](http://www.arborday.org/TreeLineUSA).

## Landscaping Around BTES Equipment

Ever wonder about that above-ground metal box or ground-level junction box in your neighborhood or front yard? These boxes house high-voltage and/or fiber optic utility equipment that can pose a serious safety hazard if treated or handled inappropriately.

In the event of an equipment failure or a power outage, it is important that our workers have safe access to equipment to make needed repairs. Therefore, for your safety and that of our employees, there are regulations that limit landscaping around electrical equipment. If BTES equipment is obstructed, the time to repair and restore service can be greatly slowed.

In addition, trees, shrubs, fences, large landscape rocks or other obstructions are not permitted in access areas around electrical equipment.

BTES customers should know where utility lines and equipment are located on their property and keep those areas clear of all obstructions.



### **Keep your family safe by:**

1) Allowing ventilation to the box. Adequate air is needed to keep the boxes cool and working properly.

2) Leaving the boxes uncovered. Do not build a shed around it, fence it in or hide it with shrubbery.

3) Encouraging children to play away from the boxes, which may or may not have sharp edges.

**It is always better for our customers to plan ahead and landscape away from BTES equipment than for BTES to be forced to remove the landscaping in order to safely and quickly work on lines or equipment.**



**Bristol Tennessee Essential Services**

*Electric • Internet • Telephone • Cable*

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



TENNESSEE FIBER OPTIC COMMUNITIES



### 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. (Spring 2017)

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

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

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

Other comments, story ideas or questions.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please return to:  
BTES News, PO Box 549, Bristol, TN 37621  
Phone (423) 968-1526

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name and address (Optional)

## Energy Savings Loan Program

### Items Eligible for Financing:



**Inspected electric heat pumps**



**Insulated exterior doors**



**Storm doors**



**Insulated garage doors**



**Insulated replacement windows**

**For more information and loan terms,  
please call:**

**423-793-5513**