

BTES NEWS

Bristol Tennessee Essential Services

Electric • Internet • Telephone • Cable

Summer 2019 - For Customers of Bristol Tennessee Essential Services

BTES Receives National Recognition

Bristol Tennessee Essential Services (BTES) has earned the Diamond Level Reliable Public Power Provider (RP3) designation from the American Public Power Association (APPA) for providing reliable and safe electric service. This places BTES in the top five percent of utilities in the United States. BTES was presented with the designation during the association's annual Engineering & Operations Technical Conference, held March 31 - April 2 in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

"Receiving an RP3 designation is a great honor," said Aaron Haderle, manager of transmission and distribution operations at Kissimmee Utility Authority and chair of the RP3 review panel. "It demonstrates that a utility strives for a high level of service and is constantly looking to improve. Aside from demonstrating reliability, these designated utilities have shown commitment to system improvement, safety, and developing a strong and sustainable workforce."

RP3 designations are awarded at three levels — diamond (top level), platinum and gold — and last for three years. The designations recognize utilities with sound business practices and a utility-wide commitment to safe and reliable delivery of electricity. To receive a designation, a utility must score higher than 80%. To receive the Diamond Level designation, a utility must score above 98%. BTES joins 274 of the nation's more than 2,000 public power utilities that currently hold an RP3 diamond, platinum or gold designation.



Aaron Haderle, chair of the RP3 Review Panel and manager of transmission and distribution operations at Kissimmee Utility Authority (L), and Mike Hyland, APPA senior vice president of engineering services (R), presented Clayton Dowell, BTES director of engineering with the RP3 Designation.

"This is a tremendous honor," said Mike Browder, CEO of BTES. "We take a lot of pride in the work we do for our community. It's nice to be recognized again as among the 'best of the best' on a national level."

Far from being a rubber stamp designation, the RP3 program requires a rigorous application process, one which must be completed over the course of several months.



"Applications are reviewed by an 18-member panel of national utility experts in safety, transmission and distribution, and system planning," Haderle said.

The designation recognizes public power utilities that exhibit operational excellence and demonstrate leading practices in the following areas:

Reliability

The reliability of an electric system goes beyond keeping the lights on. It also involves important steps like collecting and analyzing reliability data, having a mutual aid agreement, and committing to cyber and physical security.

Safety

Industry leaders aim to create a culture of safety at each utility, ensuring safe standards for employees and customers. Commitment to safety must begin with top management and be included in all aspects of operations, with rigorous safety training and adherence to a thorough safety manual.

Workforce Development

Dedicated employees are instrumental in upholding a culture of safety. Offering professional development, training and networking opportunities helps show employees that they are valued, while succession planning and recruitment efforts ensure continuity in a changing workforce.

System Improvement

Utilities maintain the integrity of their systems and promote long-term planning by keeping an eye on the future through research and development and a commitment to system improvement programs.

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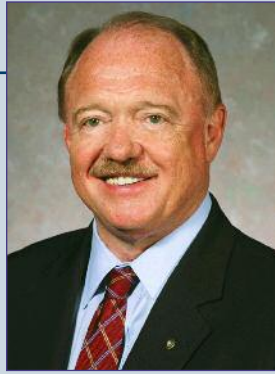
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Excellence ... A Habit

Since BTES was awarded the prestigious Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award in early 2018, we have received numerous accolades. We have shared with others our experiences, successes and knowledge gained from using the Baldrige framework for the past 30 years to guide us in continuous improvement efforts.



The Baldrige Performance Excellence Program is used to measure improvement and progress, and the award recognizes companies that have implemented successful quality management systems. When BTES received the award, there had only been 110 previous recipients in the 30-year history of the program, which amounts to an average of slightly more than two awards per state across three decades. In Tennessee, five organizations have been privileged to receive this honor, and Sullivan County is home to three of those recipients: Eastman (1993), Pal's Sudden Service (2001) and BTES (2017).

Many years ago, philosopher Will Durant summed up some of Aristotle's thoughts by saying, "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit."

There are those who want to act like they are excellent, but they only fool others for a short time. There are those who want to be quiet and still, and hope that maybe others won't notice them. And then there are those who make a habit of excellence. Whatever they do, they want to be excellent. While they enjoy being the best, they enjoy being better than their past selves the most. They also willingly help others become better at what they do. Their own fiber is the habit of excellence.

It is fun working with people who strive to be the best and help others do the same.

The Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence is a great place to start a journey of improvement ... get going!

Enjoy, 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 over 17,500 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

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
for the benefit of our customers.





MAXIMIZE YOUR INTERNET SPEED

BRISTOL TENNESSEE ESSENTIAL SERVICES

YOUR SPEED

To make sure you are getting the fastest speed possible, let's run a speed test.

Connect your computer directly to the Internet connection (bypassing the router). Close everything—if it uses the Internet, go ahead and shut it down. Visit speedtest.btes.tv to run the speed test.

WIFI

You can make your BTES Internet wireless by using a router. Here are some things to consider:

Ensure your router can handle your speed.

Some older routers can only handle speeds up to a certain amount. This is especially true for speeds above 54Mb. The router model makes a big difference (B, G, N, or AC). For example, for 100Mb or more, an AC router would work best.

Older devices may not be able to handle faster speeds. Your Internet speed will only be as fast as what your device and its wifi adapter will support.

Find a central location for your router. The closer your devices are to the router, the faster and more reliable your connection.

Stay up to date on router firmware. Vendors regularly release software updates to improve stability, performance and security.

Remember—if you run a speed test from a wireless device, take into consideration all of the above plus your wifi-connected devices, including security cameras, thermostats, smart appliances such as refrigerators and crock pots, smart speakers like Alexa, and others.

For more information, visit flashrouters.com

DOWNLOAD & UPLOAD

4Mb/
768k

60Mb/
15Mb

100Mb/
50Mb

1G/
100Mb

Your Internet speed has a download (the first number) and an upload (the second number) speed. Both are very important!

Download speed will determine how quickly you can receive information from the Internet. For example, you may use the Internet to download music files, view websites or watch TV online—all of these functions require information to be downloaded from the Internet.

Upload speed will determine how quickly you can send files, information and data to the Internet. For example, when you put pictures on social media sites or use a search engine, you are uploading data to the Internet.

Video apps such as Facetime and Skype use both download and upload speeds—so both numbers are important for high-quality Internet performance.

GIGABIT

With your BTES Gigabit Internet, you will be receiving speeds of 940Mb. To make a long (and very technical) story short, as with all Gigabit connections, some of the bits are overhead, including preamble, inter-frame gaps and TCP, which results in the maximum-received speed of 940Mb. For more details on the math, visit www.speedtest.net/insights/blog/are-you-gigabit-ready-17-tips-to-help/

If you are using a router—make sure that it supports Gigabit speeds, and that your computer or mobile device is using the latest wifi standards and has Gigabit capabilities.

Teacher / Industry Day Pairs Teachers with Local Industries

More than 70 teachers from the Bristol Tennessee School System were recently paired with 21 local industries during the annual Teacher / Industry Day to learn the educational requirements for job positions in our community. The all-day event, held March 25, began with a breakfast where BTES CEO Dr. Mike Browder welcomed attendees.



Several Tennessee high school teachers spent the day with JA Street to learn what skills are needed to work at their organization. Pictured above are Brandon Broyles (left), physical education teacher, Brad Goodman, construction technology teacher, Hunter Arnold, JA Street assistant project manager, and Preston Roberts, social studies teacher.

"Teacher / Industry Day began 23 years ago as a way to promote economic development and career development in our community," Browder said. "Each year, we start the day with a brief program for our participating teachers and industries, and then each teacher in attendance is paired with an industry in our community. The teacher spends the day with leaders at that organization — touring their facility, discussing career opportunities, and ultimately learning what skills are needed to work at that company."

BTES and the Tennessee Valley Authority have sponsored the day since its inception in 1996, and more than 700 teachers have participated in the program over the years.

"The goal is for the teachers to take what they learn back to their classrooms and help their students become more prepared to enter the workforce," Browder said. "We want to give our students the best education possible, and this starts with educators understanding what skills are needed in industries right here in our community."

Participating industries included Animal Medical Clinic, Ballad Health, Bristol Metals, BTES, Bristol Tennessee Fire Department, Bristol Tennessee Police Department, Economy Beauty Supply, Food City, Friendship Auto, HSN, JA Street & Associates, Master Model Craft, Mattern & Craig Engineers, Microporous, Pulp, Royal Building Products, Seaman Corporation, Sullivan County Public Defender's Office, The Robinette Company, Tri-City Extrusion and United Southeast Federal Credit Union.



Dr. Gary Lilly, director of schools (left), Deidre Pendley, director of career & technical education, Dr. Mike Browder, BTES CEO, April Eads, BTES business development manager, Larry Clarke, BTES board chair, and Erin Downs, BTES board member, attended the morning program.

Payment Options

Here are a few of the easiest ways to pay your BTES bill. For further information on payment options or to sign up for one of these payment methods, visit btes.net/paymentoptions.

Bank Draft

You may set up an automatic bank draft so that you never have to worry about writing a check or missing a payment while you're on vacation. Customers' bank accounts are drafted the current amount due on the due date.

Check or Credit/Debit Card by Phone

To pay your bill by phone, call 423-968-1526. You will need your BTES account number and the information on your check or credit/debit card. Our automated account manager will walk you through the process. A fee of \$1 will be charged for each check transaction. A 2.45% fee will be charged for credit/debit card transactions. You can also check your balance, due date and last payment received through this system.

Online with a Check or Credit Card/Debit

Visit our website to use this payment option. A \$1 fee will be charged for check transactions. A convenience fee of 2.45% will be charged for each credit/debit card transaction.

Using the BTES App on Your Mobile Device

Download the free app by searching BTES on either the Apple App Store or the Android Market from your mobile device. After you have downloaded the app, you can view your bill, make secure payments directly from your mobile device, view your payment history and so much more!

Auto-Pay by Credit/Debit Card or E-Check

This payment option will automatically pay your BTES bill each month with your credit/debit card or checking account! For credit/debit card transactions, a 2.45% convenience fee will be charged. For e-check transactions, a \$1 fee will be charged.

By Mail

You may mail your payment to us in the envelope provided with your bill to PO Box 549 Bristol, TN 37621.

Other Locations

Payments may also be made at several local banks: Bank of Tennessee, Regions Bank, Citizens Bank and First Tennessee.



Quality Contractors Awarded for Excellent Service

BTES recently recognized its Heat Pump Quality Contractors Network Members for providing great service and high quality to our customers.

We survey every BTES customer who purchases an electric heat pump through the Energy Savings Loan Program (although you do not have to take the loan to experience the benefits of this program), and the results are tremendous! Our customers are satisfied with the contractors and their staff, the quality of work, BTES' staff and our entire program.

Each heat pump installed through the BTES program goes through a 40-point inspection, which can prevent most problems. Quality Contractors in the BTES program know up front what is expected and do their best to meet this high standard of excellence.

Through the Energy Savings Loan Program, BTES provides no-money-down financing* for the following items:

1. Inspected electric heat pump
2. Attic insulation (R19 minimum) and ventilation
3. Floor insulation (R19 minimum) and ventilation
4. Insulated replacement windows
5. Insulated exterior doors
6. Insulated garage doors
7. Electrical service upgrades
8. Storm doors

(*Must qualify under BTES/TVA financing plan)

BTES / TVA Quality Contractors Network Members

Air Movers, Inc.
423-764-2424

Climate Controllers, Inc.
423-547-0100

J&M Heating and Cooling
423-323-3245

John Legg's Heating & Air Conditioning
423-323-5020



Kevin Frederick, BTES energy advisor (left), presents Mike Jennings of J&M Heating and Cooling with awards for the highest volume of heat pump, new construction and existing homes sales. In addition, both J&M Heating and Cooling and Air Movers, Inc. received awards for achieving 100% in quality.

Energy efficient homes save you money and make your home more comfortable. To get started, follow the checklist:

- Visit www.2eScore.com to sign up for the program and review available rebates and contractors.
- Contact Engineering Secretary Vickie Ballard at 423-793-5513 to begin loan approval process.
- Call eScore approved contractors for free estimates.
- Choose installers to do the work.
- Call Engineering Secretary Vickie Ballard for final BTES loan approval.
- After installation, BTES will inspect the installation before the installer is paid.

After approval, payments can be added to the customer's BTES bill.



www.2eScore.com

energyright
solutions TVA

Plants that keep bugs away



ROSEMARY

Fleas
Ticks



PEPPERMINT

Spiders
Mosquitoes
Ants



MARIGOLD

Mosquitoes
Aphids



BASIL

Mosquitoes
Houseflies



LAVENDER

Mosquitoes
Fleas
Flies
Moths



PETUNIAS

Beetles
Aphids



Roasted Potatoes with Asparagus

- 2 pounds new potatoes, cut into quarters
- 1/2 pound asparagus tips, cut into 2-inch pieces
- 2 tbsp. garlic-infused olive oil
- 4 tbsp. balsamic vinegar
- Generous pinch of salt and pepper

Preheat the oven to 390 degrees. In a large roasting pan, add the olive oil, balsamic vinegar and salt. Add the potatoes and toss to coat fully before roasting for 20 minutes. After 20 minutes, add the asparagus with a little extra olive oil, if needed. Toss to coat and cook 15 minutes. Season with extra balsamic vinegar, salt and pepper.

Tuscan Tortellini Salad

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 1 pound fresh cheese tortellini | 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil |
| 2 tbsp. balsamic vinegar | 1/2 tsp. honey |
| Kosher salt | Freshly ground black pepper |
| 3/4 cup chopped salami or prosciutto | 1/2 cup baby spinach |
| 1/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan | |
| 1/2 cup oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes, chopped | |

In a large pot of salted boiling water, cook tortellini according to package directions. Drain and transfer to large serving bowl.

Dressing: Whisk together olive oil, balsamic vinegar and honey, and season with salt and pepper.

To bowl, add prosciutto, spinach, tomatoes and dressing, and toss until well combined. Garnish with Parmesan.

The Lighter Side

How do farmers party?

They turnip the beets!





BTES and Avoca Elementary School Celebrate Arbor Day

In partnership with BTES and the City of Bristol, Tennessee, Avoca Elementary School fifth graders celebrated Arbor Day by planting a tree in front of their school. In the United States, Arbor Day is observed on the last Friday in April each year to raise awareness of trees and the important role they play in our environment.

At the celebration, BTES was named a 2019 Tree Line USA utility in honor of our commitment to proper tree pruning, planting and care in our service area. This is the 19th year that BTES has received this honor.

Tree Line USA, a partnership between the Arbor Day 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 Bristol Tennessee Essential Services demonstrate that it's possible for trees and utilities to co-exist for the benefit of communities and citizens."

BTES achieved Tree Line USA utility status by meeting five program standards. Utilities must follow industry standards for quality tree care; provide annual worker training in best tree-care practices; sponsor a tree-planting and public education program; maintain a tree-based energy conservation program; and participate in an Arbor Day celebration.

"BTES, our employees and Asplundh Tree Expert Company are excited to receive this honor," said BTES CEO Mike Browder. "Our statistics show



BTES provided a tree that students from Avoca Elementary School planted in front of their school in celebration of Arbor Day.

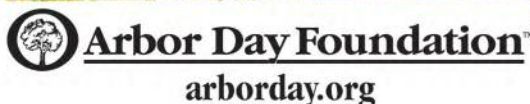
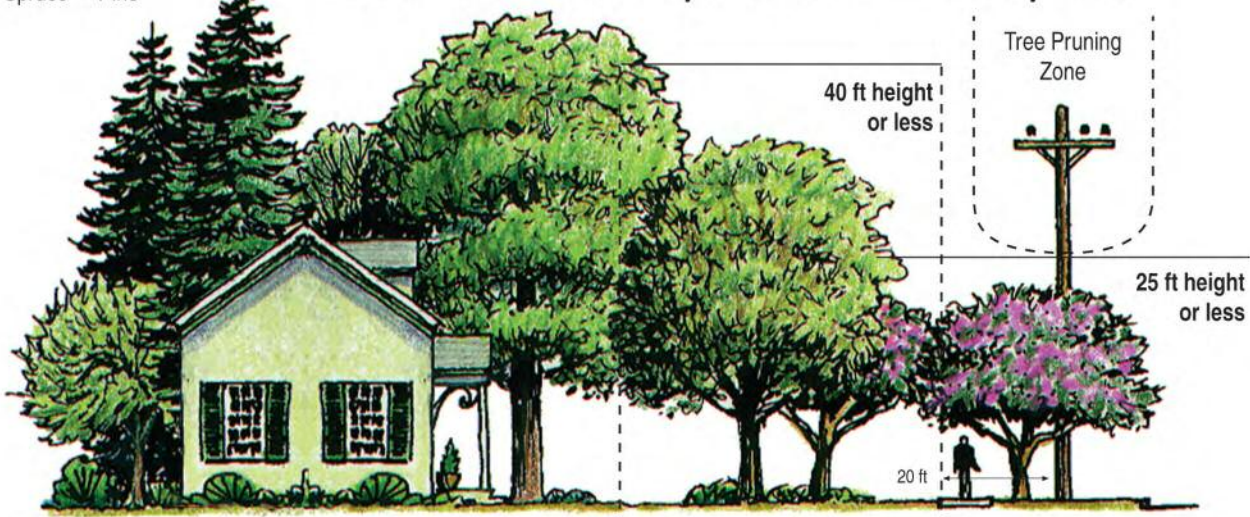
that the largest cause of electric outages is tree-related. Through our tree-trimming and maintenance program, our goal is to reduce the number of outages and the costs associated with restoring service, while maintaining our area's natural beauty."

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.

- Tall trees, such as:
- Maple
 - Oak
 - Spruce
 - Pine

Plant the right tree in the right place

Plant taller trees away from overhead utility lines



- Medium trees, such as:
- Washington hawthorn
 - Goldenrain tree

- Smallest trees, such as:
- Dogwood



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TENNESSEE FIBER OPTIC COMMUNITIES



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 with your BTES bill to the address below. (Summer 2019)

- 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)



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Mobile
App**

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Check your balance
Make payments**

Available on the app store