Written by Steve Frank
Friday, 24 December 2010 06:48

Employees of Blue Ridge Electric Membership Corporation are monitoring severe winter weather reports for snow accumulations during the Christmas holiday and are prepared to quickly respond if outages occur. While light snow typically doesn't cause problems, ice or heavy, wet snow can damage the electric system. Car accidents hitting power poles can also affect the system. If members experience an outage, the fastest way to report it is by calling the cooperative's toll free Powerline at 1-800-448-2383. Members can also check Blue Ridge Electric's online outage map at www.BlueRidgeEMC.com and follow updates during major outages on the cooperative's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/blueridgeemc.
Blue Ridge Electric works hard to keep the power on for its members through reliability upgrades and right-of-way maintenance but severe weather can sometimes cause outages. Members will be safer and less inconvenienced if they have the following emergency supplies handy:

- Flashlight with fresh batteries
- Matches
- Firewood and kindling
- Grill with charcoal and lighter or extra propane
- Radio with fresh batteries to listen to weather and news reports
- Blankets, sleeping bags, quilts
- Oil lamps and extra oil
- Wind-up or battery operated clock
- Non-perishable food
- Manual can opener
- Paper plates and plastic utensils
- Gallon jugs filled with water for drinking and cooking
- Formula and extra diapers for babies
- Thermos for keeping drinks and baby formula warm
- Emergency numbers

As a safety reminder, the cooperative reminds the public that downed power lines can still be energized and therefore dangerous or even deadly! Stay far away from downed power lines and report them immediately to Blue Ridge Electric by calling any local district office.