

Utility Payment Deferral

Recently the Alberta government announced an electricity and natural gas payment deferral during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The program is available to Albertans who are experiencing significant financial hardship as a direct result COVID-19. The program came into effect on March 18th and remains in place until June 19th of this year.

For additional information and support, contact the Utilities Consumer Advocate.

Phone: 780-644-5130

Toll Free: 310-4822

Email: UCAhelps@gov.ab.ca

Web: ucahelps.alberta.ca

How does it work?

To arrange for deferral, you must call your natural gas or electricity provider directly – that is the retail electricity provider or RRO provider that sends you the monthly bill, not the West Wetaskiwin REA. You will be required to provide your account information when you connect with them and they will note your request accordingly.

Payment post deferral period.

It is important to note the program is designed to provide temporary relief to Albertans who can't make their regular payments as a result of COVID-19 repercussions, such as a job loss and/or caring for an ill family member. Payments will be required at the end of the deferral period. While currently the understanding is that complete payment is not due on June 19th, companies are establishing reasonable repayment schedules.

Repayment

West Wetaskiwin REA realizes this is a difficult time for some members, but it is important for members to realize that the amount accrued during the 90-day deferral must be repaid. This is not a free electricity time period.

It is also important to note, that as a Cooperative, any utilization of the deferral program will have financial and liability implications for West Wetaskiwin REA. While we are committed to supporting members in need it is important to know that the Coop is not exempt from paying our contractors. Furthermore, failure of a member to repay in an established reasonable time could result in caveats on land titles to ensure the membership as a whole is not negatively impacted.

We encourage members to ask the question, "Do I really need this?" – If the answer is yes, then your Coop supports you.

For power troubles or service requests, contact: FortisAlberta (the distribution system operator for West Wetaskiwin REA): Toll-free: 1-855-333-9473 or 780-310-9473

For REA inquiries contact:
West Wetaskiwin REA
R.R. #1 Station Main,
Wetaskiwin, Alberta T9A 1W8
Phone: 780-335-9378 (WEST)
E-mail: westwet@telus.net
www.westwetaskiwinrea.com

For billing or account inquiries contact:
Battle River Power Coop
Box 1420
Camrose, Alberta T4V 1X3
Toll-free: 1-877-428-3972
E-mail: brpc@brpower.coop
www.brpower.coop

Stay Safe Around Power Lines

With spring and seeding time just around the corner, West Wetaskiwin REA encourages members to use caution when working around powerlines. Look up and around and follow these safety tips.

Check the height of your equipment.

Know the height to ensure you can cross safely under power lines and be aware that newer machinery and/or equipment may be higher. Carefully consider your route to ensure you can cross safely under power lines. Remember if equipment is higher than 4.15 meters (13.6 feet) you should contact our REA system operator, FortisAlberta, to request assistance.

Stay seven meters (23 feet) away from power lines.

Pay special attention when operating grain augers, air seeders, when lifting truck boxes or operating back hoes.

Plan ahead before moving tall equipment near power lines.

Map your route and locate and remember where any overhead power lines are located along that route. If powerlines require lifting, you must advise FortisAlberta at least seven days in advance.

Remember, contact with power lines can be avoided if you plan ahead, know the dimensions of your equipment and continually watch for poles and lines.

Stack and store wisely.

Whether you're storing grain in a bin or hay bales, stack and store at least 7 meters (13 feet) away from power lines.

Click before you dig.

Before digging or driving posts into the ground, talk to Alberta One-Call to request an underground locate. Utilities are closer to the surface of the ground than you think.

Watch out for tree branches.

Overgrown vegetation that is too close to overhead wires can make pruning dangerous. Don't take chances – only certified Utility Tree Trimmers are qualified to work around electricity infrastructure.

Assume downed power lines are energized.

Stay at least 10 meters (33 feet) away and warn others of the danger. Call <911> or the FortisAlberta 24-hour emergency line <310-WIRE (9473)>.



**Regulated
Rate
Option**



The Regulated Rate Option (RRO) may increase or decrease from month to month as it is priced on the open market and subject to many factors relating to supply and demand. It is not a 'regulated' rate, rather is a default rate. If you do not have a contract with an electricity retailer, then you are on the RRO. For April 2020, the RRO has been adjusted and is priced at \$0.06362 per kWh, reflected on your enclosed orange bill. For May 2020, the Battle River Power Coop monthly RRO billing rate is \$0.06316.

Members are free to purchase electricity services from a retailer of their choice. For a list of retailers, visit ucahelps.alberta.ca or call 310-4822 (toll free in Alberta).

Information on West Wetaskiwin REA's Code of Conduct Regulation Compliance Plan can be found on our website: www.westwetaskiwinrea.com