

# Valley Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives  
serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

## Valley Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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www.valleyrec.com

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## Guest Column



# Let's make business bad for scammers

By Doug Roles, *Vice President of Member Services*

THROUGHOUT the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been warnings about increased scam activity. Sadly, a crisis creates greater opportunity for those who peddle in taking advantage of the trusting nature of others.

But there is good news. Awareness and exercising a little caution can go a long way in stopping scammers. Remember, never give out your banking information, Social Security number, or other personal information to unsolicited phone calls, texts, or email.

As much as we all would like to see scammers apprehended, catching them is difficult. An in-depth article in the April 2020 edition of *AARP Bulletin* states that many people do not realize how sophisticated and well-organized scam operations can be, whether based in the U.S or in foreign countries. Some are operated like businesses, with call centers, managers and rewards for the operators with the most "sales."


Anne Prince, who writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), says that utility scams are common because of the vast number of utilities that exist and because consumers are understandably anxious about a threat to their electric, heating, or water service. New products and services in the energy industry provide an opening for scammers to provide misleading information or shoddy products and services.

A common phone scam begins with a phone number that appears to be from a valid utility company. The scammer claims you have a past due

account and threatens to disconnect service or take legal action if you don't use a prepaid debit card or money order to make a payment immediately. You can combat this scam by being aware of the status of your account. If you have a question or concern about your energy bill, call Valley REC at 800-432-0680.

Crooks claiming to represent a solar company sometimes call homeowners promising to replace faulty or broken parts or improve efficiency in their solar arrays. Be wary of calls offering upgrades or extended warranties. Other than occasional cleaning, rooftop solar (if installed correctly) is virtually maintenance-free.

Other scams listed in the *AARP* article include: a caller claiming to be from Amazon needing your credit card number to deliver a package; a pitch that you have won a lottery but need to wire money for fees; and a newspaper or online listing for a fantastic buy on a vehicle because the seller has to relocate ("Just wire the money!"). There are also scams that claim to teach people how to launch a successful online business for the price of an instruction kit. And, sadly, a new scam involves "medical personnel" going door-to-door offering mouth swabs for fast COVID-19 testing. The scammers are after your Medicare account number, which they may use themselves or sell to other scammers.

As the saying goes, forewarned is forearmed. Hopefully, caution and current information will go a long way in putting scammers out of business. 

## Do you have money piling up with us?

Valley REC asking for help locating members for capital credits return



Late last year, more than \$1.4 million in capital credits refunds were distributed to eligible members and former members of the co-op.

Since that time, nearly 300 of those checks have been returned by the post office because of incorrect address information.

We are making every effort to return this money to its rightful owners.

Listed on the following pages are the names of the consumers whose checks were undeliverable.

If you recognize a name and can provide an up-to-date address (or information about the executor of the estate or nearest relative if the member is deceased), please call us at 814-643-2650 or toll-free 800-432-0680.

You can also write to the Capital Credits Department, Valley REC, P.O. Box 477, Huntingdon, PA 16652-0477. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

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 JEANE H BUFFINGTON, 4613 SOUTH

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 JULIUS J BUSKO, 895 BANOCK ST, SPRING VALLEY, CA 91977  
 ROBERT A BUSSARD, 13411 TIMBER RIDGE RD, NEEDMORE, PA 17238  
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 WALTER CHASE, 1020 GREEN AVE #503, ALTOONA, PA 16601  
 KAREN A CLaar, 124 CAMBRIDGE DR, DUNCANSVILLE, PA 16635  
 WILLIAM G COLYER, 19106 SHEPHERD RD, ORBISONIA, PA 17243  
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 MICHAEL A CRAYOSKY, 11640 WALNUT HILL LN, HESSTON, PA 16647  
 JONI LEE CROMWELL, 13141 PLEASANT RIDGE RD, HARRISONVILLE, PA 17228  
 JEFF CROSSON, 344 CROMWELL ST, ORBISONIA, PA 17243  
 IRA DANIELS, 303 DANIEL RD, NEEDMORE, PA 17238  
 MICHAEL L DAVIS, 201 MAIN ST, ROARING SPRING, PA 16673  
 COURTNEY M DECKER, 152 ROARING SPRING CMN, APT 203, ROARING SPRING, PA 16673  
 MICHAL J DELVECCHIO, 107 FIELDER RD, MCVEYTOWN, PA 17051  
 JOHN DENNEL, 15587 PUMP STATION RD, SHIRLEYSBURG, PA 17260  
 TROY DESHONG, 2309 SINOQUIPE RD, FORT LITTLETON, PA 17223

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 HAROLD D EDGIN, 11618 BEACON LODGE RD, MOUNT UNION, PA 17066  
 BRANDON F ENGLAND, 10341 FOX RUN RD, WILLIAMSBURG, PA 16693  
 ROBERT J FETTERMAN C/O R F COMMUNICATIONS, 4 MOUNT ZION RD, CATAWISSA, PA 17820  
 JOHN FOOR, 100 PINEY LN, HARRISONVILLE, PA 17228  
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NEW HOLLAND, PA 17557  
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THOMAS G THOMPSON C/O BETTY  
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PIKE, MILL CREEK, PA 17060

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# Valley retiree fills time with family, travel and marbles

A FORMER Valley REC employee is settling into a retirement she hopes to fill with family, travel and maybe a few auction gems. Kim Kane started at Valley in October 1993 as secretary to the CEO, a position she held until her retirement at Thanksgiving last year.

Kane is from the Orbisonia area of Huntingdon County and worked part time for the Southern Huntingdon County School District for several years, doing a variety of secretarial and custodial jobs and working in the cafeteria and as a teacher's aide. She joined the Valley team while looking for full-time employment.

Kane's initial responsibility included clerical work, particularly typing notes taken by then-board secretary Diane Heffner, a longtime co-op employee, office manager and mentor. Kane also assisted with preparing materials for board meetings. At that time, board-member packets were compiled and mailed to Valley's nine board members about two weeks in advance of monthly meetings.

"We didn't have the technology back then that we do now," Kane says. "Today, board members use an app for meeting materials, which Valley provides electronically."

Kane also assisted with planning the co-op's annual membership meeting, held each April, as well as district nominating meetings, held in February. With the retirements of other secretarial employees, Kane became more



RELAXED: Valley REC retiree Kim Kane pauses for a photo in her yard atop Piney Ridge, in Penn Township, Huntingdon County. She worked as the co-op's secretary to the CEO for 26 years.

PHOTO BY DOUG ROLES

involved with board meetings.

"I did enjoy the interaction with the board," Kane says. "I loved my job. I loved the people and seeing members at annual meetings and nominating meetings."

Kane says technology greatly changed co-op operations in all departments during her employment. For example, outage response now involves fewer office employees, thanks to the co-op's digital outage management system.

"It used to be when there was a major snowstorm, it was like around-the-clock," Kane recalls. "Every phone was being answered. The office was abuzz."

Kane and her husband, Donnie, reside in Penn Township, Huntingdon County. He retired in 2018 from TEAM Chevrolet Buick GMC in Huntingdon. Together they enjoy spending time with

family and their dogs. They have three grown children, seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Kane hopes to do some traveling to visit extended family in several states, including Nevada and Florida. She continues to work as a cashier for auctioneer Rodney Fleck of Mount Union. She got involved with auctions in the mid-1980s through a family member and initially worked as a runner.

"I've been doing it ever since; I love it," Kane says.

Kane enjoys the atmosphere as well as looking for various collectibles, particularly sulfide marbles — transparent orbs containing figurines. Kane says she has found "a few good ones" over the years. We wish her luck finding a few more during a happy and well-deserved retirement. 🍀

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## Coordinated effort: Valley crews reroute power, replace regulator at Riverview Substation

Several Valley REC crews had a busy Saturday morning April 18 as the co-op combined a Penelec work request with Valley's planned maintenance of equipment at the co-op's Riverview Substation in Shirley Township, Huntingdon County.

The co-op de-energized the substation at about 7 a.m. To facilitate Penelec's construction of a nearby metering point, power was cut to a Valley transmission line that runs from the substation to a small Penelec substation along Route 522. The special work day was planned to minimize impact to the ACPI cabinet factory served by the transmission line and located in the township's industrial park.

Cutting power to the rest of the substation was necessary for the maintenance work. Crews replaced a failing regulator, a piece of equipment that ensures a consistent voltage along its feeder, a line that carries power to homes and businesses. Switches that connect or cut power to the lines leaving the substation were also inspected.

Co-op members normally served by the Riverview Substation saw minimal disruption, as power was rerouted from Valley's Three Springs and Atkinson Mills substations. The work was completed by 10 a.m.

"Our crews got a lot done in a short span of time," says Todd Ross, Valley's vice president of operations. "There were a lot of moving parts and safety was our top priority."

FROM TOP, LEFT: The old regulator, center, has been removed.

Journeyman linemen Jason Wilson, front, left, Logan Booher and Jonathon Shields guide the new regulator into place.

Randy Boonie, center, Huntingdon district manager, keeps a close eye on the work.

Kenny Sipes, a Shade Gap District crew leader, replaces an old porcelain cut-out fuse with a new polymer unit.

The old regulator is loaded onto a flatbed truck.

