

Tennessee CONNECTIONS

WINTER 2025 | CUSTOMER FOCUSED  COMMUNITY DRIVEN

HIGH-SPEED

Halls Residents
Praise Fiber
Internet
Page 6

ALSO INSIDE

Winners

Celebrating
Public Power
Page 18

Innovative Energy

Ripley receives backup
electric microgrid
Page 19

Colin, left, and
Connor Cox
discover the joy
of a winter
snow in Ripley.
PHOTO COURTESY
OF TAMMY COX



HIGH-SPEED INTERNET IN HALLS

'It's a godsend. Fiber is the way to go.'

Sandy Hutcherson remembers the days of dial-up internet: The excruciatingly long time it took to upload a picture or a document to a buyer online. It's much different today.

F&S Industrial Supply, owned by Sandy and her husband, Frank, was one of the first to sign up for Ripley Power and Light's high-speed, fiber-based internet in Halls.

"Fiber is the way to go," she said.

Frank started his business 43 years ago. As internet use increased, the company changed its business model around 2003 to doing more of its business online. Today, 95% of the company's business is through online sales, Sandy said.

The company sells electrical parts, pumps, motors and similar products for assembly lines in factories around the world. Each item is listed on the company's website, sold and shipped. "Good internet is a must," Sandy said.



Sandy and Frank Hutcherson

From Dial-Up to Fiber Internet

The Hutchersons' first internet service was a dial-up connection. "It would take 30 to 45 minutes to upload pictures online," Sandy said. Over the next two decades, F&S Industrial Supply went through several internet providers, progressively getting faster internet speeds. When Ripley Power and Light, in partnership with Aeneas, started selling fiber-based internet more than a year ago, the Hutchersons jumped at it.

Halls resident Amy Long remembers the "hit and miss" internet her family had before it signed up for Power and Light's fiber-based internet. Like the Hutchersons, Amy's husband,



Amy and Kenny Long

Kenny, needs reliable and fast internet for his job. Kenny, who works from home for West Tennessee Healthcare, is on the computer eight hours a day each weekday.

Not only is the speed better, their new fiber internet is also cheaper than their last internet provider, Amy said.

Sign Up for Fiber

Halls residents who want the high-speed, fiber-based internet service can sign up at fiber.aeneas.com, through a link on Ripley Power and Light's website at ripleypower.com or on the utility's Facebook page at facebook.com/ripleypowerandlight. By typing in their address, residents can find out if the new service is available at their location.

Halls residents with questions can call Aeneas at 731-554-9200 or the Power and Light Halls office at 731-836-7595 or drop by the Halls office, 509 S. Church St.

Ripley Power and Light owns the fiber network and leases it to Aeneas, which is initially offering telephone and tiered, internet services with up to speeds of one gigabyte.

Ripley Power and

Light started high-speed fiber in Halls as a pilot project, said Mike Allmand, President and CEO of Ripley Power and Light. "We are exploring ways to bring fiber broadband to all customers. The response in Halls and funding options will help determine if the fiber network will expand beyond Halls."

Sandy Hutcherson is certainly pleased her family's company is within the initial footprint of Ripley Power and Light's fiber internet. Today, the company's biggest challenge is no longer internet speeds and reliability. Instead, it's understanding the many languages her customers speak.

"Power and Light's fiber internet is a godsend," Sandy said. "When the internet goes down, our world stops." ■



Mike Allmand
President and CEO
Ripley Power and Light

The many ways to pay your electric bill ...

At Ripley Power and Light Company, we make it convenient to pay your electric bill. Here are your options ...

- **Online through our customer portal:** Visit ripleypower.com.
- **Ripley Power and Light app:** Download our app to your smart device through the Apple Store or Google Play.
- **In person:** Come by our Ripley or Halls office during normal working hours: 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Thursday and 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Friday.
- **24-hour bill pay:** Pay by credit card or cash through the kiosks in our drive-thru lanes at our Ripley and Halls offices. The kiosks are secure to protect your information.
- **Night deposit:** Use the secure deposit boxes at our Ripley and Halls locations.

■ **Bank draft:** Opt for bank draft. Your bank deducts the amount you owe from your bank account the day the bill is due. Each month, we send your bank the amount you owe, and we send you a copy of your bill.

■ **Mail:** Use the envelope that comes with your bill.

(Note: If you choose to pay your utility bills in one of the above ways, you can sign up for e-statements and receive your bill through email. Customers who get e-statements will see their bill before other customers receive their bill in the mail.)

■ **Prepay Program:** Pay for electricity before you use it. A daily text or email gives you the amount of electricity you have left on your account so you know when to buy more. You can add money to your account at our offices or through the customer portal, mail or kiosk. Prepay customers cannot use bank draft or receive e-statements. ■

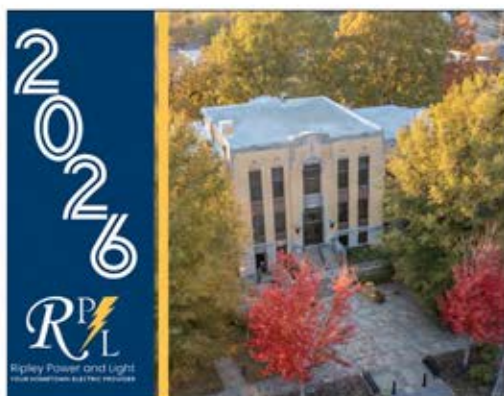
Don't forget your neighbor in need

The holiday season is a good time to think about our neighbors who may have a hard time paying their electric bills. Through our Plus One Program, customers contribute with a one-time donation or monthly through their electric bills. Ripley Power and Light administers the program with no add-on fees. Learn more or sign up at ripleypower.com through the blue "My Account" box on our home page. ■



Holiday Seek and Find

Did you find all of the words? Answers to the Holiday Seek and Find on the back page of this magazine are above.



Calendars

The 2026 Ripley Power and Light Company calendars have been mailed. If you did not receive a calendar, call our Ripley office at 731-635-2323 or drop by at 150 S. Main St., on weekdays.

More stories from Ripley Power and Light ... pages 18,19

Celebrating public power with a coloring contest

Ripley Power and Light Company celebrated October's Public Power Week with a coloring contest for elementary school-aged children.

Public Power Week celebrates reliable, low-cost electricity provided by public power utilities.

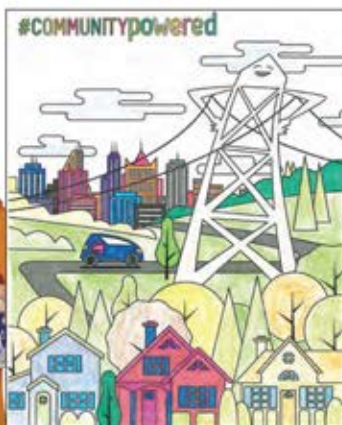
Ripley Power and Light is among the more than 2,000 community-owned, not-for-profit electric utilities in the United States. These utilities power the

homes and businesses of 49 million Americans, invest in their communities and support local commerce and jobs.

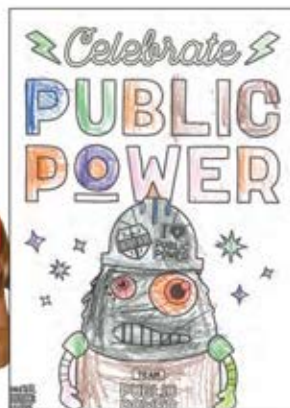
The coloring contest sheets represented this year's theme of "2,000 Utilities. One Purpose."

Winners in the local contest are Hattie H., who is in pre-kindergarten; Freyja D., second grade; Kynslea H., third grade; Emrys D., fourth grade; and Lyra D., sixth grade. Each winner received a \$50 Visa gift card from Ripley Power and Light.

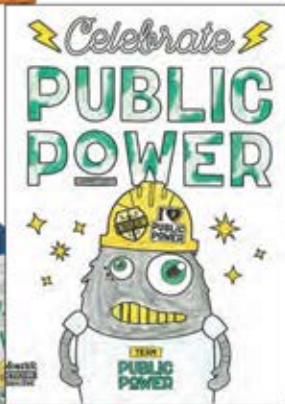
For more information about Ripley Power and Light's community involvement, visit the "About Us" section at ripleypower.com. ■



Lyra, sixth grade



Hattie, prekindergarten



Freyja, second grade



Emrys, fourth grade



Kynslea, third grade





Ripley's solar-powered microgrid is displayed during July's Tomato Festival.

City, Ripley Power and Light Participate in Pilot Project

A portable, solar-powered microgrid system will be ready to provide electricity in Ripley should an emergency occur.

It is part of a pilot project to provide backup power for emergency services and a cost-effective, emissions-free power source for nonemergency situations. The microgrid can operate around the clock without needing fuel. Instead, it operates on a battery that is powered by the sun.

Tennessee Valley Authority, which helped pay for the city's innovative microgrid system, is one of five players in a unique partnership that brought the microgrid to Ripley, said Ben Colgrove, director of research and development at the National Institute for Hometown Security (NIHS).

"We were looking for a partner in a rural community," Colgrove said. Then he met Ripley Mayor Craig Fitzhugh at a conference organized by the Tennessee Advanced Energy Business Council.

NIHS designs technical projects that benefit critical infrastructure, Colgrove explained. The key players in Ripley's microgrid project are the City of Ripley, which was willing to participate in the project; the nonprofit NIHS; Resilience Energy and Infrastructure, a private company that manufactured the microgrid;

and Ripley Power and Light Company, which enables the microgrid to integrate with the city's electric grid.

"With partnerships like this," Colgrove said, "you can accomplish so much more."

The microgrid system can provide enough power for the critical loads of community buildings, such as Ripley Fire Department and Ripley Elementary School. Since it's portable, it can be taken to where it is needed in the community.

Another result of the partnership was cutting-edge, battery-fire response training for the Ripley, Dyersburg, Covington and Brownsville fire departments in November, Colgrove said.

The installation of the microgrid will be completed sometime

in January, Colgrove said. For the next six months, his organization will evaluate the effectiveness of a small community's use of a mobile microgrid in emergencies, identify opportunities for how the microgrid can be used as a clean power source in non-emergencies, and measure the decreased need for fossil fuel-based generators by small communities during emergencies.

"We'll learn from it," Colgrove said. "We're learning how a small community can use it so we can take the technology to other communities." ■

A Naming Contest

Since Ripley Elementary School is one of the buildings that is being integrated into the microgrid system, the students there were asked to suggest names for the microgrid system. "They came up with four very creative and original names," said Ben Colgrove, director of research and development at NIHS. Attendees at the Tomato Festival voted on their favorite name.

The winner: The Ripley TigerVolt!



RIPLEY POWER AND LIGHT COMPANY

ripleypower.com

Ripley Office

731-635-2323

150 S. Main St. • Ripley

Halls Office

731-836-7595

409 S. Church St. • Halls

Office Hours

We are open 47 hours each week to serve you better!

7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Monday-Thursday

7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Friday

You can pay your bill ...

- At ripleypower.com.
- Through our mobile app.
- Through bank draft.
- At our Ripley & Halls offices.
- In office night deposit boxes.
- At the kiosks at our offices.

If you have not been receiving your bills, call our office immediately so we can verify your mailing address.

Ripley Power and Light offices will be closed ...

**Wednesday and Thursday
Dec. 24 and 25
for Christmas**

**Thursday, Jan. 1
for New Year's Day**

**Monday, Jan. 19
for Martin Luther King Jr. Day**

**Monday, Feb. 16
for Presidents Day**

Holiday Seek and Find



Find and circle the holiday words, below, in the puzzle. Be sure to look across, backwards, down and diagonal! Answers on Page 7.

Lights

Twinkling

Lightbulbs

Ornament

Santa Claus

Presents

Tinsel

Glow

Icicle

Mistletoe

Bright

Festive

Trees

Snowflake

Hanukkah

Wreath

Garland

Rudolph

Nativity

Ribbon

Happy Holidays

Saint Nicholas

Toys

Reindeer

