

BRIGHT IDEAS

A monthly newsletter for BELD customers, December 2006



Electricity 101: Demystifying your monthly electric bill

We understand that the breakdown of charges on your electric bill can be confusing—there's a *customer charge*, an *energy charge*, a *transmission charge*, and a *distribution charge*. Then there's that mysterious *Power Cost Adjustment*...

The kilowatt-hour (kWh) charge on your monthly electric bill is made up of three services: **energy** (generation), **transmission**, and **distribution** of electric power. There is also a small monthly customer charge (not related to your usage) and a **Power Cost Adjustment**.

Energy charge

Energy is the electric current generated at power plants. To secure a mix of low-cost, reliable power, BELD contracts with providers in New England and New York for the electricity used in your home or business.

Transmission charge

The cost to move bulk electricity from power plants to local substations makes up the transmission portion of the kWh rate.

Distribution charge

High-voltage current leaves the transmission lines at a substation where it is reduced to a medium voltage. It then travels through distribution lines to neighborhoods, where it passes through another transformer. In the final step, electricity passes through a meter that measures use in kWh units.

Power Cost Adjustment

The least understood item listed—the Power Cost Adjustment (or PCA)—is tied directly to our cost of buying electricity. **Although BELD generates some power at its Potter II generating station, most of the electricity used by BELD customers is purchased through the regional electric system.**

The purchase of power is BELD's largest and most volatile expense, accounting for about 75% of our business costs. When there are short-term increases in our power costs, the PCA allows us to recover our costs so we can pay our bills.

The PCA is made up of two components: energy costs and capacity costs. **Energy costs are the costs of the energy consumed by all of BELD's customers.** This is the piece most affected by changing oil and gas prices in the industry. As these commodities fluctuate in price, so do BELD's energy costs. We use a hedging strategy to protect us against extremely high prices, but we are still dependent on these fuels.

Capacity costs are costs associated with BELD's membership in ISO-New England and the regional electric system in general. BELD is required to pay its share of regional costs—based on our energy consumption—in order to protect the electric system and ensure reliability across New England. These reliability costs are shared by all the members of ISO-New England.

The PCA is analyzed regularly and used to cover our costs—not to create a profit for BELD. We are always looking for ways to reduce our rates in order to pass on more savings to our customers. And we are proactively addressing rising fuel costs by building a new power plant—scheduled for completion in 2009—which will help stabilize future rates.

Warmest wishes for a safe and joyful holiday season from Braintree Electric Light Department & BELD Broadband!

We care about you and your safety—please use holiday lights and decorations wisely...

✓ **Inspect tree lights for cracked or loose sockets or exposed wires.**

✓ **Never use indoor lights outside.**

✓ **Keep paper and tinsel away from hot lights and candles.**

✓ **Don't overload electric circuits.**

✓ **Keep electric cords away from water.**

✓ **Never leave burning candles unattended.**

✓ **Unplug all decorations before leaving the house or going to bed.**

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!!

BELD Broadband Digital Phone has arrived!

The latest phone technology is now available to Braintree residents from BELD Broadband. Voice over broadband is taking the world by storm! **For as little as \$26 a month, you can call anyone, anytime, anywhere in the continental U.S. and Canada.** All the popular features—such as voicemail, caller ID, call waiting and three-way calling—are included.

With BELD Broadband, your calls will travel over Braintree's reliable cable and fiber optic networks. **There are no yearly service contracts and no hidden fees.** Installation is simple—you can either do it yourself or have our technicians do it for you for a fee.

You can keep your existing phone number, add phone or fax lines, change your number and area code and manage your account online. **New subscribers that sign up for digital phone can save as much as 50% over their current monthly phone bill.** As always, customers will receive BELD's renowned customer service and support.

There is no special software required to get phone service from BELD Broadband. Digital phone is being rolled out in a phased approach across town and is not yet available in all areas, so call BELD Customer Service at 781/348-BELD (2353) to find out if it's available in your area.

COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

Continuing Education classes

Braintree Community Continuing Education will hold walk-in registrations for Winter 2007 classes on **Tuesday, January 2, 5:30-8:30 p.m.**, and **Wednesday, January 3, 4-8:30 p.m.** in the Braintree High School cafeteria. Semester begins the week of January 15. For more information, email info@braintreeadulted.com, visit www.braintreeadulted.com, or call 781/848-4000 (ext. 2251).

Kindergarten registration for September 2007

The Braintree School Department announces that kindergarten registration for September 2007 will be held the **week of January 8, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.**, for new residents and those who have not previously informed the schools. **Children must be five years of age by August 31, 2007.** Please contact the school district in which your child resides for registration information:

Flaherty School, Lakeside Drive, 781/380-0180

Highlands School, 144 Wildwood Ave., 781/380-0190

Hollis School, 482 Washington Street, 781/380-0120

Liberty School, 49 Proctor Road, 781/380-0210

Morrison School, 260 Liberty Street, 781/380-0230

Ross School, 20 Hayward Street, 781/380-0240

In addition, if you have a child who will be entering **first grade** in September 2007 and who is **not** currently enrolled in the Braintree Public Schools, please call your school district as listed above or the office of the Superintendent of Schools at 781/380-0130, Ext. 100.

AARP meeting January 16

Braintree AARP Chapter #4042 will hold its next meeting **Tuesday, January 16, 2007.** The meeting will be held at 1:30 p.m. at the D.A.V. Hall, 788 Liberty Street, Braintree. Guest speaker is Arthur Milmore, who will show slides of the old

Paragon Park, including the Nantasket boats and the re-assembly of the original roller coaster at its new home. Call Frank Bocchino at 781/848-4293 for more information.

"Peanuts" recycling

Braintree Parcel Express, 346 Washington Street (Washington and Elm), has agreed to recycle those pesky peanuts that are used for shipping. Drop off a bag during normal business hours—you can call them at 781/849-0233. **Also, the Clean Harbors hazardous waste drop-off facility in East Braintree has closed for the winter months.** For general recycling information, call 781/794-8237.

Community volunteers needed

South Shore Habitat for Humanity volunteers will soon be building a home in Braintree. We need local residents, community leaders and businesses to fundraise, raise awareness and welcome a new family to the area by joining the Braintree Local Partnership Committee. Contact Shannon McNamee at 781/843-9080, ext. 2, or at communitydev@sshhabitat.org.

Italian classes offered

The Italian American Cultural Organization is offering Italian classes—for adults on **Wednesday nights, 6:30-8:30 p.m.**, at the Council on Aging, and for children on **Tuesday afternoons, 4:30-6:30 p.m.**, at Braintree High School. Call Domenic Candelieri at 781/848-9222 for fees and more information.

Lawyer Referral Service

Confused about a legal matter or how to find an attorney? The Bar Association of Norfolk County has a free Lawyer Referral Service—a panel of experienced attorneys providing a non-profit service to the community. Calls are confidential. Call Adrienne Clarke at 617/471-9693.

BELD

www.beld.com
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PAYMENT LOCATIONS

150 Potter Road

Our office is open from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Customer Service is open until 7 p.m. on Thursday.

Drop boxes

Top of Potter Road & Town Hall.

Braintree Cooperative Bank

1010 Washington St.

372 Washington St.

Direct Payment

Call BELD at 781/348-2353.

Online payments

www.beld.com

BROADBAND HELP DESK

Mon-Fri: 8 a.m.-10 p.m.

Sat-Sun: 8 a.m.-8 p.m.

COMMISSION MEETINGS

Public Meetings are usually held monthly. Call 781/348-2353 or check www.beld.com to confirm time and date.

COMMISSIONERS

Thomas Reynolds, Chair
Anthony Agnitti, Vice Chair
James Regan, Secretary

HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

Monday, December 25

Christmas Day

Monday, January 1, 2007

New Year's Day

Monday, January 15, 2007

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day



Here's a great gift idea for the holidays!

Our holiday gift certificates can be used as payment on any BELD or BELD Broadband account and are available for purchase in any amount at our Customer Service office. Call 781/348-BELD (2353) for more information.