



Valley Electric Association, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

1) What are the COVID-19 Symptoms?

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) website states the following for symptoms of COVID-19: Reported illnesses have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness and death for confirmed coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases. Please refer to <https://www.cdc.gov/> for a list of updated symptoms.

2) Will pre-paid meters continue to shut-off automatically when the account balance goes below \$0.00?

Effective March 19th, 2020, we will not be disconnecting pre-paid accounts. Once your balance has reached \$0.00, your account will continue to operate. Please understand that your balance will continue to accrue. We encourage those affected by COVID-19 to please contact us for help with applying for government assistance programs. To provide additional assistance during this difficult time, Valley Electric will monitor balances daily and attempt to contact members to provide solutions to ensure continuity of service.

Description:

*Pre-Paid Metering offers the members an alternative to a normal monthly billing statement. While a **credit reference and deposit are not required**, members must establish a pre-paid metering account with an initial credit of \$50. Instead of receiving a paper bill each month, member energy usage is calculated and billed daily against a **self-managed** credit balance on their account. When the credit balance runs out, the meter automatically disconnects power. In order to restore the service automatically the member needs to have a \$25.00 credit balance on their account. However, Pre-Paid Metering accounts will not be charged disconnect or reconnect fees. Once a credit balance is restored to a Pre-Paid Metering account, the power will be automatically turned back on within minutes.*

3) Are you going to disconnect traditional accounts for non-pay due to the COVID-19 virus?

Effective March 16, 2020, Valley Electric Association will suspend non-pay disconnects and associated late payment penalties for both electric and broadband consumers affected by COVID-19. We will continue to monitor this evolving situation and will reassess as necessary. Any members needing payment assistance, will be asked to call Valley Electric's office at (775) 727-5312.

4) How can I protect myself after using the Valley Electric Kiosks?

Please protect yourself when using the kiosk. Valley Electric Association recommends following the guidelines set forth by the Center for Disease Control (CDC). These guidelines include protecting yourself by washing your hands often; using a hand sanitizer when soap and water are not readily available; and avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands. Please refer to <https://www.cdc.gov/> for more information.

5) Is Valley Electric closed?

Valley Electric Association is taking precautionary measures to ensure the health and safety of our members, consumers and employees. Effective March 16th, 2020, our lobby was closed to the public, however, all other operations continue.

6) If the lobby is closed, how do I make my payments?

Valley Electric Association provides several options for paying your bill. These include:

- Using the SmartHub app on your mobile device
- Using the online bill pay at our website www.vea.coop
- Using our kiosks located in all of our VEA districts as well as Smith's Food & Drug in Pahrump. For a complete listing of kiosk locations, please visit <https://vea.coop/about-us/kiosk-locations/>
- Using our drive through drop box at VEAs main office at 800 East Highway 372 in Pahrump
- Mailing in your payment
- Call VEA at (775) 727-5312

7) How can I apply for service?

You can apply for service at <https://vea.coop/applications/>

8) Has my district meeting been canceled? How do I vote if my district meeting has been canceled?

Planned District meetings have been **postponed**. For those Districts where voting is taking place, the voting process will be extended accordingly and can be done via www.vea.coop. Ballots may also be mailed in or deposited in the payment drop box located at our drive-thru.

9) Has the annual meeting been canceled?

VEA's Annual meeting has been **postponed**, the Bylaw voting process will be extended accordingly.

10) Will I be able to attend VEAs Board of Director meetings?

Based on recommendations by the CDC, meetings should be 10 or less people. As a result board meetings will be closed to the public, but can be streamed by accessing a link located at <https://vea.coop/about-us/board-of-directors/board-meetings/> at the scheduled time.

11) Is the Valley Conference Center available for rental?

All meetings planned at our Valley Conference Center are cancelled indefinitely, including open Board of Director meetings, committee meetings and currently scheduled event rentals.

12) Why can't Broadband Installers come inside my home?

- The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person. ([From CDC website](#))
 - Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
 - Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.
- The health and safety of our members, consumers and employees is of paramount importance to VEA.
- We want to operate out of an abundance of caution and minimize the risk of spreading COVID-19 as much as possible during this unprecedented time.

13) For Broadband (VCA), how can I contact support?

- By visiting our website at valleycom.com under the “Contact Us” tab click on report an issue. This form goes directly to our internet support team.
- Call (775) 727-5312 option 3 for internet/phone related issues or questions. Agents are available Monday-Friday 7am-8pm and Saturday-Sunday 9:30am-8pm.

14) How can I return my Broadband Equipment?

For the interim please mail equipment to:

Valley Electric Association
Attn: Broadband Returns
800 E Highway 372
Pahrump, NV 89048

Mailing the equipment allows our Member/Consumers to have an option to return equipment now vs waiting. We are currently working on a long-term solution for this process.

15) What is the best way to perform a speed test?

The Pure Speed Test- from medium.com (click link for more in depth information)

The objective of this test is to remove as many variables as possible, in order to obtain results that reflect your true connection capacity to your provider.

- i. Disable the WiFi on your router (you will need to be able to login into your router to do this, see manufacturer's instructions.)*
- ii. Disconnect all hardwired devices from the router, such as printers and switches.
- iii. Connect just your computer with a network cable, aka cat5, cat6 or ethernet, to your router's LAN ports.**
- iv. Disable any background activities such as Apple Photos, Dropbox, or Google Drive sync
- v. Head to www.speedtest.net and test your speed 3 times.



** if you can't disable the WiFi on the router, make sure you are logged into it with the network cable, then temporarily change the Network Name (aka SSID) which will cause all wireless devices to disconnect. Don't forget to change that back when you are done testing.*

*** if you do not have a network cable or a wired network connection on your computer, try to make sure that during the tests, the only device that connects to your router is your computer. However, the speed test may reflect your WiFi negotiations speeds, and not your provider, and because many variables impact your WiFi*

connectivity, this can drastically change from test to test. Just walking to another room can lower your speed by 50% or more... so when possible, hard-wire to the router to run this test.