

# New Enterprise Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

3596 Brumbaugh Road  
P.O. Box 75

New Enterprise, PA 16664-0075  
814-766-3221 • 1-800-270-3177

FAX: 814-766-3319

Website: [www.newenterpriserec.com](http://www.newenterpriserec.com)

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**Office Hours**

Monday through Friday  
7 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

**Emergency Outage Number**

814-766-3221

1-800-270-3177

## From the General Manager/CEO



### Doing the 'Electric Shift'

By Mark Morrison

IT'S "ELECTRIC SHIFT" time again. As we have done in the past, we are again asking for your help in keeping power costs as low as possible.

Many of you are familiar with the Electric Shift. But for those of you who aren't, the Electric Shift is easy and, with a little practice, it allows you to use electricity more wisely. During the hot, humid days of summer, electric use tends to run extremely high. This makes the cost of generation to meet this need also high. Our future power costs, in fact, are partially based on how much power we buy on hot, sticky weekdays between the hours of 1 and 6 p.m. This time period is referred to as the "High Five" hours.

How can you help? Here are a few steps you can take to help prevent future power costs from increasing:

- ▶ Set your air conditioners to 78 de-

grees or use fans instead.

- ▶ Close your curtains and blinds to keep things cooler inside your home.
- ▶ Operate washers, dryers, dishwashers, showers, and other major appliances early in the morning or late in the evening.
- ▶ Minimize the number of times you must open your refrigerator or freezer.
- ▶ Cook with an outdoor grill or a microwave oven.
- ▶ Turn off any non-essential lights.
- ▶ Run pool pumps at night.

We need the involvement of many people to control power costs. As we work together, we can make a difference.

So remember from June 1 to Sept. 30, do the Electric Shift from 1 to 6 p.m. on hot, humid days. Your help is greatly appreciated. ☀

### Tip of the month

**Dishwasher efficiency tip: Air dry clean dishes to save energy. If your dishwasher does not have an automatic air-dry switch, turn off the dishwasher after the final rinse and prop the door open slightly so the dishes will dry faster.**

*Source: U.S. Department of Energy*

# Changes to disconnection for nonpayment policy

NEW ENTERPRISE Rural Electric Cooperative's (REC) board and management strive to offer our consumer-members the best service at the lowest possible cost. Each year, thousands of dollars are spent on disconnecting meters that are past due on

**Please contact the office to ensure we have your correct telephone number, cell number or email address.**

their electric bills. And thousands of dollars are lost on accounts disconnected for nonpayment where people move and do not pay their final bill.

Consumer-member accounts are billed a few days after the meters are read. Bills are mailed a day or two after the due date and are due approximately three weeks later. To receive a disconnect notice, your account must be 60 days or greater in arrears.

The disconnect message is printed on your billing statement along with a disconnect notice mailed a week after the statement.

During the three weeks, consumer-members have the chance to call or come to our office to make payment arrangements or pay their full, past-due balance.

We dislike disconnecting a service! Disconnections are inconvenient and expensive for you and for your cooperative. Unfortunately, disconnection of electric meters does happen.

An attempt will be made to contact any account that is scheduled to be disconnected a day or so prior to the disconnect day. This call is a warning that our employees will be out to your location to disconnect. The full, past-due payment or a payment agreement with signatures on file must be in our office before the disconnect date. When paying, only cash, MasterCard or Visa will be accepted.

Accounts will be disconnected for the following reasons:

1. Payment arrangements are not honored.
2. Returned checks that are not made good.
3. Nonpayment of delinquent accounts.

Once our employees come to your

location, it is too late to make payment or an agreement. Disconnection will occur. A door hanger will be placed on your door noting the amount needed to be paid before reconnection and other important information.

If your electric service is disconnected for nonpayment, you will be required to pay:

- ▶ Your total bill;
- ▶ Your kilowatt-hour use from the date of the last billing to the date your meter was disconnected;
- ▶ A disconnect fee of \$75;
- ▶ A reconnect fee of \$75; and

- ▶ An amount needed to bring your security deposit up to the required balance.

All payments must be made with cash, MasterCard or Visa by coming to the office or calling. Our employees will not be collecting money at the door. Payment must be in our office by 2 p.m. for the service to be reconnected the same day. Electric service will be reconnected the next business day for payments that come in after 2 p.m.

We would prefer to work with you to get your account paid in full. Call Brawna at 814-766-3221 or 800-270-3177, extension 4602, as soon as you receive your billing statement. Do not wait until it is too late. ☀

## Co-op Connections Card

**New Enterprise REC consumer-members are encouraged to take advantage of special savings that can be achieved by showing their Co-op Connections Card for discounts at participating local and national businesses.**

**What is the Co-op Connections Card? The Co-op Connections Card is free, and it saves money for consumer-members of rural electric cooperatives. There are 493 cooperatives participating in the program with a total savings to date of \$75 million.**

**This free card may be able to save you up to an average of 46 percent on prescriptions. What about your dental, vision, diabetic supplies, hearing aids, lab testing, MRI or CT scans, or chiropractic visits? Well, the Co-op Connections Card may be able to save you money on these services, too.**

**Details about the discounts offered by participating businesses, both locally and nationally, can be found online at [www.connections.coop](http://www.connections.coop). The site is searchable by ZIP code, so you can locate Co-op Connections Card participating businesses. A mobile app is also available to download for use with smartphones.**

**Co-op Connections Cards are accepted at more than 60,000 national and regional pharmacy chain stores – including CVS, Rite Aid, Wal-Mart, Wegmans, Weis, Walgreens and Target – as well as many local pharmacies.**

**Are you going on a family vacation? This card can save you money at hotels, restaurants, rental cars, theme parks and much more.**

**You can get discounts for flowers, office supplies at Staples, Kids and Teen books at Barnes & Noble, or paint from Sherwin Williams. You can even get printable coupons. There are too many items to mention. So, go to the website and see what you can save today.**



# Safety after the storm, during power outages

SEVERE storms can be devastating to homes, properties and lives. These storms can also take down power lines — creating a dangerous situation for all of us, including our line crews working hard to get your power back on.

How long it takes to get your power restored depends on the extent of the storm's destruction, the number of outages, and the point at which it is safe for our employees to get to the damaged areas. There are many steps in the assessment and restoration process — clearing downed power lines; ensuring public health and safety facilities are operational; checking power stations and transformers; repairing transmission lines, substations, and distribution lines; and getting power restored to consumer-members within the damaged areas.

Contact New Enterprise REC at 814-766-3221 or 800-270-3177, option 3, to report the outage. Use caution if venturing outside after a storm:

- ▶ Just because power lines are damaged does not mean they are dead. Every downed power line is potentially energized and dangerous. Wait for our crews to arrive on the scene



to ensure power has been cut off. Downed power lines, stray wires and debris in contact with them all have the potential to deliver a fatal shock. Stay far away and keep others away from downed power lines.

- ▶ Never enter a flooded basement if electrical outlets are submerged. The water could be energized.
- ▶ Do not turn the power off if you must stand in water to do so. Call New Enterprise REC and have us turn off the power at the meter.
- ▶ Before entering storm-damaged buildings, make sure the electricity and gas are turned off.
- ▶ Do not use water-damaged electric appliances, electronics and other items before having them inspected and properly restored. Electric motors in appliances should be cleaned and reconditioned before use. It may be necessary to replace some appliances and electronics.
- ▶ If you clean up outdoors after a storm, do not use electric equipment in wet conditions.
- ▶ If you are driving and come across a downed power line, stay away and keep others away. Do not drive over it, as snagging the line could pull a pole and other equipment to the ground. Contact us to address the downed power line.
- ▶ If you come in contact with a downed power line, do not leave the car. Wait for our lineworkers to

make sure the power line is de-energized before exiting the car.

During an outage, it is best to turn off electrical appliances and unplug major electronics, including computers and televisions. Power sometimes comes back in surges, which can damage electronics. Your circuits could overload when power returns if all your electrical items are on. Leave one light on to indicate that power is back on. Wait a few minutes and then turn on other appliances and equipment — one at a time.

If you use a standby generator, take proper safety precautions. Always read and follow all manufacturer operating instructions. There should be nothing plugged into the generator when you turn it on. This prevents a surge from damaging your generator and appliances. Operate generators in well-ventilated, outdoor, dry areas. Never attach a temporary generator to a circuit breaker, fuse or outlet; plug items into the generator once it's operating.

Permanent generators should be wired into a house by a qualified electrician and include a transfer switch to prevent feeding electricity back into overhead lines, which can be deadly for lineworkers.

Have a storm kit prepared to help you get through a lengthy outage. Keep the kit in a cool, dry place, and make sure all members of the family know where it is. ⚡

## Safe Electricity<sup>®</sup> Storm Safety Kit

- Drinking water & food
- Blankets, pillows & clothing
- Basic first-aid supplies
- Prescriptions
- Basic toiletries
- Flashlights
- Battery-operated radio
- Battery-operated clock
- Extra supply of batteries
- Phone
- Cash and credit cards
- Emergency numbers
- Important documents (in a waterproof container)
- Toys, books & games
- Baby supplies
- Pet supplies

## The importance of generator safety

Over the years, the portable electric generator has become more and more popular. Generators keep your food cold, help you milk your cows and provide lighting to your home. Generators improve the quality of life during an extended power outage.

For all the good generators do, they can also be deadly. Proper installation is required to prevent injuries or death. A licensed electrician should wire and connect home-use generators. Do not connect the generator directly into your home's electrical system through a receptacle outlet. Before using a portable generator, you must disconnect your home's electric wiring from the power grid. Otherwise, power from the generator can go out over the utility lines, endangering the lives of the lineworkers making the repairs.

Since generators are so popular, the industry is now manufacturing a "whisper generator." These generators make relatively little or no noise. No loud noise while you are trying to sleep; that's great, right? Yes, it is great if your generator is installed correctly.

A few years back, one lineworker from another cooperative almost lost his life at a home that was running an incorrectly installed whisper generator after a storm had knocked the power out. The lineworker and his crew followed every safety procedure. All was deemed safe to proceed with the restoration. When he reached around the utility pole, he came in contact with what was supposed to be a dead transformer and was severely hurt.

The crew soon discovered the homeowner had hooked a portable whisper generator directly into the panel box, which then backfed onto the power lines. Not only was the generator not hooked up properly, there was no sound or other external sign to warn the lineworkers that a generator was running.

Fortunately, this lineworker made a full recovery. However, the accident should never have happened. There are very simple, yet important, guidelines to follow when installing any type of generator.

Below are a few suggestions for making your generator safe:

- ▶ Read and follow all manufacturer operating instructions to properly ground the generator. Be sure you understand them before starting it.
- ▶ Standby generators should have a transfer safety switch installed by a licensed electrician. Portable generators should never be plugged directly into a home outlet or electrical system – use an extension cord to plug appliances into an outlet on the generator.
- ▶ Never operate a generator in a confined area, such as a garage. Generators produce gases, including deadly



carbon monoxide. They require proper ventilation.

- ▶ Generators pose electrical risks, especially when operated in wet conditions. Use a generator only when necessary in wet or moist conditions. Protect the generator by operating it under an open, canopy-like structure on a dry surface where water cannot form puddles or drain under it. Always ensure that your hands are dry before touching the generator.
- ▶ When you refuel the generator, make sure the engine is cool so you can prevent a fire should the tank overflow.
- ▶ There should be nothing plugged into the generator when you turn it on. This prevents a surge from damaging your generator and appliances.
- ▶ Be sure to keep children and pets away from the generator, which could burn them.

Safety is a top priority at New Enterprise REC, for our employees and consumer-members alike.

**Other things to keep in mind: Plug appliances directly into the generator using heavy-duty, outdoor-rated extension cords, but don't overload it. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for maximum load. Shut off the generator before refueling, or a fire could start – and it's a good idea to have a fully charged fire extinguisher nearby, just in case.**