

FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER / CEO

The power of American independence

New Enterprise Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



New Enterprise REC
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

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

EMERGENCY OUTAGE NUMBER

814/766-3221
1-800-270-3177



Rick L. Eichelberger
General Manager & CEO

FIREWORKS and flags. Cookouts and cold drinks. The Fourth of July is a festive day on which we celebrate our nation's independence with family and friends. Typically, this is not a day of quiet reflection. While we spend a lot of energy having fun, if we give any thought about our country's founders and their determined efforts to bring about our nation's independence, it's fleeting.

Independent spirit part of our DNA

However, it is worth reflecting that this uniquely American spirit of independence remains part of our collective DNA nearly 240 years after our independent nation was formed and the Declaration of Independence was crafted. And this sense of independence has served us well. For example, beginning 80 years ago, an independent streak was inspiring groups of farmers across America's countryside to band together to improve their quality of life. Aside from President Franklin Roosevelt's promise of federal aid in the form of low-interest loans and engineering expertise, rural Americans had little help in bringing electricity to their homes. So, they did it themselves by pulling together and working cooperatively — a shining example of American determination and ingenuity.

Nearly every U.S. president since Richard Nixon, who was president during the time of the Arab oil embargo in 1973, has talked about the goal of U.S. energy independence. Today, we are closer to that goal than ever before. We are exporting more gas and importing less foreign fuel than any time in recent memory. American ingenuity in the form of new technology and innovation is opening up more options and spurring greater efficiency across all forms of energy. According to the Energy Information Agency, energy

expenditures as a share of gross domestic product (GDP) are forecast at 6.2 percent in 2015, their lowest level since 2002, reflecting both lower oil prices and ongoing increases in energy efficiency.

Road to energy independence

Consumers have an important role to play on the road to energy independence. They don't have to wait for Democrats and Republicans to agree, or environmentalists and fossil fuel advocates to reach consensus. Consumers can move us toward national energy independence by taking action in simple, practical ways — insulating and caulking around windows, doors and outlets; washing clothes in cold water; replacing air filters; installing a programmable thermostat; and using more energy-efficient appliances and home heating and cooling systems. Efficiency efforts can cut costs for individual households, but the collective benefit to our country is even greater.

If we all work together to achieve increased energy efficiency and reduce our overall energy consumption, we can make even more progress on our road toward energy independence. Use New Enterprise Rural Electric Cooperative as a resource. We can provide energy-saving tips tailored for your unique household needs.

Electric co-ops provide renewable energy resources

Today, nearly 95 percent of the nation's 900-plus electric cooperatives provide electricity produced by renewable sources, all playing a key role in powering rural America while fostering our nation's energy independence.

Advances in technology are transforming how we make and move electricity. Over time, these changes will greatly improve not only the efficiency, but also the reliability, of electric power. So this Fourth of July, as you gaze at the fireworks lighting up the sky, reflect on the spirit of independence integral to our American character. 

Vacation kWh use

Summer is here and so is vacation season. If you are planning to be away this summer, you may think your electric bill will be lower. In reality, when you are away, your meter doesn't stop running.



Ask yourself a few questions before you assume your electric bill should decrease during vacation time.

Was your water heater turned down or off while you were away? Remember, if your electric water heater is left on while you are gone, it will continue to maintain the tank temperature even if you are not using any hot water. Was your refrigerator and/or freezer emptied and turned off? If not, they will continue to maintain their preset temperatures. Were other electrical appliances left plugged in, such as clocks, lights, fans, computers, televisions, stereos, heating and cooling equipment? All of these will use energy while you are away if left plugged in. Did you do laundry when you returned? This will give your electric water heater a workout during the first day or two back home.

To see the amount of electricity you use while on vacation, read your meter the day you leave and then again when you return. This will let you know how much electricity you used while no one was home.

Attention landlords

Be sure when renting your properties out, you have the renter(s) put the account into their name. By putting the account in the renter's name, you as a landlord are not responsible for any unpaid bills.

A credit check is run on any new member opening an account in their name. The credit check determines what deposit will need to be paid. For those with excellent credit, no deposit is required. An average credit rating requires a \$125 deposit. A \$250 security deposit is required for individuals with below-average credit. Should a person have no credit history, a \$125 security deposit is needed.

To get electric service with New Enter-

prise REC, membership papers must be completed and a \$5 membership fee needs to be paid. In addition, a security deposit of the above amount must be paid before an account can be transferred into a new person's name. The account remains in your name and you are responsible for the bill until your renter takes care of the paperwork and fees.

So remember to follow up with your renter to make sure they took care of their obligations before you give them the keys.

CAUTION: Turn those burners off!

You're cooking dinner: the pot of water is boiling, and your favorite pasta is gently rolling. The meat sauce is simmering on the back burner, and your buttered garlic bread is in the oven. What could possibly be better?

Whaaaaapppp! A loud crack fills the air. The lights dim once, twice, and they're out! You look over at your half-cooked meal as you call New Enterprise REC's office and wonder how long it's going to take to get the power back.

After eating your way through a bag of chips and a jar of salsa, you decide it's time to give up and just go to bed. Why not get some extra sleep out of the deal? Unfortunately, you've forgotten something.

As you're dreaming about the dinner you never ate, you start smelling meat sauce. The next thing you know, you hear the loud ring of your smoke detector. What's going on? You run out of

your bedroom and into the kitchen, thinking, "Oh, no, the stove is on fire! How can that be?"

Once the fire is extinguished and panic has subsided, you realize you never turned your burners off when the power went out. When the power came back on, so did the burners.

This is a true story that happened during a power outage. This family not only lost most of their kitchen, but also sustained serious burns. On the bright side, though, their smoke detectors worked and everyone is alive.

While most electric stove/ovens turn themselves off during an outage, not all



do. Whether it's your stove, coffeepot or makeup mirror, you need to turn the item off. If you're not sure the item is off, unplug it or take your flashlight to the circuit panel and turn the circuit off.

This is a gentle reminder to play it safe during an outage. Turn off any appliance that could start a fire. Leaving your bedroom light turned on will let you know when the power is restored so you can double-check your appliances. ⚡

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



By cleaning your air conditioner's air ducts, you can lower your energy consumption by between 5 and 15 percent.

Source: energy.gov

Ways to save money on electric bill

- ▶ **Turn down the thermostat** - Or turn it up, depending on the season. By turning your thermostat just 3 degrees up or down, you can save about \$100 each year. For example, if you normally keep it on 69 during the summer, turn it up to 72. You won't really notice the difference in temperature, but you will notice it on your energy bill.
- ▶ **Check your windows** - Make sure you keep your curtains or window blinds closed on sunny days to keep out the sun and prevent your air conditioner from running.
- ▶ **Check for air leaks** - Leaks around doors and windows can cause your heating/cooling unit to work overtime. Ensure that all windows and doors are properly closed and there are no leaks allowing outdoor air inside.
- ▶ **Change filters regularly** - Keeping your heating and cooling unit properly maintained is essential. Make sure you change your filters regularly to keep the unit from overworking.
- ▶ **Choose appliances wisely** - If you are buying new appliances, make sure you purchase energy-efficient models.
- ▶ **Use smaller appliances** - Larger appliances will naturally use more energy. Simply using the microwave as opposed to the electric oven a couple of times each week or choosing smaller lamps instead of using your overhead lights will help you to save as well.
- ▶ **Turn down the heat** - Turning down your water heater to 120 degrees will help you to save every year.
- ▶ **Insulate** - Make sure you have adequate insulation, not only in your walls, but around your water heater as well.
- ▶ **Choose cold water** - When washing clothes and doing other tasks, choose cold water when you can to help lower energy use.
- ▶ **Turn off the oven** - When baking, turn your oven off about 10 minutes before the cooking time requires and let the heat that is still in the oven finish baking your foods.
- ▶ **Use a pressure cooker** - Pressure cookers are not only convenient, they are efficient. You can cook in less than half the time, and save time and money.
- ▶ **Fill it up** - Always make sure your dishwasher and washing machine are full before you run a load. Washing smaller loads uses energy you could save by just waiting until you have enough for a full load.
- ▶ **Set the right temperature** - Make sure your freezer and refrigerator are set at the right temperatures.
- ▶ **Don't open the door** - Unless you are reaching in for something, never repeatedly open and close the refrigerator. Make sure you know what you are going after before you do open the door so cold air does not escape and cause the fridge to run more than it should.
- ▶ **Placement is important** - Your freezer and/or refrigerator should be placed away from your stove and preferably in an area that does not get direct sunlight.
- ▶ **Check the seals** - Your fridge door should seal airtight. If it does not, you may need to replace the rubber seal that keeps cold air in and warm air out.
- ▶ **Clean the lint trap** - Keeping the lint trap in your dryer clean is not only good fire prevention, it can also help your dryer to run more efficiently.
- ▶ **Use a clothesline** - There is nothing better than freshly dried clothes from a clothesline. If weather permits, hang clothes outside to dry and save the energy that your dryer would use.
- ▶ **Turn the water off** - When shaving or brushing your teeth, don't allow water to run unless you are actually using it for rinsing.
- ▶ **Repair leaky faucets** - Faucets that leak not only waste water, they waste the energy that it takes to heat the water. Make sure your faucets are operating properly without leaks.
- ▶ **Turn off the lights** - Your mother probably told you to turn off the lights when you are leaving a room. This rule still applies. Always turn off lights when leaving a room. During the daytime, leave lighting off and just use natural light to see.
- ▶ **Cook outdoors** - During the summer and any time it's warm enough, use your outdoor grill to cook instead of kitchen appliances. Not only does this save energy, it's tasty.
- ▶ **Check your bill** - You should always check your electric bill to make sure it is accurate. Pay attention to the use reported on your bill and monitor that against your meter to make sure you are not paying for energy you are not using.
- ▶ **Bake at night** - During the warmer months, it is best to bake at night when outdoor temperatures are lower.
- ▶ **Dust** - Keeping lightbulbs dusted will help them to better light your home and keep them more energy efficient. Once each week, take a feather duster to overhead lights and lamps to remove dust.
- ▶ **Use the dishwasher** - OK, so this one is a double benefit. If you have a dishwasher, it is actually more energy efficient to use it than it is to wash dishes by hand. And of course, we won't argue with that.
- ▶ **Close doors** - If you are not using a room, keep the door closed. This helps the heating and air conditioning unit to conserve energy. You can actually shut off vents in those rooms to help lower energy costs and then just open the vents when you plan to use the room.
- ▶ **Use chest-type freezers** - Chest-type freezers tend to use up to 30 percent less energy than upright models, so if you are buying a new freezer, opt for a chest type.
- ▶ **Take a shower** - Showers use up to 50 percent less energy than tub baths. If you must have a soak, limit your baths to once each week and take showers otherwise.

Services offered by New Enterprise REC

AUTO PAY – Auto Pay is a program designed to automatically withdraw your electric payment from your checking or savings account on the 20th of each month. To start this program, a completed form is required along with a voided check. Call or stop by the office to get one of these forms, or you can get the form on our website at www.newenterpriserec.com.

RECURRING CREDIT CARD – The recurring credit card program is very similar to Auto Pay. With this program, the cooperative will charge your monthly bill to your credit card on the 20th of every month. Call or stop by the office to get the required form.

BUDGET BILLING – New Enterprise REC can set up your account on Budget Billing. With this program, the computer looks back at your previous 12 months' use, averages it and rounds it off to the nearest \$10. This procedure is done each month so your account doesn't get too large of a balance due or a credit balance. A signed form is required for this program. The account needs to have a zero balance before we can set it up on the billing. On-time payments are required for the Budget Billing program.

LIFE-SUSTAINING EQUIPMENT – New Enterprise REC keeps a list of consumer-members who require life-sustaining equipment. Each account is coded so we know at a glance if someone in your household has this equipment. Your physician will need to complete a form, which must be updated each year. Being on this list doesn't guarantee you never will be without electricity, but we will do our best to get you back in service as soon as possible.

PENN LINES – Each month, all consumer-members receive a copy of *Penn Lines*. Every issue provides feature stories, tips

about safe and efficient use of electricity and recipes, plus much more. New Enterprise REC's information is located in the middle four pages. This section lets you know what is happening at your co-op.

FAMILY IN NEED – Consumer-members may elect to have their electric bill rounded to the nearest dollar with the extra cents going into the Family in Need Fund. This fund is designed to assist families experiencing a hardship paying their electric bill.

PAYMENT BY PHONE – Members who wish to pay over the phone can call our office between 7 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. and one of our member service representatives can take your payment by check or credit/debit card.

PAYMENT THROUGH THE WEBSITE – Internet users can pay online. Go to www.newenterpriserec.com and click on "Bill Pay." First-time users will need to register. With our new e-bill system, pay your bill and view past bills and/or past account history.

PAYMENT USING THE SMARTHUB APP – Cellphone or tablet users can pay their bill with our SmartHub app. You can get this free app from the Apple Store® (search for New Enterprise Rural) or in the Android® Market (search for SmartHub – not case sensitive but must be one word). If duplicates appear, the correct app is provided by our partner, National Information Solutions Cooperative.

PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS – Should you have trouble paying your monthly bill, call Brawna at extension 4602 to set up payment arrangements. Agreements can be made any time except the day before disconnection or the disconnect date. Don't wait – call as soon as you know you aren't going to be able to pay your bill.

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Thunder and lightning

KABOOM! Watching and listening to a thunderstorm can be exciting, but you wouldn't want to be out in it. All thunderstorms make lightning, and lightning is dangerous. Lightning happens when ice and water particles bump around inside thunder clouds. As they bump into each other, they create an electric charge. When the charge connects with electrical charges on the ground, lightning strikes.

Lightning is most likely to hit tall objects, including trees, mountains and people – anything that stands up from the ground. Thunderstorms can happen at any time of the year, but they happen most often during the spring, summer and fall. They also happen most often in the afternoon and evening. There are more than 1,800 thunderstorms every day on the Earth.

FUN FACTS ABOUT THUNDER, LIGHTNING

- ▶ If you can hear thunder, lightning is nearby.
- ▶ When lightning strikes, it makes a hole in the air called a channel. After the lightning is gone, the hole collapses. The sound you hear when it collapses is thunder.
- ▶ You can hear thunder up to 15 miles away. You can see lightning up 100 miles away.
- ▶ The average temperature of lightning is around 20,000 °C (36,000 °F).
- ▶ The sound of thunder can be anything from a loud crack to a low rumble.
- ▶ Light travels faster than sound, so we see lightning before we hear thunder.
- ▶ A lightning flash is no more than 1 inch wide.
- ▶ What we see as a flash of lightning may actually be three or four different strokes in exactly the same place, one right after another. That's why lightning seems to flicker.
- ▶ The Guinness Book of World Records lists Roy Sullivan of Virginia as the human being struck by lightning the most times: seven. This is one record you don't want to beat!

