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Your Touchstone Energy® Partner



www.harrisonrea.com

Economic challenges of a rural electric provider

Many people choose to live in a rural area for the beautiful scenery, the privacy, the security and the calm serenity that “country living” has to offer. We consider it a privilege to be able to provide power to the rural setting of Harrison, Doddridge, Barbour, Taylor, Upshur, Lewis and Marion counties.

Being a rural service provider presents a unique set of challenges. The mountainous terrain makes it more difficult to build line and restore power. A large portion of our infrastructure is not along the side of the road as in cities and towns. Often lines cannot be built or repaired with the convenience of equipment like bucket trucks. Our linemen will routinely build, patrol and repair lines by physically walking the lines and climbing the poles.

Harrison Rural Electrification’s electric lines are also exposed to more trees and wildlife, therefore creating a larger budget for tree trimming maintenance. HREA spends an average of \$600,000 a year on tree trimming in order to keep electric lines free from vegetation that could make contact with our system and interrupt your electric service.

These challenges are why rural cooperatives were established 75 years ago. Investor-owned utilities such as Appalachian Power (AEP) and Allegheny Power were not able to service rural areas because the cost and lower return on electric sales was not profitable.

On average, investor-owned utilities have between 35 and 42 consumers per mile of electric distribution line. Harrison Rural has a little over 6 members per mile of line. The cost to build and maintain

line is shared by more consumers for investor-owned utilities customers than it is for HREA members. Even though we have significantly less revenue to spread our costs over, our rates still remain competitive when compared to other states.

Another factor influencing electric providers is large industries. The majority of those are found in cities and towns—not rural territory. Investor-owned utilities benefit from the substantial revenue streams generated by sales to large industrial customers.

All of these factors and challenges impact the cost to provide electric service to members of HREA. Even though we face unique challenges, we continue to strive to provide the best customer service and reliability at the most economical price to our members.

We think the benefits of living in the country outweigh the challenges. We hope you think so too!

Manager’s Corner

by
Gary Jackson,
CEO/General
Manager



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Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

If your home is more than 10 years old, it likely needs more insulation. How much depends on a variety of factors, most importantly where you live. For example, insulation for a home in the Northeast will have a higher R-value rating than a home in Southern California. Check out www.simplyinsulate.com to find out more.

Source: Alliance to Save Energy

What are capital credits?

Harrison Rural Electric is a non-profit organization. Therefore, if we have any money left over at year-end after all expenses have been paid, we call this money our “margin.” These margins are distributed to our membership in the way of capital credits. Each member has one or more electric accounts, but only one capital credit account. Margins are allocated according to a member’s kilowatt-hour use. Although these margins are retained to run the company, there are two different ways capital credits are “retired” to our membership, which are explained to the right.

This is just one way your cooperative differs from an investor-owned utility. Instead of paying dividends to stockholders, your cooperative distributes margins to you, our member/owners.

1. A “general” retirement. (This doesn’t happen very often). The board of directors will select specific years to retire, and whatever a member was allocated in those years, he or she would receive either a credit on their electric bill or a check. For example, member #1 was allocated \$10 in 1980, \$11 in 1985 and \$25 in 1990. Member #1 has a total of \$46 in their capital credit account. The board declares that all capital credits allocated in 1980 through 1985 will be retired. Member #1 will receive a credit on his or her electric bill, or will receive a check for \$21. Now member #1 has \$25 remaining in their capital credit account.

2. An “estate” retirement. When both husband and wife have passed away, the executor of their estate can file an application and have whatever capital credits have accumulated in the deceased member’s account retired to their estate to go against final expenses. For example, Mr. and Mrs. Smith have been co-op members for 40 years. From 1960 to 2009, the Smiths have been allocated a total of \$2,650.47. This money accumulated in the Smiths’ capital-credit account. Mr. Smith passed away in 2007, and when Mrs. Smith passed away in 2009, the executor of her estate filled out the proper paper work and, after board approval, a check for \$2,650.47 was issued to Mrs. Smith’s executor.

Gobble your turkey safely this season

Don’t let poor handling and preparation ruin your turkey dinner. By following a few simple tips, your family will be healthy and stuffed this Thanksgiving season.

Fresh turkeys

Allow one pound of turkey per person.

Buy turkey only one to two days before cooking it.

Keep turkey stored in the refrigerator until ready to cook.

Place on a tray or in a pan to catch any juices that may leak.

Do not buy fresh, prestuffed

turkeys. If not handled properly, any harmful bacteria that may be in the stuffing can multiply quickly.

Frozen turkeys

Allow one pound of turkey per person.

Keep frozen until ready to thaw and cook.

Turkeys can be frozen indefinitely, but for best quality cook within one year.

Frozen prestuffed turkeys

If you want a prestuffed turkey, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) recommends buying only frozen prestuffed turkeys that display the USDA or state mark of inspection on the packaging.

These turkeys are safe because they have been processed under controlled conditions. DO NOT THAW before cooking. Cook from the frozen state. Follow package

directions for proper handling and cooking.

Reminders

Be sure to remove giblets from turkey cavity after thawing and cook them separately.

Always wash with soap and water your hands, utensils, the sink and anything else that comes in contact with raw turkey and its juices.

For information on other methods for cooking a turkey, call the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854) or TTY at 1-800-256-7072. You also can visit the website at www.fsis.usda.gov.

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association



Extension cord safety: **Make smart connections**

During the holiday season, families often string together extension cords without a second thought. Unfortunately, not all cords are created equal.

Just because an extension cord can reach an outlet across a room doesn't mean it's the right one for the task at hand. If a tool, appliance or holiday display draws more current than an extension cord can carry, it may cause the cord (and whatever is connected to it) to overheat and start a fire.

Cords come in many lengths and are marked with a size or gauge. The gauge is based on the American Wire Gauge (AWG) System, in which the larger the wire, the smaller the AWG number.

For example, a 12-gauge wire would be larger and power larger-wattage appliances than a 14-gauge wire. A cord, based on its gauge, can power appliances of a certain wattage only at specific distances. As the cord gets longer, the current-carrying capacity of the cord drops.

Using the right cord

for the job is only the first step in using extension cords safely. Follow these tips to ensure safe use and make smart connection decisions:

Look for the Underwriters Laboratories (UL) symbol. The UL mark means that samples of the cord have been tested for safety hazards.

Never use an indoor extension cord outdoors, as it could result in electric shock or trigger a fire. Extension cords that can be used outdoors will be clearly marked "Suitable for Use with Outdoor Appliances."

Extension cords should not be placed underneath rugs or other heavy furniture; tacked in place to a wall or taped down; or used while coiled or bent. Match the length of the cord to your needs.

Store all cords indoors when not in use. Outdoor conditions can deteriorate a cord over time.

Unplug extension cords when not in use. The

cord will continue conducting electricity until unplugged.

On cords with more than one outlet, use the covers provided for unused openings. Children and pets face serious injury if they

chew on unused outlets or stick sharp metal objects into the openings.

Do not use extension cords that are cut or damaged.

Touching even a single exposed strand of wire can result in an electric shock or burn.

Never file or cut the plug blades or grounding pin of an extension cord or appliance to plug it into an old outlet.

As a safety feature, extension cords and most appliances boast polarized plugs (one blade wider than the other). These special plugs are designed to prevent electric shock by properly aligning circuit conductors. If a plug does not fit, have a qualified electrician install a new outlet.

Source: Underwriters Laboratories, Inc.

**Harrison Rural Electric Cooperative
wishes you and your family a
wonderful
Thanksgiving holiday.**

As a reminder, our office will be closed

November 25 & 26 to allow our employees to enjoy the holiday with their families.



Follow safety rules for turkey fryers

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission is issuing safety tips for preventing fires and burns when using turkey fryers. Since 1998, CPSC has reports of more than 100 incidents that involved fires, flames or burns associated with turkey fryers. Here are some of the hazard scenarios:

- House fires associated with turkey fryers leading to injuries and property damage.
- Ignition of oil used with turkey fryers. This often was related to oil reaching excess temperatures or oil contacting the open flame of the fryer.
- Splashing of hot oil, causing burns.

The majority of reported incidents occurred while the oil was being heated prior to adding the turkey. For this reason, it is very important consumers monitor the temperature of the oil closely.

If any smoke at all is noticed coming from a heating pot of oil, the burner should be turned off immediately because the oil is overheated.

There is a risk of injury resulting from splashing due to the cooking of partially frozen meats. Thoroughly thaw and dry ALL meats before cooking in hot oil. One reported burn incident occurred when partially frozen chicken wings were added to hot oil in a turkey fryer.

CPSC staff is working with industry and voluntary standards organizations to improve the safety standard for turkey fryers.

For safest operation, CPSC staff recommends that consumers follow these guidelines as they prepare to use a turkey fryer:

- Make sure there is at least two feet of space between the liquid propane tank and fryer burner.
- Place the liquid propane gas tank and fryer so that any wind blows the heat of the fryer away from the gas tank.
- Center the pot over the burner on the cooker.
- Completely thaw (USDA says 24 hours for every four to five pounds) and dry turkey before cooking. Partially frozen and/or wet turkeys can produce excessive hot oil splatter when added to the oil.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions to determine the proper amount of oil to add. If those are not available:
- Place turkey in pot
- Fill with water until the turkey is covered by about 1/2 inch of water
- Remove and dry turkey
- Mark water level. Dump water, dry the pot, and fill with oil to the marked level.

Proper insulation a simple way to save

One of the simplest ways to reduce your home's heating and cooling costs — and improve comfort — involves installing proper insulation. Doing so provides resistance to heat flow. The more heat flow resistance your in-

sulation provides, the lower your heating and cooling costs.

Heat flows naturally from a warmer to a cooler space. In winter, heat moves directly from heated living spaces to adjacent unheated attics, garages, basements and even outdoors. It can also travel indirectly through interior ceilings, walls and floors — wherever there is a difference in temperature.

During the summer cooling season, the reverse takes place. Heat flows from the outdoors to the interior of a house.

To maintain comfort, heat lost in the winter must be replaced by your heating system. In summer, heat gained must be removed by your cooling system. Proper insulation, though, decreases heat flow.

Heat flow resistance is measured in terms of its R-value. The higher the R-value, the greater

the insulation's effectiveness.

When calculating the R-value of a multilayered installation, add R-values of individual layers. Installing more insulation in your home increases the R-value.

Insulation effectiveness also depends on how and where it's installed. For example, insulation that gets compressed will not provide its full rated R-value. The overall R-value of a wall or ceiling will be somewhat different from the R-value of the insulation because some heat flows around the insulation through studs and joists. Therefore, it's important to properly install your insulation to achieve the maximum R-value.

For more information, visit www.eere.energy.gov

Source: U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

