



# Harrison Rural Electrification Association, Inc.

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## HREA transitions from summer to fall

THE FALL SEASON is rapidly approaching, and if you venture out into the woods, you will see our abundant wildlife busy preparing for the potential issues winter will bring. Your cooperative is no different.

After what has been a hot, stormy summer, we need to ensure that we have adequately restocked our material warehouse, completed preventive maintenance on equipment and vehicles, and cleared as much of our planned summer work as possible. It is an ongoing cycle that can't be taken lightly. While nobody wants to get caught out in the cold unprepared, we must use common sense in order to avoid overspending. It is a delicate balance where we never really know how e did until we hit the middle of spring next year.

This year's summer heat seemed unrelenting; maybe it seems worse because of my age,

and the storms, especially the wind, seemed extra violent. The microburst that hit the Kincheloe and Rockford areas did significant damage to members' personal property and cooperative infrastructure. We had more broken poles from this event than we did from the 2012 derecho. One member reiterated that the wind hit with such force that it bent — not laid over, but bent — the metal fence posts in and around his garden.

A couple of weeks later, another wind storm passed through the Dola area, leaving quite a mess in its wake. The weird part was that folks living just over the ridge did not get enough rain or wind to even realize how severely their neighbors were hit.

Finally, while not directly affecting our service area, the historic floods in the southeastern portion of our state were devastating to those impacted. Christy Foster, an HREA lineman, was on vacation the week following that storm, but he took the time to organize a relief effort, and with the help and support of his fellow employees, was able to deliver two trailer-loads of water and other supplies to the Lewisburg area that Wednesday. We commend all of our employees for their generosity and for showing the personal moral character we have come to expect from them.

We wish that same level of

### Manager's Corner

by Terry Stout,  
CEO/General Manager



character carried over to our transmission provider. In the middle of July, they gave us about a six-day notice that they intended to de-energize the Chiefton Substation early on a Monday morning. We scrambled to get postcard notifications out to the affected members so they could prepare. Due to some communications and other issues on the transmission provider's scheduling, the outage started later in the morning, when the heat was already starting to build. The very next day, they gave us about a half-hour notice that they had been ordered to reverse the previous day's changes by the Regional Transmission Organization (RTO), so they again in the heat of the day de-energized the substation and completed their work. Since all non-emergency transmission outages have to be scheduled and approved by the RTO, it seems they may have got the cart before the horse on Monday.

Eventually, they communicated that they were moving the outages to this month, but supplied Monday morning and Friday evenings on three successive weeks as their target dates. When advised that their schedule would impact two

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#### Office Hours

7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday

# Protect electronics from storms

BY LLOYD MASON

All the technology in the world today cannot stop a storm. The weather will do what it does, and there is precious little that can be done about it. Fortunately, technology flourishes in an environment where it is needed most.

We are all familiar with losing power now and then for any number of reasons. Squirrels, birds, and rodents, snow, ice, and wind can take down a tree right onto our lines. So when the unforeseen happens, we all must look to our own preparedness.

One of the ways to avoid the “loss-of-power blues” is to buy a generator. But generators can be expensive, are dangerous if not operated properly, and are not a good solution for renters. When backup generation is unavailable, there is another device called an uninterruptible power supply, or UPS.

This device looks like a really big power strip with batteries built into it. When the power goes out, the UPS stays on until its internal battery is exhausted. In HREA’s offices, I use UPS’s at every workstation. Your local equipment dealer will have them, as most retailers have caught up with this trend.

The UPS will help extend the life of your computer as well. Many people in rural areas are living in homes built long before computers arrived, and the UPS acts as a stabilizer for your wall socket. Anytime your power fluctuates, the built-in battery will take over to provide power to your computer.

The bigger the UPS system, the longer the batteries in it will last. While the UPS is plugged into the wall, it will automatically refill its batteries, so it will be at full charge whenever it is needed.

Perhaps most important, a UPS system can protect anything that plugs into a wall. And aside from protecting your expensive electronics, this solution carries a modest price tag and is easy to install.

No matter where you live, in the country or the city, a UPS system should be part of the plan for when the lights go out.

**LLOYD MASON** is the manager of information technology at Harrison Rural Electric Association. He writes monthly on technology issues affecting our cooperative and members.

## From summer to fall


schools and potentially Friday evening athletic events, they revised their schedule to two successive weeks, with the outages occurring on Saturday mornings and Wednesday evenings. Assuming that they attain proper authorization from the RTO, we will be sending out postcards with the revised dates to those affected. Having once worked for large investor-owned companies, I am glad to be free of

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that “it is easier to ask for forgiveness than it is to ask for permission” mentality.

Lastly, we have put a lot of effort in refining our material inventory to try to ensure that we have what we need and don’t waste dollars on what isn’t needed. That said, it is extremely difficult to accurately forecast what we are actually going to need based on past experience and future weather predictions. Add in that delivery times and costs can significantly vary among approved vendors, and you can see what makes this task difficult. We do not make any frivolous expenditures; every dime spent must be for improving reliability, safety, efficiency, and effectiveness or improving our financial stability. Material inventory hits on all of those, planes which is why we rightfully are and have spent so much time and effort into trying to get it right. We never forget that the money we spend is the memberships’ money, not some unknown Wall Street investor’s, who’s looking strictly for a financial return on his or her investment. As a cooperative, the HREA membership is our investment.

Get out and enjoy the last days of summer, and don’t miss a chance to get out and just watch our wildlife prepare for the upcoming winter. We can all learn a thing or two from our animal friends. ☺



If you see these HREA employees this month, be sure to wish them a very happy birthday!

<b>Richard Crouser</b>	<b>Sept. 1</b>
<b>Rachel Rollins</b>	<b>Sept. 15</b>
<b>Missie Stephenson</b>	<b>Sept. 16</b>
<b>Chris Davisson</b>	<b>Sept. 29</b>
<b>Lloyd Mason</b>	<b>Sept. 29</b>

# Share electrical safety lessons

with your kids

BY MEGHAAN EVANS

We all know electricity plays a major role in our everyday lives, and it is a powerful resource that should be respected. Unfortunately, our children often don't understand the dangers of electricity. At HREA, we encourage you to share electrical safety tips and lessons with your little ones as often as possible. We also understand their attention spans run short, so here are a few creative ways to get them involved.

Depending on the age of your children, consider designating an "electronics deputy." The deputy should be responsible for pointing out electronics in your home that are not in use and keeping appliances safe from liquids. Reward your deputy for pointing out overloaded outlets or other potentially dangerous situations.

Emphasize the importance of fire prevention with your children, and create a family fire drill plan as an extra precaution. Incentivize your children by rewarding those who follow the plan and make it safely out of the home during a practice drill.

While it is fun and engaging to turn safety into a game, it's important to ensure your children understand the risks they face if they don't practice

electrical safety.

One of the most important safety tips you can give your kids is to avoid any downed or low-hanging power lines. In fact, it is best to avoid power lines, transformers, and substations in general. A downed power line can still be energized, and it can also energize other objects, including fences and trees. If your children encounter a downed power line, ask them to tell you or another adult to call HREA.

Here are a few other safety tips to share with your kids:

- Never put metal objects in outlets or appliances.
- Do not overcrowd electrical outlets.
- Never mix water and electricity.

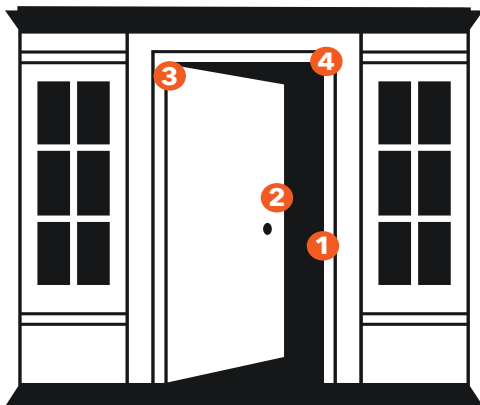
No matter how you choose to get your kids interested in staying safe around electricity, HREA is here to help.

**MEGHAAN EVANS** writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

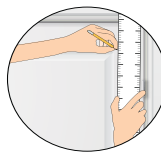
## WEATHER STRIPPING DOORS

Capturing Energy Savings by Sealing Air Leaks

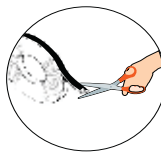
Save energy and seal air leaks by weather stripping exterior doors. How do you know if you need to weather strip? If you can see any amount of light between the door frame and the floor, weather stripping should be applied to eliminate energy waste. This DIY energy-saving project is relatively easy and inexpensive depending on the type of materials selected. The most common weather stripping material is self-adhesive foam strips, although rubber, vinyl, metal, or a combination of materials may also be used.



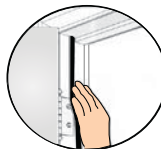
**1 CLEANING SURFACES** - Clean the door and door jamb to be weather stripped. For best results, weather stripping should be applied to clean, dry surfaces above 20°F.



**2 MEASURING DOOR & DOOR JAMBS** - To ensure greater accuracy, measure your space twice before cutting the material. It is best to plan for one continuous strip for each side of the door and door jamb.



**3 CUTTING FOAM** - Cut long pieces of self-adhesive weather stripping material (foam, vinyl, etc.) for each side of the door jamb and door.



**4 APPLYING WEATHER STRIPPING** - Peel back the self-adhesive foam. Apply one continuous strip of material snugly along each side. Make sure the weather stripping meets tightly at the corners and is pressed firmly onto the door and door jamb. The material should compress tightly between the door and door jamb, without making it difficult to shut.

SOURCE: Department of Energy

# Overhead vs. underground power lines: What's the difference?

BY TOM TATE

THERE ARE TWO METHODS of installing the power lines that carry electricity to your home: overhead and underground. HREA members sometimes ask why we use one versus the other, or why all power lines are not installed using the underground construction method. These are great questions, and the answer is that each method has its place.

Overhead line construction starts with the setting of utility poles. Poles can be set in nearly any type of terrain, even rocky ones. In the case of heavy rock, special equipment is used to auger out the hole. If placement occurs in boggy or wet terrain, many techniques are available to set poles securely. Once the poles are in place, wires can be strung and then equipment — like transformers, fuses, and reclosers — is installed. Power can then flow.

Underground line construction requires digging a trench that is deep enough to keep the lines well away from surface activities. Where the terrain is extremely rocky, underground lines may not be an option. Next, wires are laid in the trench directly or placed in conduits for protection. The trench is filled in, and the surface is restored to its original condition. Pad-mount transformers and additional equipment are installed as needed. Then the system is ready to deliver electricity.

Let's take a look at some the advantages and disadvantages of each construction method.

## Overhead construction: pros

- Lower cost; quicker construction; easier to spot damage and faults; less expensive to repair and upgrade; can be built anywhere; any voltage can be placed overhead

## Overhead construction: cons

- Susceptible to wind, ice, and snow; more vulnerable to damage from trees and vegetation, which requires right-of-way trimming; vulnerable to blinks when animals and branches contact lines; susceptible to damage from vehicle collisions; less attractive

## Underground construction: pros

- Not vulnerable to damage from tree branches; no right-of-way trimming required; less susceptible to damage from vehicle collisions; not impacted by wind, ice, and snow; less vulnerable to blinks when animals and branches contact lines

## Underground construction: cons

- More expensive to build; susceptible to flooding; difficult to locate faults; expensive to repair; fed by overhead lines at some point, making the lines vulnerable to outages and interruptions; limitations on voltages that can be buried underground; can be vulnerable to dig-ins

Determining whether power lines should be overhead or underground boils down to what is best for the situation. Underground lines might be ideal in situations where there is a desire to keep the poles and wires out of sight, such as a residential neighborhood, park, or historical area.

Overhead systems work well when appearance is not a major concern. Examples include extremely long line distances across country, where the voltages are higher than the limitations set for underground lines.

The ultimate mix of underground and overhead construction used by HREA provides you, our members, with the highest possible quality of service at the lowest possible price. Cost, appearance, reliability, maintenance, and future upgrades will drive which is the better approach. ☞

**TOM TATE** is a nonprofit membership organization providing consumer safety and energy efficiency materials to more than 400 co-ops.

