



# Harrison Rural Electrification Association, Inc.

RR 6, Box 502

Clarksburg, WV 26301-0502

**304-624-6365**

Your Touchstone Energy® Partners 

www.harrisonrea.com

## Safety tips for living with electricity

Electricity has become an integral part of our everyday lives, and we tend to lose sight of its potential dangers; consequently, electricity can be a dangerous tool if used irresponsibly. Public awareness can be one key to preventing electrical fires, shock injuries and fatal electrocution. I'd like to share with you some life-saving precautions that may save you or a family member from experiencing the negative aspects of electricity.

### GFCIs (GROUND-FAULT CIRCUIT INTERRUPTERS)

These devices can de-energize a circuit when they detect ground faults or current leakage. A person who becomes part of a path for leakage current will be severely shocked or electrocuted if a GFCI is not in use. They are especially useful when using equipment outdoors or near water, and

specifically needed in kitchens, bathrooms, basements or garages. They typically are said to protect people between the ages of one to eighty-one.

### CALL BEFORE YOU DIG

For homeowners, excavating in your yard can pose a potential shock risk. Digging into an underground electric line can cause power outages and/or personal injury from shock or electrocution. Therefore, whether you are grading, installing sprinklers or planting a tree, HREA encourages you to make a call before digging.

### DOWNED POWER LINES

If you come upon an overhead power line that is low or lying on the ground, always assume that anyone who touches it, or comes near it, will be killed. Unfortunately, downed electric lines look harmless. They rarely cause sparks, buzz or warn you of their dangerous condition. Always stay a good distance away and be sure to call the qualified individuals at HREA to handle the problem.

### ELECTRICITY AND WATER

Water and electricity is a poor recipe that can produce hazardous results. The biggest precaution for mixing the two is around swimming pools. The National Electric Code requires that overhead electric lines cross no closer than 10 feet from the inner wall of the pool area. If you have a condition such as this, please call HREA for help in relocating the line, there-

### Manager's Corner

By  
Gary Jackson,  
CEO/General  
Manager



of reeliminating this hazardous condition.

### KITE FLYING

Never fly kites with wire or wet string, even when the weather is fair. Not only is there danger from overhead power lines, but static electricity can build up enough on the kite string to be dangerous, too.

### LADDER SAFETY

Keep all ladders and other tools in the SAFE ZONE, at least 10 feet from any power lines. Don't count on a wooden ladder to protect you; wood will conduct electricity as will wet, dirty and defective ladders of any kind. Fiberglass ladders are best, but even they are no guarantee of safety.

### ELECTRIC GENERATORS

Several hazardous conditions exist when using electric generators. I'll name just a few. Hooking a portable generator directly to your household wiring can be deadly to you and others. A generator that is directly connected to your home's wiring system can "backfeed" onto the power lines connected to your home. Utility transformers can then "step-up", or increase, this backfeed to thousands of volts — enough to kill a  
**(Continued on page 27)**

### Board of Directors

James Stuart, Dist. 4 .....President  
Michael Cross, Dist. 7 .....Vice President  
James McMurtry, Dist. 6 .....Secy.-Treas.  
C.B. Sharp .....Dist. 1  
Greg Robertson .....Dist. 2  
Glenn Cox, Jr. ....Dist. 3  
Ron Watson .....Dist. 5

Gary L. Jackson, General Manager  
Terry Stout .....Office Manager  
Alan Cox .....Operations Manager  
Richard L. Fox .....Staking Engineer  
Nada McNemar .....Editor

Office Hours  
7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Mon. - Fri.



## Employee spotlight

by APRIL GREATHOUSE, co-editor

Our employee spotlight this month is on Nada McNemar. Nada began working for Harrison Rural Electric in December 1990. She started as the assistant bookkeeper, and that is where she dedicates her time after 16 years. She recently took on the job as editor of our monthly *Country Living* local pages. One of her favorite subjects in college was English, so therefore this new task is just up her alley. Editing is very challenging for her. For years, the office staff has come to her for editing letters and articles.

She graduated from Fairmont State College, *summa cum laude*, with a bachelor of science degree in business administration. She was married to the late Bill McNemar for 23 years. Nada has one daughter, Tammy Stutler, and two grandchildren, 14-year-old JW Stutler and 7-year-old Kylee Gain.

Nada actively participates in her grandchildren's extracurricular activities. She also loves animals. She has two dogs, Murphy and Daphne, that she often plays with in her spare time. She also enjoys bird watching from her back porch. She regularly attends Summit Park Baptist Church, where she often participates in various fundraising

activities.

Nada always wanted to learn how to crochet, so her mom taught her how. She has started on an afghan pattern and wants very much to complete it someday, just so she can say she did it. (You go, girl!)

Nada is a very compassionate and caring person. To those of you whom she calls friends, you are very special people. Nada is dedicated to her work and is a very valued employee. We are fortunate to have someone with her skill and knowledge working with us and for you.



Picture taken at the 2006 Annual Meeting shows Nada with some of her co-workers; (from left) Billing Clerk Missie Stephenson, Nada, Office Manager Terry Stout, Bookkeeper Debbie Yerkey and Cashier Receptionist April Greathouse.

## The 'dog days' of summer

Have you ever wondered where the expression "dog days" originated? According to the *Columbia Encyclopedia*, dog days are the sultriest period of summer, from about July 3 to Aug. 11. Webster defines "dog days" as "1: the period between early July and early September when the hot, sultry weather of summer usually occurs in the Northern Hemisphere. 2: a period of stagnation or inactivity." However, these definitions still do not answer the question, "Why are these days referred to as 'dog days'?"

Information provided by *wilstar.com* states that in ancient times different groups of peoples in different parts of the world drew images of the sky by "connecting the dots" of the stars. These images depended upon the culture. The Chinese saw things differently than Native Americans, who saw different pictures than Europeans. These star pictures are what we now call constellations, and the constellations that are now

mapped out in the sky come from our European ancestors. They saw images of bears, (Ursa Major and Ursa Minor); twins, (Gemini); a bull, (Taurus); and many others, including dogs, (Canis Major and Canis Minor).

The brightest of the stars in Canis Major (the big dog) is Sirius. In fact, Sirius is the brightest star in the summer sky. It is so bright that ancient Romans thought that the Earth received heat from it, and since Sirius rises and sets with the sun in the summer, ancients believed that its heat added to the heat of the sun, creating a stretch of hot, sultry weather. They named this period of time "dog days" after the Dog Star, Sirius.

Although dog days certainly are the warmest part of summer, the heat is not due to the added radiation from a far-away star. The heat of summer is a direct result of the Earth's tilt.

# Fourth of July cookout

## 4TH OF JULY CAKE

It's time to fire up the old grill for the traditional 4th of July cookout, and what meal would be complete without dessert? In keeping with the spirit of the day, the following is a simple cake recipe that is colorful and patriotic in its display. (It also tastes pretty good.)

**CAKE**  
3/4 cup butter  
1 2/3 cup sugar  
3 eggs  
1 tsp. vanilla  
2 cups flour  
2/3 cup cocoa  
1 1/4 tsp. baking soda  
1/4 tsp. baking powder  
1 tsp. salt  
1 1/3 cup water

**BUTTERCREAM FROSTING**  
3 cups powdered sugar  
1/3 cup butter, softened  
2 Tbsp milk  
1 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract

**TOPPING**  
1/2 pint blueberries  
1 qt. small evenly-sized strawberries

In large bowl, combine butter, sugar, eggs and vanilla: beat on high speed for 3 minutes. Stir together flour, cocoa, baking soda, baking powder and salt. Add alternately with water to butter mixture. Mix just until combined. Don't overmix. Pour into a greased and floured 13x9x2 baking pan. Bake at 350° for about 30 minutes or until pick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool for about 15 min. then remove from pan, cool completely on wire rack. Place cake on cardboard that's been covered with foil. Frost with buttercream frosting.

In large bowl combine sugar and butter. Add milk and vanilla, beat to spreading consistency. Frost cake with frosting and top with fruit.

Arrange blueberries in upper left corner of cake, covering about 1/4 of the cake. Arrange strawberries in rows to create the red stripes.

## What do the 4th of July and electric Cooperatives have in common?

When Benjamin Franklin signed the Declaration of Independence, he is credited with saying, "We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately."

No wonder Franklin also was the founder of the first successful cooperative formed in the United States. He organized the Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insurance of Houses from Loss by Fire in 1752.

The principles behind the Declaration of Independence that form the basis of American democracy also are the beliefs that form the basis of cooperatives.

A cooperative is owned and democratically controlled by the people who use its services. Each consumer-owner has one vote regardless of their equity in the company; that is, wealthy members can't buy more control, and everyone has an equal say.

This is in contrast to investor-owned businesses where only shareholders have a vote in how the

business is run; and even among shareholders, some have more votes than others depending on their shares.

The Declaration of Independence also declared the equality of rights of its citizens and that people had the right to organize to secure their futures when their rights were infringed upon.

At the time the Declaration was written, democracy was a pretty untested idea — but the founders of our country were determined to make it work.

So when you celebrate the 4th of July with your families and friends this year, think about those principles that inspired our Founding Fathers. They also inspired the founders of rural electric Cooperatives, who were determined to provide reliable, affordable power to secure the futures of their rural communities.

### BIRTHDAY GREETINGS!

July birthdays include Lineman Bill Jack Curran, Assistant Bookkeeper Nada McNemar, Office Manager Terry Stout and summer helper Zach Davis. Bill has worked for your Cooperative for 20 years, Nada has been with HREA for 16 years, Terry started as manager of office services four years ago and this is Zach's second summer working parttime for the Cooperative. Best wishes go out to July's birthday bunch.



### Safety tips (—continued from page 25)

utility lineman working on the outage. Also, never use your generator in an enclosed area where hazardous carbon monoxide fumes can deal you disastrous results. Finally, do not store fuel indoors or try to refuel a generator while it is running.

# Hot summer weather can be very dangerous!

Not only do we often experience excessively hot temperatures in the summer, but we also have thunderstorms to contend with, and they can be very dangerous.

Thunderstorms are relatively small compared to other types of storms. The average for a thunderstorm is about 30 miles wide and usually lasts about 30 minutes. Despite their size, however, thunderstorms are more deadly than tornadoes. All thunderstorms produce lightning, which kills an average of more than 90 people a year. They also produce heavy rain that leads to flash flooding, which kills approximately 140 people every year. About 100,000 thunderstorms occur each year, but only 10 percent are classified as severe.

Most deaths by lightning happen outside, but you can be injured from lightning indoors, also. Taking baths or showers, standing near a window or open door or talking on the phone are not activities you should be engaged in while it is storming. The air near a lightning strike is heated to 50,000°F hotter than the surface of the sun. The reason a tree splits after being struck is not from the force of the bolt, it's because the sap inside begins to boil.

Lightning often strikes areas outside the heavy rainfall and can occur as far away as 10 miles from the actual rain. Many people also believe that "heat lightning" after a very hot summer day poses no threat, but in reality it is lightning from a storm that is too far away for the thunder to be heard. To estimate the distance in miles between you and the lightning flash, count the seconds between the lightning and thunder and divide by five.

If you get caught in an open field during a thunderstorm, find a low spot away from trees, fences and poles or take shelter under shorter trees. If you have no shelter, make yourself a small target by squatting low to the ground on the balls of your feet to minimize contact with the ground. Place your hands on your knees with your head between them when your skin tingles or your hair stands on end. If you are on a tractor or other vehicle during an electrical storm, stay put. Vehicles provide better protection than lying exposed in open fields.

Flash flooding can quickly result in fatalities

when preventive actions are not taken. When a storm occurs at night, warnings may not reach those people who need to evacuate low-lying areas. Avoid using low-water bridges or roads that may be soft and could wash out. Many deaths occur when people are trapped in vehicles. Never drive into flood waters, even if you think they are not deep.

Excessive heat can kill, also. An average of almost 200 people each year are affected by the demands of summer heat. Heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat strokes are real risks. The highest temperature ever recorded in the United States was in Death Valley, CA —134°F.

Heat disorders occur when the body is unable to cool down by sweating, or replace fluids (or salt) lost through perspiration. Heat stroke is the most serious condition that requires emergency medical treatment, and it can be fatal. The severity of heat disorders increases with age and physical activity. Persons with weight or alcohol problems are more susceptible to heat. Exposure to full sunlight and humid conditions add to how hot it really feels, and strong, hot, dry winds increase the risk of developing a heat disorder. The daily Heat Index from the National Weather Service can provide information about air temperatures and relative humidity. A National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) radio provides accurate and current weather information specific to your area. Some NOAA radios have a feature that automatically sounds a tone when a watch or warning is issued in your area.

When excessive heat is occurring, reschedule strenuous activity to the coolest time of the day. Wear light-colored clothing that reflects heat. Drink plenty of water before you even feel thirsty. Wear a wide-brimmed hat to shield your face and neck from the sun, and always use sunscreen. Take frequent breaks in the shade or a long break in an air-conditioned room. Guard against drastic changes over long periods of time by keeping the air conditioner at a moderate, rather than chilly, setting. (This also will help lower your electric bill).

For more information about severe weather, visit Safe Farm on the Web or contact the American Red Cross.