Harrison Rural Electrification Association, Inc.

RR 6, Box 502 Clarksburg, WV 26301-0502

304-624-6365

Your Touchstone Energy® Partners 💉



www.harrisonrea.com

Smart solutions needed

Spring is not far off, and the sounds of summer are beginning to appear, but will this new beginning bring with it a change for a brighter tomorrow?

Our new administration in Washington is tackling the concerns of a faltering financial system, and many of us are concerned as to when things will return to some normalcy. While all of us are aware that changes are imminent all through our lives, we all have to realize that the economic crisis affecting us today will remain a major focus for all of us through the coming years.

The new administration also promises an increased focus on global climate change, and more importantly, the potential impact it will have on affordable electricity. It is crucial that any energy policy discussed in Washington comes with a price tag that won't

Board of Directors

Michael Cross, Dist. 7President
Greg Robertson, Dist. 2Vice President
Darrell Powell, Dist. 6SecyTreas.
C.B. SharpDist. 1
Glenn Cox, JrDist. 3
James Stuart Dist. 4
Ron WatsonDist. 5

Gary L. Jackson, General Manager
Terry StoutOffice Manager
Alan CoxOperations Manager
Richard L. FoxStaking Engineer
Nada McNemarEditor

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

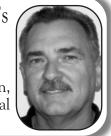
leave consumers in the dark.

Through the nationwide grass-roots awareness campaign called *Our Energy, Our Future*, co-op consumers have contacted their elected officials with three critical energy policy questions focused on capacity, technology and affordability. With a new president and a new Congress, electric cooperatives will need to continue pressing for answers. These answers won't be clear-cut.

Although electricity use across the United States is steadily climbing, and the relatively high costs for construction materials and the uncertainties of climate change have placed strict limits on the future of carbon dioxide emitted by newly planned coalfired power plants, these potential changes already have stalled development of new base load generation — efficient stations that provide dependable and affordable electric power year round.

So here's the important ques-

Manager's
Corner
By
Gary Jackson,
CEO/General
Manager



tion: how can we keep power flowing and electric bills affordable? There's simply no single answer and electric co-ops know from experience that it will take a variety of new generation resources and technologies to ensure reliable and affordable electricity in the coming years. We must continue to research into renewable energy, invest in clean coal technology, nuclear power, an updated transmission grid and improvements in energy efficiency across the board.

Please visit www.ourenergy.coop today. Make your voice heard and help guide policymakers toward a smart and affordable energy future.



Check your water heater thermostat. Many manufacturers set thermostats to 140° F, although most households only need a setting of 120° F. Each 10 degree drop in water temperature can save you between 3 percent and 5 percent in energy costs.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

Co-ops and Congress:

Working together for our future

America has an energy crisis too big to ignore. Experts warn that unless we make more electricity available soon, some regions of the country may face power shortages within the next *two years*. And because of a number of economic and political factors, electric costs have climbed 40 percent since 2002 and are projected to go even higher.

We need an answer right now to keep electric bills affordable.

During the past year, consumers like you have joined the "Our Energy, Our Future"™ grassroots awareness campaign to educate elected officials on the need to craft energy policies that will support a diverse mix of power generation while keeping energy affordable. More than 1.56 million messages have been sent to Congress through the campaign,

asking three simple questions:

- How will Congress help us meet the rising future demand for electricity?
- How will Congress support the development of technology needed to reduce carbon dioxide emissions?
- How will Congress make sure electricity remains affordable?

Today we're continuing our efforts with one key

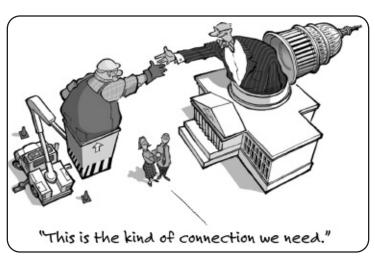
question: Is Congress willing to work with electric cooperatives like Harrison REA to ensure we have reliable power at a price our consumers can afford? It's a simple question, one that can be answered with a resounding 'Yes!' or 'No.' The answer is critical to our future.

Ask your U.S. representative and senators if they will work with electric cooperatives to develop policies that will keep electricity affordable. Co-ops were

created to make safe, reliable and affordable electricity available for all Americans. We take our role seriously, and have resources in place to help law-makers find ways to address our nation's energy crisis without causing costs to rise beyond your means. We can find the right solution together.

Let Congress know where you stand in

this critical debate. We thank those of you who already have started a dialogue with your elected officials through the campaign, and ask that you keep that conversation going. Visit www.ourenergy.coop today, and tell your family and friends to do the same. We'll all be impacted by future energy policy changes; now is the time to work together and take a stand for affordability. We simply can't afford not to.



Unplug those chargers!

The following article was taken from the official Web site of California Senator Barbara Boxer:

Senator Boxer says, "TAKE A STEP: UNPLUG IT". Ever notice that your cell phone charger stays warm even when you are not using it? It stays warm because it continues to use electricity any time it is plugged in. Take a step to improve the environment by unplugging your cell phone charger when your phone is charged. Most modern cell phones recharge in a short amount of time. This means that, if you leave your charger plugged in all the time, you may be wasting more than 95 percent of the electricity it uses.

Many other appliances use electricity even when

turned off. It is estimated that for most households, about 5 percent of their energy consumption is spent on machines that are turned off but that are still consuming energy, emitting about 18 million tons of carbon into the atmosphere every year. It also can save you money on your electric bill.

It could be time for an entire household energy audit. If you are not using the spare clock in the guest room, unplug it. If you only use the refrigerator in the garage three times a year, unplug it. If you have a tool recharger in the garage that you use only occasionally, unplug it. All of these can be energy hogs, costing you money and adding to global warming.

CFL light bulbs will save you money

Several months ago, HREA decided to give away compact fluorescent light bulbs in an effort to help our members save money on their electric bill. Since the bulb giveaway started about the same time cold weather hit, it's hard to see the difference these bulbs can make, but consider the facts:

HREA gave away more than 2,300 compact fluorescent light bulbs equal to 60-watt incandescent bulbs. The 13-watt CFL uses only 13 watts of electricity and produces 880 lumens, as compared to a 60-watt bulb that produces 850

lumens. The life expectancy of a CFL is 10,000 hours, or about nine years. One can only guess at the life expectancy of an incandescent bulb. CFLs use around 70 percent less electricity than incandescent bulbs, and replacing just one incandescent bulb with a CFL can save up to 350 pounds of carbon emissions a year.

Since residential energy is responsible for around 21 percent of total U.S. carbon emissions, replacing those incandescent bulbs is not only good for the monthly budget, it's also good for the environment.

Use newspapers for mulch

With the days getting longer and the temperatures getting warmer, thoughts of this year's spring planting comes to mind. Whether your interest is flowers or vegetables, or both, one thing remains constant — weeds! Weeds seem to sprout faster than you can pull them, but there is an easy and inexpensive way to keep them at bay — use newspapers for mulch. Newspapers are biodegradable, but hold up for several months. They rob weeds of sunlight, but let water and air reach the soil, and they're a great alternative to herbicides.

When mulching with newspapers, the Natural Resources Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture recommends using a layer of newspapers that's about a quarter-inch thick. Use only black and white pages, because some of the colored inks may be harmful to plants. Make use of lawn maintenance leftovers, such as leaves, grass clippings and pine needles by spreading a 2-3" layer over the newspapers to weight them down. With this extra cushion of leaves and grass, it makes it easy

Co-op Connections® cards are helping!

As you remember, several months ago, we sent all of our members a Co-op Connections® card. Well, the report is in for the last quarter of 2008, and several members have benefited from the pharmacy discount that is available when you show your card.

More than 200 prescriptions were filled that would have cost members \$6,474.20. With the Co-op Connections card, these same prescriptions cost \$4,450, a savings of \$2,024.20. Members saved anywhere from 24 to 39 percent on prescription costs. And, as we all know, "every little bit helps."

to walk around in the garden without ripping holes in the newspaper.

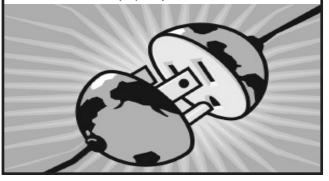
In the fall, spread two to three sheets of wet newspaper over the entire garden plot, add peat moss, grass clippings and shredded leaves, and when you uncover the garden in the spring, you will find rich, weed-free soil underneath. You can be creative with the ingredients you mix on top of the layer of newspapers, just be sure to not put anything on there that has been treated with herbicides.

So, if pulling weeds out is not one of your favorite things, try newspaper for mulch. Newspaper helps regulate soil temperature and conserve moisture. You'll save time, water and you won't spend your summer pulling out weeds.

Stay plugged in to what's happening with your electric cooperative at your annual meeting.

Harrison Cooperative will hold its 72nd Annual Meeting at 6 p.m. on Thursday, April 16, at Liberty High School

Take part in the business meeting and enjoy a pasta dinner.



Protecting plants from early spring frost

Spring is almost here, and even though temperatures are getting warmer, there likely will be several frosty nights. A dip in temperature can put tender new growth in jeopardy. Luckily, protecting plants from cold damage can be accomplished in a variety

of quick and easy ways. The key is to have your plants covered during the hours the frost develops, from late night to early morning. A good rule of thumb when frost is predicted is to cover plants from 8 p.m. and uncover them by 8 a.m.. Be sure to uncover your plants in the morning when the sun hits. Plants can't breathe under a protective cover.

If a plant is injured by frost, you will notice it within a few days. The plant growth will turn black, drop off or turn to mush. Most plants don't recover from frost exposure.

You can easily protect your plants with simple materials that you have around the house. Save old pots and plastic containers. They're great for protecting plants on frosty nights. Simply turn the

bucket or container upside down and place it over the plant. It's a good idea to put a rock or brick on top of the container to keep it in place. Old bed linens come in handy for covering up plants and protecting them from frost. They are light weight

and won't crush the plant. Place sheets
loosely over the plants and use a rock or
brick along the edges to keep the sheet
from blowing off. Sheets are really
great for draping over blooming
shrubs. Newspaper works well also,
but obviously, newspaper has a
size limitation.

The best way to avoid having to cover plants at all is to wait until the last predicted frost has passed before you plant. Some of us

can't do that, however. There's always the challenge of having the first tomato before any of our neighbors, and frankly, for many of us, the warm days of spring give us planting fever, so protecting our new plants from frost is well worth the effort.

Funding home efficiency improvements

by MEGAN McKOY

The idea of owning a more efficient home — and paying lower utility bills — has widespread appeal, but finding ways to fund needed energy efficiency improvements can be difficult during hard economic times. Fortunately, there are several ways to recover some of your expenses when planning your next project.

Through the federal Energy Improvement and Extension Act of 2008, Uncle Sam offers a personal tax credit of up to \$500 for energy efficiency upgrades made to existing homes this year. You can recover up to 10 percent of the cost of adding insulation materials and exterior doors, windows and roofs designed to help reduce your home's heat loss or gain.

Want to install a new central air conditioner or air-source heat pump? Your credit could be as much as \$300. The benefit covers up to 100 percent of the cost for qualifying heating and cooling units, with a maximum credit of \$500 for all improvements.

In addition, other federal incentives are available. While solar panels, solar water heaters and geothermal heat pumps are expensive, you may qualify for a tax credit equal to 30 percent of the installation cost if your projects are approved by the Solar Rating and Certification Corporation or ENERGY STAR, depending on the project's scope. Solar panels do not have a maximum limit for this benefit as of 2009; solar water heaters and geothermal heat pumps carry a \$2,000 limit. (Check with your local electric cooperative before proceeding with any type of solar project.)

Some electric cooperatives and state government offices offer further subsidies or rebates to consumers who want to make a home more efficient. For a listing of state and local energy efficiency assistance available, visit the Database for State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency, a project funded by the U.S. Department of Energy, at www.dsireusa.org.

For details on how the right appliances can help you cut your electric bills, visit www.energystar.gov.

Source: Database for State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency