



Harrison Rural Electrification Association, Inc.

RR 6, Box 502
Clarksburg, WV 26301-0502
304-624-6365

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 
www.harrisonrea.com

We must keep electricity affordable

I was proud to join thousands of electric co-op representatives in our nation's capital this spring. We told our elected officials that now more than ever we have to plan for a safe, reliable and affordable energy future. To get there, we need to know the rules for power generation, and we need to know now!

Rolling blackouts

Rolling blackouts in Texas earlier this year reminded all of us that electricity must be used as quickly as it's produced. We don't have the technology yet to store large amounts of power to fall back on when expensive generation resources like wind turbines don't work.

For our children and grandchildren's sake, we need to make some tough decisions soon — and we need to get them right.

We excel at long-range planning. Most of the power you use today was generated and delivered

using a system that was designed four or five decades ago. Co-ops around the country stand ready with plans for new infrastructure, power plants and innovative technologies to provide electricity for the next 40 years. But there's a problem, we're waiting on marching orders from our nation's leaders.

Tell us the rules

With a flurry of proposed regulations being discussed for power plants, and more to come, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has been following its own set of marching orders and deadlines set by the courts. However, what the final regulations will look like remains unclear. Electric co-ops need to know the rules — our marching orders — for power generation and delivery systems before we can invest.

Until the government sets the rules of the game, we can't begin to act on our plans for the next four decades. As the public appetite for electricity grows and threatens to outstrip our nation's

Manager's Corner

by
Gary Jackson,
CEO/General
Manager



generation capacity, we need to build more power plants. But what type of facilities should they be? What type will make the most sense financially?

Our mission

Harrison Rural Electrification's mission was set by you, our members, about 75 years ago. You charged us to provide safe, reliable and affordable power. Where this power comes from affects a sizable portion of your electric bill. About 60 cents of each dollar you pay us goes for wholesale power generation. Bucket trucks, poles and wire, right-of-way trimming, payroll and other operating expenses are covered by the rest.

Although expensive power plants and expanded transmission systems are an investment in a better future for all of us, we'll

keep our ultimate mission at the forefront of our efforts as we work with Congress to get our marching orders and keep the lights on for the next 75 years. It's one more way we're looking out for you!

Board of Directors

C.B. Sharp, Dist. 1.....President
James Stuart, Dist. 4.....Vice President
Darrell Powell, Dist. 6.....Secy.-Treas.
Greg Robertson.....Dist. 2 Kent Vance.....Dist. 3
Ron Watson.....Dist. 5 Michael Cross.....Dist. 7

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.



Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

One of the easiest ways to make your home more energy efficient is to add insulation in the attic. To see if you need insulation, look across an uncovered attic floor. If the insulation is level with or below the floor joists, you probably need to add more.

Source: ENERGY STAR

Efficiency upgrades that make sense

BY BRIAN SLOBODA

Surveys show that only about 15 percent of folks actually take steps to enhance the energy efficiency of their home. In most cases, people feel that energy efficiency improvements are too complicated or too expensive to tackle.

However, there are several simple upgrades you can consider that won't break your household budget. Following are a few:

Lighting

Compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) may look odd, but more and more homeowners are installing these energy-efficient lights. One CFL uses about 75 percent less energy and can save more than \$40 over its lifetime when compared with a traditional incandescent light bulb, according to estimates by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's ENERGY STAR program. Some people do not like CFLs because of their color or quality of the light, but CFLs have improved since they were

first introduced. In most lamps and fixtures, you probably won't notice a difference using a CFL.

Heating and air conditioning

The U.S. Energy Information Administration estimates that heating and air conditioning account for 22 percent of a typical home's annual electric bill. While an air-source heat pump or a geothermal heat pump can be 20 to 45 percent more efficient than an existing central heating and cooling system, up-front installation costs are often a barrier.

Simple solutions such as changing air filters at least every three months will increase air flow to rooms, increase the life of your central heating and cooling unit's motor, and improve air quality. Sealing and insulating ductwork can be done in a weekend and result in energy savings of up to 20 percent.

To lessen the amount of work that heating and cooling systems need to do, it's important to find and fix air leaks. Walk around your house on a cold day and feel for drafts around exterior doors and windows, electric outlets and entrance points for TV and telephone cables. In basements, target dryer vents, natural gas lines or any opening in the wall. To fix leaks, apply caulk, spray foam or weatherstripping.

Simple acts such as cooking outdoors on a hot summer day and drawing curtains closed to block the summer sun will keep the interior of your home cooler and reduce the amount of time your air con-

ditioning units need to operate.

Appliances and electronics

Gadgets and equipment that make life easier are also some of the largest electric users in our homes. When buying a new appliance, look for the ENERGY STAR label. ENERGY STAR products will use 10 to 15 percent less energy than noncertified items. Some states have even adopted ENERGY STAR holidays during which sales tax is waived on the purchase of qualifying ENERGY STAR-rated appliances.

To keep appliances running more efficiently, try these tips:

- Clean lint traps on dryers, and don't overdry clothes.
- Replace worn refrigerator door gaskets to stop cool air from seeping out.
- Clean refrigerator coils and keep refrigerators away from heat-generating appliances such as an oven.

Many home electronics, like computers, TVs and DVD players, consume power even when turned off. These are called "vampire" or "phantom" loads. The average home loses 8 percent of its monthly energy consumption to these devices. In fact, a full 75 percent of the power used to run home electronics is consumed when they're turned off, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. Plugging these items into a power strip or a smart strip and turning off the strip when not in use remains the best way to stop this loss of energy.

Other ideas

The best energy efficiency improvements are often the easiest, such as turning lights off when leaving a room, sealing windows and doors, and cleaning refrigerator coils.

To measure the success of any energy efficiency upgrades, big or small, first look at the payback period — the amount of time it takes for the improvement to pay for itself. Then consider your home's comfort level. Check whether fixes you've made keep room temperatures level and if fewer drafts are found around doors, windows and other openings like vents or outlets.

For more information, contact the energy experts at your local electric cooperative or visit TogetherWeSave.com.

Brian Sloboda is a program manager specializing in energy efficiency for the Cooperative Research Network, a service of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.



Stay safe while shopping online

If you're like many consumers today, you probably do some shopping online. Every year, online sales seem to increase dramatically. During the 2010 Christmas shopping season, Internet-related sales grew 15.4 percent from the same time period in 2009 — reaching an astonishing \$36.4 billion. But while shopping from the convenience of your keyboard can save time, money and gas, here are some important things to consider:

- Know your retailer. It's always safer to shop with merchants you know. If you want to buy from a website that's new to you, do an on-line search for that merchant and "complaints" to check for negative chatter about the seller.
- Use secure websites. When placing your order on the merchant's website, make sure that there is an "s" at the beginning of the Web address: For example, the URL should begin "https://" instead of just "http://." Also, be sure to look for a padlock icon in the upper or lower right-hand portion of your computer screen. Both of these mean that the site you are visiting uses a high level of security to protect your personal information.
- Credit cards give you greater protection than cash and debit cards. If you are not charged the correct amount for your purchase, or do not receive the merchandise you ordered, you can dispute the transaction under the terms of the Fair Credit Billing Act if you've used a credit card.
- Choose your password carefully. Most websites require you to use a password to access your personal information and place orders. Be sure to create a password that is not easy for others to guess — and use a combination of letters, numbers and, if possible, symbols such as "*" and "%" to make it more difficult for your information to be accessed by others.



- Check the merchant's privacy policy. This will tell you how they plan to use your information — including whether they will share it with others. You may wish to avoid sellers that do not have a privacy policy, as you have no way of knowing what they'll do with your data.

- Always print and keep the receipt from your transaction. It contains all of the information from your order, including what you bought, the price you paid and any order or confirmation number. This is vital if you need to follow up with the merchant or dispute your transaction.

Shopping online is easy and convenient — but by taking some simple precautions, it can also be safe.

Source: *About.com*

Are you wasting your money on DIRT?

Dirty air filters cause a heating and cooling system to work harder and break down faster. That's because unfiltered dust and grime works into critical parts, creating friction that causes unnecessary wear and, eventually, failure.

How does a dirty air filter cost you?

- Reduces air flow in the home, leading to up to 15 percent higher operating costs
- Leads to costly duct cleaning or replacement
- Lowers system efficiency

To avoid these expenses, change filters monthly when your heating and cooling system's in regular use. Discuss cleaning the unit and ductwork with your heating and cooling service professional.

Learn more ways to save at www.energysavers.gov.

Source: High Performance HVAC, U.S. Department of Energy

Help your child get ready for the return to school

The lazy days of summer are ready to end for students, and it will be back to the routine of heading off to school.

As the new school year approaches, you can help your child get ready with a few simple steps:

About a week before school starts, have them begin a school schedule for going to bed and getting up in the morning. This will be especially helpful for those kids who are up late or who've been sleeping in most of the summer.

Buy your school supplies early. Many schools post a supply list on their website, or one can be obtained at the school office.

If a student is headed to a new school, plan on visiting there before the first day. For kindergarteners, it may help to take them through their new morning routine, including going

to the school, a few days before school actually begins. Many times, the principal will allow kindergarteners a chance to come in and see their new

classroom before school begins.

For those heading to a new middle or high school, making a visit a few days ahead can be beneficial. These

buildings often are larger and more spread out than lower schools, and taking some time to figure out how to get around the complex can alleviate confusion on the first day.

Also, familiarize yourself with your child's school's website. These often provide valuable information, not only before school begins but also throughout the year.



ESFI says, 'Test before you touch'

Electrical hazards are the sixth leading cause of workplace fatalities. According to the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI), contact with large appliances, such as air conditioners, contributes to nearly 20 percent of consumer product electrocutions. Whether at home or in the workplace, there are a number of safety precautions that can reduce the chance of deaths, injuries and economic losses due to electrical hazards:

Use ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) and arc-fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs) to help prevent electrocutions.

Understand your electrical system — know which fuse or circuit breaker controls each switch, light and outlet.

Make sure circuits are turned off before starting electrical work, and take measures to make sure they are not turned back on while working.

Use a circuit tester. Make sure it is working by testing it before and after you use it to test the circuit.

Always test before you touch.

Source: *Electrical Safety Foundation International*

