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Planning

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE is and forever will be a difficult task. As we near the mid-point of this year, we have already begun reviewing next year's preliminary plan to see what changes are needed. We will continue to tweak the plan throughout the remainder of the year as conditions change. These changes can come about for a variety of reasons, ranging from system performance to project costs to accomplishing the items on this year's plan. This does not even include what may happen on the political front, which is a modern-day version of an Abbott and Costello skit. Even with all of this fluidity, our cooperative business model stands as the best base option for now and the future.

With the technological improvements we have made over the past couple of years, we now have the best dataset of information to base our decision-making on in the history of the cooperative. As wonderful as that is, it is still only the beginning stage of an even larger

goal. The proper use of all this data requires us to refine the analysis of the data to where we can become proactive rather than reactive. More than likely, there will be additional technology added in order to achieve that goal. It will also require additional training and experience with this technology to ensure we continue to get everything possible from the investment.

Planning for future power supply is probably the most difficult item we have to deal with. On one hand, we were able to take advantage of the markets to lock in favorable base power rates for the next seven years. On the other hand is the question of integrating renewable energy into our supply mix. While there does seem to be several options available, some options involve costs that run nearly double that of fossil fuels. At the same time, transmission costs look like they will continue to escalate as PJM, our Regional Transmission Organization, continues to change its tariffs and pricing models, with Federal Energy Regulatory Commission approval, to maximize the profitability of the transmission and generation portion of power costs. In fact, it would not be surprising to see the PJM portion of the monthly power bill to soon exceed the base power costs.

With that trend, we would be remiss to not look at potential renewable energy strategies. In the short term, there may be the possibility of adding solar arrays near a couple of our substations. These would not replace all of the demand

Manager's Corner

by Terry Stout,
 CEO/General Manager



at those substations, but they should reduce our reliability on grid power during peak times, thus reducing transmission costs. The main issue is that the provider wants us to lock into a 20-year agreement but is not willing to lock in non-renewables for the same timeframe. Another option that is intriguing is community solar. Under this set-up, either we or a third party would build the array near the substation and then sell or lease panels to the membership. This too would reduce our reliance on grid power, but we do not know to what extent the membership would be willing to expend additional funds just to have solar power. Hydropower is another possibility. This option provides the best price point for renewable energy; however, it still flows through the grid and thus there is not a reduction in transmission costs.

There are many other possibilities to be explored, such as energy conservation and energy storage, that could be beneficial in the future. At this time, much of these rely on the makeup of the consumer base and available resources in a geographical area. We will continue to research and monitor their development.

Hope everyone has a wonderful summer. ☺

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7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday-Friday

Retrofit your manufactured home for energy efficiency

BY ANNE PRINCE

IF YOU LIVE IN A MANUFACTURED HOME, chances are you may have a disproportionately higher energy bill than a family living in a modular or traditional wood-frame home. The good news is there are many ways you can improve your home's energy efficiency.

Manufactured home or mobile home?

First, a clarification. Some use the term manufactured home and mobile home interchangeably. A mobile home is one that was factory-built before 1976, when the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) set national standards that nearly every manufactured home must meet. Thereafter, factory-built homes were called manufactured homes and are engineered and built in accordance with the 1976 federal code.

Manufactured homes come in all shapes and sizes. They may be single- or multi-sectioned and are available in various sizes and floorplans. There are many differences between manufactured homes built before the U.S. HUD code took effect in 1976 and those built afterward, a major difference being energy efficiency. Those built before federal standards were generally not as energy efficient as later models, even though thermal standards were changed in 1994. And while your manufactured home may have been built to the energy standards of the time, significant progress has been made over the past decades with

high-efficiency mechanical equipment, windows, insulation, siding, and roofing materials.

In short, whether your home is less than 5 years old or more than 50, most homes can benefit from energy efficiency measures. Sunlight, seasonal temperature changes, and wind can cause doors and windows to not close tightly, and ductwork can spring leaks, wasting cooling and heating energy.

If your home was built before 1976, the U.S. Department of Energy recommends the following steps to retrofit your manufactured home and improve energy efficiency:

1. Install energy-efficient windows and doors.
2. Replace insulation in the belly.
3. Make general repairs, such as sealing the bottom board, caulking windows and doors, and sealing ducts.
4. Add insulation to the walls.
5. Install or seal the belly wrap.
6. Add insulation to the roof or install a roof cap.

Additional energy-saving tips

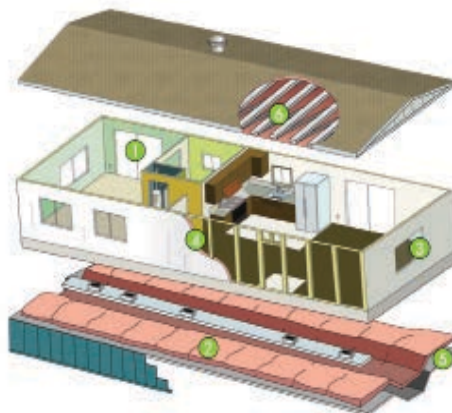
In addition to the measures listed above, consider caulking and weather stripping windows and doors, particularly if you are not able to replace them with more energy-efficient ones. Properly seal openings around ducts and plumbing fixtures. Replace incandescent light bulbs with LEDs, both indoors and outside. Reduce "phantom" loads by unplugging electronic devices like computers, printers, and gaming systems when not in use. If you are planning to move to a new manufactured home, look for an ENERGY STAR-rated model.

For more information about energy efficiency improvements for manufactured homes, visit EnergySavers.gov. ☞

ANNE PRINCE writes for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

RETROFIT YOUR MANUFACTURED HOME FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY

- 1 Install energy-efficient windows and doors
- 2 Replace insulation in the belly
- 3 Make general repairs (seal bottom board, caulk windows, doors, seal ducts, etc.)
- 4 Add insulation to the walls
- 5 Install or seal the belly wrap
- 6 Add insulation to the roof or install a roof cap



Original artwork provided by Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives

Change: The only thing we can count on

BY LLOYD MASON

Change is coming, but a more accurate point of view is that change is here. This is a statement we can all understand, but what questions come of it?

In the world of technology, it seems that every time we turn around, something needs to be upgraded, patched, or newly provisioned. The fact of the matter is that technology changes our world so rapidly now that the social impact is very hard to weigh. Many of the standard conventions in our lives are no longer commonly shared. We have all become hyper-connected to the world and, in many ways, actually disconnected from each other. The lack of face-to-face communication is expected to manifest itself into all forms of society, but how?

No matter where you live, it is easy to find evidence of this phenomenon. The way things are done is changing rapidly, and we can no longer afford to rely on what we used to know. Like it or not, the way we educate needs to be retooled for most people to remain relevant in the workforce of today. For instance, our education system in the United States isn't broken; it was just designed in a time with very different challenges. In a time of an industrial awakening, it was important to design the school system to prepare our young people for a specific set of skills that in many cases do not apply anymore. More and more businesses are discussing an education gap between those with technical knowledge and those without.

The answer has to be change. The scope of the changes needed is massive. We must completely change the way we prepare our young people for the challenges ahead because it is now well-known that we are training for a job that hasn't even been created yet. Now there is a challenge.

Originally, when we began to build comput-

erized machines, researchers expected massive efficiencies, and everyone involved was projecting a revolution in the workplace, on the farm, and at home. While that all sounds good for many reasons, having to deal with logistics and cost transition has proven to be harder in practice than it was in theory. The staggering cost of transitioning both equipment and human resources has proved to be daunting.

We must let go of old paradigms and be willing to introduce critical thinking to everything around us. "We must be the change we want to see in the world," Mahatma Gandhi said, and it is just as true today as when those words were spoken many years ago. We must all seek the next level, if you will. We must all embrace our part in this and take responsibility for what we can do to change for the better. With a healthy dose of positivity and a forward-looking approach, we can all have a place in this new age together.

Til next time @TECH CORNER.

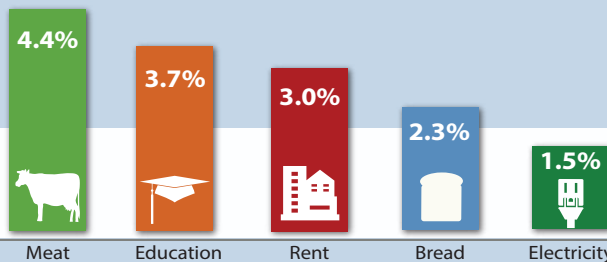
LLOYD MASON is the manager of information technology at Harrison Rural Electric Association. He writes monthly on technology issues affecting our cooperative and members.

Electricity Remains a Good Value

The cost of powering your home rises at a slower pace than many of your typical expenses. Compare the average price increase of these expenses each year over the last five years, and the value of electricity shines.



Average Annual Price Increase
2010-2015



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index



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

Christy Foster

June 3

Katrina Ewing

June 29

HOW THE ELECTRIC CO-OP WORKS



1. Member-owners elect representatives to a board of trustees.

2. The board defines expectations for the co-op's general manager (GM/CEO) and provides policies and strategic goals.



3. The GM/CEO interprets the board's expectations to create a plan.



8. The board reflects on policies and updates them as needed.



Member-owners provide input & feedback to board, GM & staff.



4. The GM/CEO delegates responsibilities to staff who help carry out the plan.



7. The GM/CEO shares results with the board.



6. The GM/CEO collects data from staff about their efforts.



5. Staff develop and oversee programs to accomplish their tasks.