

FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER/CEO

Learning the cooperative principles

New Enterprise Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

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Rick L. Eichelberger
General Manager & CEO

ONE OF MY favorite bumper stickers is, “If you can read this, thank a teacher.” The importance of education was drilled into many of us by our parents. It is no accident that we educate children from a very early age while our young minds are still dry sponges willing to absorb so much.

The original seven co-op principles set forth in 1844

contained the simple phrase, “Promotion of Education.” Today, Principle Five states that all co-ops should promote “Education, Training and Information.” This is intended for the employees, members and the community at large.

It is based on the simple premise that if people know more about the cooperative business model, they will be in a much better position to understand the benefits and promote better use of the co-op and its resources.

While there are almost one million people in the U.S. who work for cooperatives of all types (agriculture, housing, credit unions and many others in addition to electric co-ops) very few of us learn about cooperatives in school. That creates a real challenge when trying to explain the cooperative difference. People understand an investor-owned business is designed to make a profit or that a non-profit, like the Red Cross, is designed to serve the community. Co-ops have both an economic and social purpose. We operate on a not-for-profit basis so that we can

pass along the best price for our goods or services to you, the owner-member.

Due to the fact that the co-op business model is normally not taught by teachers, it is up to us at New Enterprise Rural Electric Cooperative through publications like this one to ensure that you know about the differences and benefits of being a co-op member. Consumer surveys by Touchstone Energy and others consistently affirm that people prefer to do business with a cooperative if given a choice.

So why don't they teach about co-ops in school? There are several theories about this, including that there is not enough academic research about co-ops, which is often the source for curriculums. Another reason offered is that the co-op community is so diverse that teaching about it only creates more confusion. The first issue about research is being addressed by the Cooperative Business Research Institute at Indiana University.

The second can be addressed by answering the old question: How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time. Simply by taking an interest in learning about New Enterprise Rural Electric Cooperative through our website, attending an annual meeting, stopping by the office or talking to your fellow co-op members — all are good ways to better understand the cooperative model you're a part of.

By knowing more about how cooperatives operate, you are in a better position to participate as owner-members. We always welcome your questions and comments to help us promote the “cooperative way” of doing business. 

Co-op calendar

- November 11 – Co-op closed to observe Veterans Day
- November 21 – Last day to make payment arrangements with Brawna at extension 4602 to avoid disconnection
- November 25 – Disconnect date
- November 27 – Co-op closed to celebrate Thanksgiving
- November 28 – Billing due date

The importance of generator safety

BY BRAWNA L. SELL

ONE OF THE greatest conveniences of our modern life is electricity. Electricity flows through the overhead or underground wires just about all the time. We take for granted electric power will always be there when we need it. As much as we would like that to be true, there are times the power does go off.

Over the years, the portable electric generator has become more and more popular. Generators keep your food cold, help you milk your cows, or provide lighting and heat to your home. Generators improve the quality of life during an extended power outage.

For all the good generators do, they can also be deadly. Proper installation is required to prevent injuries or death. A licensed electrician should wire and connect home-use generators. Do not connect the generator directly into your home's electrical system through a receptacle outlet. Before using a portable generator, you must disconnect your home's electric wiring from the power grid. Otherwise, power from the generator can go out over the utility lines, endangering the lives of the linemen making the repairs.

Since generators are so popular, the industry is now manufacturing a Whisper Generator. These generators make little or almost no noise. No loud noise while you are trying to sleep; that's great, right? Yes, it is great if your generator is installed correctly.

Recently, one of our sister cooperatives in Pennsylvania almost lost one of their linemen at a home that was running an incorrectly installed "whisper" generator after a storm had knocked the power out. The lineman and his crew followed every safety procedure. All was deemed safe to proceed with the restoration. When he reached around the utility pole, he came in contact with what was supposed to be a dead transformer and was severely hurt.

The crew soon discovered that the homeowner had hooked a portable whisper generator directly into the panel box, which then backfed onto the power lines. Not only was the generator not hooked



up properly, there was no sound or other external sign to warn the linemen that a generator was running.

Fortunately, this lineman will make a full recovery. However, the accident should never have happened. There are very simple, yet important, guidelines to follow when installing any type of generator.

Below are a few suggestions for making your generator safe:

- ▶ Read and follow all manufacturer operating instructions to properly ground the generator. Be sure you understand them before starting it up.
- ▶ Standby generators should have a transfer safety switch installed by a licensed electrician. Portable generators should never be plugged directly into a home outlet or electrical system — use an extension cord to plug appliances into an outlet on the generator.
- ▶ Never operate a generator in a confined area, such as a garage. Generators produce gases, including deadly carbon monoxide. They require

proper ventilation.

- ▶ Generators pose electrical risks, especially when operated in wet conditions. Use a generator only when necessary when the weather creates wet or moist conditions. Protect the generator by operating it under an open, canopy-like structure on a dry surface where water cannot form puddles or drain under it. Always ensure that your hands are dry before touching the generator.
- ▶ When you refuel the generator, make sure the engine is cool to prevent a fire, should the tank overflow.
- ▶ There should be nothing plugged into the generator when you turn it on. This prevents a surge from damaging your generator and appliances.
- ▶ Be sure to keep children and pets away from the generator, which could burn them.

For more safety information on the use of portable and standby generators and safety after a storm, go to SafeElectricity.org. 

There's an app for that

The new online SmartHub has been in place for members' use for the past few months. SmartHub provides more information than ever before on your computer, smartphone or tablet.

You can view or pay your monthly electric bill, but it also offers so much more information and convenience:

- ▶ Quickly pay your bill
- ▶ Review past payments
- ▶ View your daily and monthly electric use
- ▶ Update your account or contact information
- ▶ Receive email or text notifications

For those of you who like to use your smartphone or tablet, a free SmartHub app is available. This app can be downloaded for Apple and Android mobile devices. Just go to the Apple Store® or Google Play®, and search for SmartHub.

After downloading the app on your mobile device, the installation will prompt you to find your electric co-op. You can type in "New Enterprise."

Safe and secure

SmartHub provides a safe and secure environment for bill payments and transactions between New Enterprise

REC and your financial institution.

The SmartHub app is encrypted during every transaction run, and no personal information is stored on your mobile device.

Other helpful apps

Remember the days when people kept in touch with widespread family and friends by writing letters? You know, where you actually used a pen, stationery, envelope and a postage stamp.

Keeping in touch today may involve a laptop, smartphone, tablet device, email, texting or social media. These devices are not only used for socializing, but can help you save money and energy.

As a member of Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives, the branding program of the nation's electric cooperatives, we are proud to offer these mobile apps. *Touchstone Energy — Save Energy, Save Money app* lets you see how much money you could pocket each month by switching from traditional incandescent lightbulbs to compact fluorescent lamps or light-emitting diodes.

In addition, the app delivers handy pop-up "Tip of the Day" reminders on ways to make your home more energy efficient. The free app is available for

Apple iPhones and iPads at the iTunes store and for Android smartphones at Play.Google.com; search for: Together We Save.

Touchstone Energy's Weather Connection app is more than a weather app. It is a premium safety and security alerting application. With this app, you will receive critical alerts via voice and push notifications regarding life-threatening weather events. Enjoy the power of NOAA Weather Radio with your smartphone.

The Co-op Connections program allows consumer-members to obtain details about online, national and local discounts offered. You can use this app to find discounts at home or while on the road.

By using this *Co-op Connection app*, you will be able to receive a 10 to 60 percent discount on prescription drugs at over 60,000 national and regional pharmacy chain stores, including CVS, Walgreens, Wal-Mart and many more.

NOTE: Mobile devices do offer the ability to store your login information for apps installed on the device. If you choose to store your login information, any person who has access to your mobile device can access your account. ☀



Say Merry Christmas with a gift of lights



It won't be long before we are hearing "Merry Christmas." Instead of worrying about what to get those hard-to-buy for people, why not purchase an Electric Gift Certificate from New Enterprise REC? You can purchase a gift certificate in any value you would like. You may either mail your coupon and payment, stop by the office, or call us and pay over the phone with a check, Visa, or MasterCard.

New Enterprise REC Gift Certificate

Recipient's Name: _____

Amount of Gift: _____

Purchaser's Name: _____

Purchaser's Address: _____

Purchaser's Phone Number: _____

How should the certificate(s) be signed: _____

(Mom & Dad, The Smith Family, Joe & Betty, etc.)

(Please circle one)

I wish to remain anonymous

Mail letter to recipient

Mail letter to purchaser

Electric safety tips

- ▶ Be sure the appliances you purchase have been approved by a reputable consumer laboratory, such as UL (Underwriters Laboratories). UL-approved products tend to have their own set of electrical safety tips and warnings.
- ▶ Use bulbs with the correct wattage. Higher wattage bulbs may cause overheating.
- ▶ Always screw bulbs tightly. Loose bulbs could cause shorts and sparks.
- ▶ Always unplug or switch off the fixture before replacing a bulb.
- ▶ Switch to compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs); these provide the same level of light at a lower wattage level. This is safer and better for the environment and your pocket.

KIDZCORNER

Starting this Thanksgiving, why not begin showing adults and children your kindness? There are so many things to be thankful for. On days when someone is having a rough day, your simple act of kindness may help their day go better. Why not try a few of these ideas or come up with your own:

1. Collect canned goods for the food bank.
2. Pick up trash in the neighborhood.
3. Hold the door for someone.
4. Smile and say "Hello!"
5. Donate toys.
6. Give outgrown clothing to a smaller friend or clothing bank.
7. Donate books to the library.
8. Draw a picture for the mailman.
9. Make a big sign for your trash collector, saying "Thank You" and lay it on your trash.
10. Clean your bedroom without your parents telling you to.



Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program — better known as LIHEAP — is a grant program that helps low-income families pay their heating and utility bills. This program was scheduled to open Nov. 3, 2014, for



cash and crisis grants. The programs are scheduled to close on April 3, 2015. You may apply for cash or crisis grants or both.

- ▶ **Cash grants:** This grant is sent directly to the utility company or fuel provider. You do not have to be out of fuel or have a disconnection notice to apply for this grant.
- ▶ **Crisis grant:** This money will be directly sent to your fuel provider or utility. To be eligible for this grant, you need to have an emergency situation. An emergency is considered: broken heating equipment or leaking lines, lack of fuel, termination of utility service, or danger of being without fuel and electric service.

If you received LIHEAP last year, you should have already received an application. Should this be your first time applying, you can get an application by:

- ▶ Contacting your local County Assistance Office by phone or in person
Bedford County 814-623-6127 or 800-542-8584
Fulton County 717-485-3151 or 800-222-8563
Huntingdon County 814-643-1170 or 800-237-7674
- ▶ Calling the LIHEAP Client Helpline at 1-866-857-7095
- ▶ Applying online at www.compass.state.pa.us. ☀

