

New Enterprise Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives
serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

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From the General Manager/CEO



Summer shift

By Mark Morrison

SUMMERTIME is definitely here — although this summer is a bit different than any other we have seen before. The nice weather was a welcome sight indeed. My hope is that we are all taking advantage of some of our normal summertime hobbies and adventures despite the current health crisis constraints. We are quite blessed to live in this region where the landscape provides so many wonderful outdoor activities — hiking and biking trails, boating, kayaking, or fishing our many rivers, streams, and creeks and, of course, uncovering the pool in the backyard.

We are busy with summer activities at the cooperative as well. This time of the year is prime for those construction projects that have been put on hold because of wet conditions. Every September, we evaluate our construction plan and fold it into the next year's budget, highlighting system improvement projects that will improve the distribution system reliability and resiliency for all. Although the weather is very warm, line crews are pushing forward with many pole and conductor replacements systemwide. In the coming months, we will evaluate our progress and set goals for next year.

Our right-of-way plan is also in full swing. As many of you know, we are on a six-year cycle for right-of-way maintenance. This time frame has proven itself over the years and is one of the reasons we enjoy reliable power throughout some of the worst weather each season can bring. We always appreciate calls from the membership

helping us to maintain the rights of way. Throughout the year, we receive many calls from folks who identify “sketchy” trees that may contact the line or pose a potential threat to the line under the right conditions. These calls always mean so much to us at the office. We would rather eliminate an outage on our terms rather than when Mother Nature causes the outage. We have not been able to prevent them all, she still shows us that she is in charge from time to time.

Each summer we participate in the “electric shift” program as well. You may have seen the ads on TV during the summer when the temperatures and electricity demand are at their highest levels. The goal of this program is to lower system electricity demand during peak energy consumption times. The cooperative is billed a demand component on our electric bill each month, so if we can wait until early evening to wash and dry the clothes, run the pool pump or run the dishwasher, those efforts will help keep power costs lower for all. Once again, the membership is one of the best resources for the cooperative to help get the job done.

Enjoy what is left of summer. Let us hope things get better than what we have become used to. Stay safe and healthy out there, help your neighbors, and thank you for always helping and being a member of this great electric cooperative. As always, stop in or give us a call and let us know how we are doing.

Mark

For more than 50 years, teens from rural America have been going to Washington, D.C., for the Rural Electric Youth Tour, a special and unique trip sponsored by their local cooperatives, their state association, and NRECA. Over the years, these delegates have toured some of the finest museums in the world and visited America's most historic monuments. They have met with their elected officials and explored Capitol Hill. They have learned the impact of electric cooperatives have on their communities, as well as how programs like NRECA International are impacting lives around the world. And each year, roughly 2,000 delegates and staff make an impact on Washington, D.C.

This year for the first time in Youth Tour history, the trip was canceled due to COVID-19. The decision was made due to safety concerns for students, staff and communities.

As NRECA CEO Jim Matheson says, "There's going to be a big

void this year in Washington without having the YouthTour." He is so right.

At first, one part of Youth Tour, Youth Leadership Council (YLC), was still expected to go on with Olivia Higgins as New Enterprise REC's representative. Olivia is the daughter of James and Sandy Higgins of Hopewell.

Normally, candidates for YLC are interviewed and one representative from Pennsylvania and one from New Jersey are chosen to represent their states during the week of Youth Tour. Because Youth Tour was canceled, the procedure was different this year. Olivia wrote an essay for her YLC selection process. Unfortunately, as time went on, all activities for the YLC were also canceled due to ongoing uncertainties related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Olivia put a lot of time and hard work into her essay, so we would like to share it with you, our membership.



Guest Columnist

YLC essay

Olivia Higgins
Youth Leadership Council Representative
From New Enterprise Rural Electric Cooperative



I AM Olivia Higgins from New Enterprise Rural Electric Cooperative. I am involved in soccer, basketball and track at Northern Bedford High School. I am also involved in FFA (Future Farmers of America), FCA (Fellowship of Christian Athletes), and have taken many honor and college classes. When I am out of school, I often am outside playing sports or hanging out with my friends. I also work at American Kream, an ice cream stand in Hopewell. I have also volunteered with my school's American Youth Soccer Association and I have refereed for two years. I was supposed to coach and referee this year for my senior project. Next year, I plan to go to Penn State to major in architectural engineering. Throughout the years, I have always changed what I want to be one day, just like every other kid, until a couple years ago when I realized that I love to plan and design structures.

My dad is who inspired me most

because he helped me to decide that I wanted to be an architectural engineer. He works at a firm that I would one day maybe want to work at, and has given me many opportunities there, with multiple job-shadowing opportunities, and has let me explore many different projects. This pandemic has actually kept me from being able to do my senior project, job shadowing, and so much more.

I was so sad to hear that our trip to Washington, D.C., was canceled because I was really looking forward to seeing and learning about all the historical stops we would make as we were there, and I was also looking forward to meeting new people. With my original senior project being canceled, I missed

out on being able to coach young kids the sport I love deeply. As of right now, I am not able to job shadow or make any college visits, which for someone who always likes to be prepared is making me a little nervous for my future, but I know everything will all eventually work out for the best. Having sports starting back up is giving me hope for in the fall that we may go back to school. With seeing 2020 seniors missing out on the end of their senior year, I just hope that we don't miss out on it all — the sports, the last moments with friends, senior prom, homecoming and graduation.

I am very glad my cooperative gave me this opportunity, although I know we were all hoping for an exciting trip with new people, but it has still given me some good memories and more respect for the people in my community. I very much hope with all that is happening in the world, that people appreciate the good things in life and that this will never happen again for the sake of having every possible opportunity given to us. ☀️



Electricity brings everyday value

By Brawna L. Sell, *Office Manager*

EVEN though I work in the energy industry, like most people, I still don't think much about the electricity I use. I expect the lights to turn on when I flip the switch and the coffeemaker to work each morning. Because electricity is so abundant, we don't think much about it. Since many of us have been spending more time at home over the past few months, we have likely been using more energy. And yet, we still expect an endless supply of power with uninterrupted service 24/7. The only time we really think about electricity is when the power goes out or perhaps when the monthly bill arrives.

Given how electricity powers our modern lifestyle every day, it's a great value, especially when compared to other common services and expenses. For example, think back to the cost of a gallon of gasoline 20 years ago. Consider the cost of groceries or a cup of your favorite specialty coffee from a few years back. In comparison, the cost

of electricity has remained largely flat, unlike most other consumer goods.

Like many of you, I have a cellphone to stay connected, and I subscribe to cable channels so I can enjoy more viewing options. Many of us consider these necessities for modern day life. We can see what we're getting for our money, and we pay the price for those services. In contrast, when we use electricity, we don't necessarily "see" all that we're getting for our money.

But considering what electricity does for us, it's a tremendous value for our quality of life as well as our budgets. For comparison, consider that the average rent increase was nearly 4% (from 2014-2019), according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index (CPI). The cost of medical care increased 3% during this time, and education was not too far behind at 2.6%. So, where did electricity rank? According to the CPI, electricity increased by less than half a percentage point, 0.4%.

The bottom line: electricity brings

everyday value. Outages at New Enterprise REC are few and normally last only a short time. Considering that electricity is something we all use around the clock, I'm very proud of our track record. At the same time, we are striving to increase our service reliability, reduce those brief interruptions and reduce costs. We are continually working to improve our operations to ensure a smarter grid and exploring more renewable energy options where possible.

New Enterprise REC provides the reliable service you expect and deserve as valued members of the co-op. And as your trusted energy adviser, we want to help you save you energy and money.

We recognize that the past few months have been challenging for many of our members and we're here to help. If you have questions about your account or are looking for ways to save energy at home, please give us a call. New Enterprise REC is *your* electric co-op, and our sole purpose is to serve you and the needs of our community. That's everyday value. 🌞

Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) re-opens

The county assistance offices are now open for LIHEAP.

For members who have received crisis LIHEAP assistance during the 2019/2020 season:

- ▶ You have received a \$100 supplement, which was on your June billing statement.
- ▶ Call your county assistance office to let them know if you are in need of help. You may be eligible for more assistance.

Members who have not received crisis assistance:

- ▶ Go to the following website to complete your application: compass.state.pa.us/compass.web/Public/CMPHome. Look under the "What We Offer" tab for your LIHEAP application. You will need to complete the form and mail it to your county assistance office (information listed below). If you don't have internet or a printer, call New Enterprise REC. We will mail you a form. Should you wish to stop at the office, please call first.
- ▶ If you applied for LIHEAP funds and

were denied due to income limits, re-apply. You may now be eligible because of a decrease in wages due to COVID-19.

- ▶ New claims can be eligible for up to \$800.

Bedford CAO – LIHEAP

150 North Street
Bedford, PA 15522-1040
814-623-6127 or 800-542-8584

Fulton CAO – LIHEAP

539 Fulton Drive
McConnellsburg, PA 17233-8061
717-485-3151 or 800-222-8563

Huntingdon CAO – LIHEAP

7591 Lake Raystown Shopping Center
Huntingdon, PA 16652
814-643-1170 or 800-237-7674



What is Co-ops Vote?

Co-ops Vote is a nonpartisan project of America's electric cooperatives designed to inform its members on the key issues facing electric co-ops and encourage them to vote and support their co-ops and the communities they serve when they go to the polls. Co-ops Vote does not endorse or recommend any candidates for election.

Vote.coop has information on registering to vote and finding out more about candidates. 🗳️



Payment methods

Everyone can use a refresher on all the methods of payment here at New Enterprise REC.

Bills are sent out the first of every month. If you have not received your bill by the 10th of the month, please do not hesitate to call our office. The office is open from 7 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Monday – Friday.

Payment arrangements can be made by calling Brawna Sell at extension 4602 or by emailing her at bsell@newenterpriserec.com.

Here's a quick rundown of different ways you can pay:

- ▶ Drop by our office — come into the office from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday – Friday, or drop your payment in the payment drop box located beside the front entrance doors or drive up to the green box along the driveway.
- ▶ Sign up for Auto Pay, New Enterprise REC's automatic draft program. With Auto Pay, your monthly bill is deducted from your checking or savings account or charged to your credit/debit card (MasterCard, Visa or Discover) on the 20th of the month.
- ▶ Go online to our website, newenterpriserec.com, to pay by debit card, credit card or by check at no additional charge. Online payments are available 24/7.
- ▶ Call in anytime during office hours to pay with a debit/credit card or checking account at no additional charge.
- ▶ You can also pay with your smartphone or tablet. Download SmartHub for free on the Apple Store or Google Play.

Lastly, don't forget the due date! Payments are generally due on the 23rd of each month. If the 23rd falls on a weekend or holiday, the due date is the business day after the 23rd. Remember to always look at your bill to confirm the due date. If you have any additional questions about payments, feel free to give us a call or stop by our office during business hours. 🗳️



LOOKING DOWN: This is the view lineworkers see from atop a 40-foot pole. Photo by Zach Conley

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

When the weather is nice, put your grill to use! During summer months, cooking outdoors is a great way to save energy and eliminate unwanted heat from cooking indoors.

