

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



2021, the road ahead

By Mark Morrison

AS WE CLOSE the books on 2020 and start a new chapter in 2021, I am happy to report some of the progress we have made over the past year and chat a bit about our plans for the upcoming year.

2020 was a busy year for the cooperative lineworkers. Our work plan sets lofty goals for pole replacements and system maintenance each year, ensuring that we are doing what is necessary to keep the lights on. While the initial focus was simply on replacing aging and end-of-life pole assets, the cooperative was able to relocate a few pieces of line from undesirable locations to areas where truck access is now a possibility for power restoration. We are also focusing on replacing aging poles throughout the system. The same holds true for 2021 when line improvements are slated for the Waterfall and Saltillo areas. We will also be surveying equipment and design of our substations and delivery points in preparation for upcoming improvements.

One of the biggest operational expenses for the cooperative is right-of-way and vegetation management. Each year, New Enterprise lineworkers and contractors perform maintenance on upward of 70 miles of line. Our crews make their way around the system every six years for scheduled work. Our plan also includes provisions for hot spots — areas that pose an immediate threat to safety and reliability. In 2020, work was completed in the Bakers Summit, Jack's Corner and Liberty areas. Right-of-way work is scheduled

for the Saltillo and Hickory Bottom areas for the upcoming year. As always, anytime you are concerned a tree may contact the line, let us know, and cooperative personnel will come out and evaluate a course of action.

Over the past two years, the cooperative has been replacing meters and aging metering technology. We will continue that plan this coming year and should have close to a third of all meters changed out by the end of the year. The new metering system has the potential to notify us of an outage or voltage problem, thus sometimes preventing possible outages or equipment failures. The data provided also helps us in planning system upgrades and using cooperative dollars most efficiently.

You may have noticed your electric bill being a little less than normal this month. In 2020, the cooperative continued its plan set forth by the board of directors and carried out by management to retire capital credits to the membership. This is just one of the advantages of being a member of an electric cooperative. Our 2021 budget includes the continuation of the retirement of capital credits slated for distribution with the December billing cycle. To date, the capital credits plan has retired nearly \$1.4 million back to the members.

Wishing you a healthy, happy, fulfilling and prosperous new year. Please stop by or give us a call to share any thoughts on how we are serving the membership. ☀

Four ways Santa saves energy in his workshop

THE HOLIDAY SEASON is finally upon us, and Santa and his elves have been especially busy as they gear up for their biggest night of the year.

It's no secret that Santa is known for running an efficient workshop. How else could he make all those toys in time for Christmas Eve? Rumor has it that one way Santa ensures an efficient workspace is through energy-saving measures.

Here are four ways Santa saves energy in his workshop:

- ▶ Santa leaves his decorations up year-round, so by using LED holiday light strands, he's able to save on his monthly energy bills. LED holiday strands can last up to 40 seasons, which make them a great option for any festive home.
- ▶ Santa requires several power tools

to make a year's worth of new toys. That's why he insists on using cordless power tools with the Energy Star® rating. According to energystar.gov, if all power tools in the U.S. used Energy Star-rated battery chargers, 2 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity could be saved. That's equivalent to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 1.7 million tons.

- ▶ Mrs. Claus loves to keep warm by the fire in the evenings, and Santa knows one of the best tricks to ensure fireplace efficiency. While a fireplace can keep a small area of your home cozy and warm, it can also pull heated air from the room through the chimney. That's why Santa always closes the fireplace flue when a fire isn't burning.
- ▶ Santa also saves energy by using



power strips. Power strips are ideal for workshops, craft nooks, game rooms and other spaces in your home. With one simple switch, you can conveniently control several devices and electronics that are plugged into the power strip.

This holiday season, let's take a page from Santa's book and remember to save energy when possible. With these four tips, you'll be well on your way to savings — and hopefully, Santa's "nice" list! ☀

Energy assistance

THE LOW INCOME Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is designed to help low-income families and individuals pay a portion of their heating bills during the heating season.

- ▶ You don't have to own your home.
- ▶ You must re-apply each year.
- ▶ You don't have to be on public assistance.
- ▶ You don't need an unpaid bill.

To apply for this program, go to compass.state.pa.us or call your county assistance office:

Bedford County – 800-542-8584 or 814-623-6127

Fulton County – 800-222-8563 or 717-485-3151

Huntingdon County – 800-237-7674 or 814-643-1170. ☀



Sales tax

Are you paying sales tax on your home electric bill? Home electricity use isn't taxable, so you shouldn't be paying this tax at your residence.

If you are being charged Pennsylvania sales tax for your electricity, we do not have a Pennsylvania Sales Tax Blanket Exemption Certificate on file. New Enterprise REC is required by the state to charge sales tax on any meter not having one of these forms on file.

To find out if you are paying this tax, look on your billing statement under "Detail of Charges." If sales tax is being charged, it will be in this area. Call our office or stop by for a Pennsylvania Sales Tax Blanket Exemption Certificate. Once it is completed and returned to our office, your account will be coded to not charge tax.

These certificates are mailed out every three years. Be sure to return yours each time you receive one.

Call our office with any questions. ☀

Winter outage kit

Winter is here, and along with winter comes storm-related outages. Don't be left out in the cold. Be prepared with an outage kit, which could include items such as:

- ▶ Candles, matches, flashlight and extra batteries
- ▶ Manual can opener and canned foods
- ▶ Wind-up or battery-operated clock
- ▶ Camp-type stove and fuel or barbecue grill (use outdoors only)
- ▶ Extra blankets and sleeping bags
- ▶ Battery-powered lamps
- ▶ Emergency phone numbers and at least one phone that operates without electricity

Space heaters

ELECTRIC space heaters can help warm a room quickly. However, they can be as dangerous as they are convenient if used improperly. Safe Electricity urges everyone in the home to understand the importance of using space heaters safely.

- ▶ Purchase only space heaters that have been tested for safety and are approved by the Underwriters Laboratory. Make sure the unit has an emergency tip-over shut-off feature and heating element guards. Read and follow the manufacturer's instructions for operation and care.
- ▶ Before using a space heater, make sure your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are in good working condition.
- ▶ Make sure the heater is clean and in good condition.
- ▶ Place the heater out of high-traffic areas and on a level, hard, non-flammable floor surface — NOT on carpets, furniture, or countertops.
- ▶ Space heaters have one purpose: to provide supplemental heating. Never use them to thaw pipes, cook food, or dry clothing or towels.
- ▶ Remember to keep space heaters at least 3 feet from combustible liquids such as fuel, spray cans, and paint, as well as flammable items such as draperies, blankets, and sofas.

- ▶ Never allow pets or children near an electric heater. Accidental contact could cause serious shock or burns.
- ▶ Do not overload circuits. Never use extension cords or multiple plugs with a space heater, and make sure not to plug the unit into the same circuit as other electric appliances.
- ▶ If your space heater is plugged into a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) and it trips, don't assume there is something wrong with the GFCI. Immediately stop using the heater until a professional can check it. If not, a serious shock could occur.
- ▶ Never leave space heaters unattended. Turn off your space heater and unplug it before leaving the room or going to bed.
- ▶ Replace older space heaters with newer, safer models.

Many people also use electric blankets to keep warm during cold winter nights. Before plugging in electric blankets, check for any damage, and inspect the cord for frays, cracks, or cuts. Do not tuck electric blankets under the mattress, and place nothing on top of the blanket while it's in use, including comforters and bedspreads. Don't allow pets to sleep on the electric blanket. ⚡

Attention landlords

Be sure when renting your properties out that you have the renter(s) put the account into their name(s). By putting the account in the renter's name, you as a landlord aren't responsible for any unpaid bills.

A credit check is run on any new member opening an account. The credit check determines how much deposit will be required. For those with excellent credit, no deposit is required. An average credit rating requires a \$125 deposit. A \$250 security deposit is required for individuals with below-average credit. Should a person have no credit history, a \$125 security deposit is needed.

To get electric service with New Enterprise REC, membership papers must be completed, and a \$5 membership fee needs to be paid. In addition, a security deposit of the above amount must be paid before an account can be transferred into a new person's name. Occasionally, a person has a prior obligation that needs to be taken care of before an account can be opened in their name.

So remember, be sure your renter takes care of their entire obligation with the co-op before you give them the keys. A call to our office to verify all paperwork has been completed and fees have been paid can be made before allowing them to move in.



Safe Electricity® Storm Safety Kit

- ▶ Drinking water & food
- ▶ Blankets, pillows & clothing
- ▶ Basic first-aid supplies
- ▶ Prescriptions
- ▶ Basic toiletries
- ▶ Flashlights
- ▶ Battery-operated radio
- ▶ Battery-operated clock
- ▶ Extra supply of batteries
- ▶ Phone
- ▶ Cash and credit cards
- ▶ Emergency numbers
- ▶ Important documents (in a waterproof container)
- ▶ Toys, books & games
- ▶ Baby supplies
- ▶ Pet supplies

12 Days of Holiday Safety

It's easy to make safety a part of your holiday with these tips. Tackle one a day and you're well on your way to a safe New Year!



ESFi
Electrical Safety Foundation International

Day 1 What's that noise? Test your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. Make sure everyone knows what to do if they hear them.

Day 5 Ouch! Prevent trips and falls by keeping cords safely along walls and out of doorways and high traffic areas.

Day 9 Nice and warm. Keep space heaters at least 3 feet away from anything that can burn — decorations, trees, gifts and curtains.

Day 2 What a shocker! Before use, inspect all electrical lights, decorations and extension cords for damage.

Day 6 Kids eat the darndest things! Avoid putting lights, metal hooks, breakable ornaments, and other small decorations within reach of young children.

Day 10 Can't touch this! Consider installing tamper-resistant outlets/receptacles to prevent kids from inserting objects into the slots.

Day 3 Two's company, three's a crowd. Do not overload outlets with too many decorations or devices.

Day 7 Thirsty? Keep your Christmas tree stand full of water. A fresh, green tree poses less of a fire hazard than a dry tree.

Day 11 Escape Route: Share your family fire escape plan with overnight guests.

Day 4 Is it working? Test your ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) and arc fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs) to make sure they're protecting you.

Day 8 Make a wish! Blow out the candles before leaving a room or going to bed.

Day 12 Hot stuff! Keep children away from cooking areas; use back burners and turn pot handles in away from little hands.

Buy American-made for Christmas

Why not purchase an American-made Christmas gift for a family member or friend this year? Unfortunately, American-made items are becoming harder and harder to find. But New Enterprise REC has a gift that isn't hard to find and makes shopping easy: gift certificates for electricity. Our gift certificates make a great gift for Christmas or anytime during the year. New Enterprise REC has gift certificates available year-round, but Christmas is the most popular time to buy them.

If you would like to purchase a gift certificate, please complete the certificate below. Should you like more than one, you can write the additional information on a piece of paper. Gift certificates can also be found on our website or purchased at the office. Amounts from the internet will not be posted to an account until a form of payment has been made.



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 Jones Family, Joe & Betty, etc.)

(Please circle one)

I wish to remain anonymous

Mail letter to recipient

Mail letter to purchaser