

New Enterprise Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives
serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

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Office Hours
Monday through Friday
7 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Emergency Outage Number
814-766-3221
1-800-270-3177

From the General Manager/CEO



Building into 2021

By Mark Morrison

OVER THE past eight decades, the board and management of New Enterprise Rural Electric Cooperative have strived to improve the quality of life within the cooperative service territory. All of those years were building blocks steering us to where we are today. 2020 was quite challenging for all of us, and it has impacted us all and the way we live and move as free people. Despite the changes brought about by government and the effects of COVID-19, the cooperative has adapted without missing a beat.

In the coming year, we will continue to build on the previous successes of the cooperative. Our right-of-way maintenance plan that was put into place years ago has put our system in a great position to handle adverse weather conditions we experience as our seasons change. While we cannot guarantee our system will always be tougher than Mother Nature, our six-year right-of-way cycle has placed us in a position to preserve the integrity of the distribution system and provide a reliable flow of electricity. Thanks to all our cooperative members who are always on alert for trees that may pose a threat to the line. As always, feel free to give us a call if you have a tree that you think may pose a threat to the line, and we will be more than happy to come out and take a look.

In April, the cooperative will take delivery of a new digger truck scheduled to replace our current digger that

has been serving the membership for the past 18 years. This will be a welcome addition to the cooperative and will be a key piece of equipment used to maintain existing and build new cooperative line.

As promised, this year we will be spending time and resources upgrading poles and conductor on a five-and-a-half-mile section of line located in Fulton County. This project will replace aging pole and conductor infrastructure serving members out of the Waterfall Substation. In addition to this project, the cooperative is also in the process of upgrading the Waterfall Substation, where we will be replacing the aging wood pole structure with an engineered steel package and increasing station capacity. This will give us the ability to backfeed other cooperative delivery points, providing members with continuity of service should the need arise.

Our current board and management are continuing to meet the standard of service and reliability set by those who came before us. We will continue to do our part to maintain a level of service the cooperative has always provided, through thoughtful, meaningful, and efficient use of time and resources, ensuring we have made the cooperative better than it was before.

Hoping you all have a happy and blessed New Year. Stop in or give us a call, and let us know how we are doing. ☀

Did you know....

- ▶ Bills are sent out the first part of every month. They should arrive before the 10th of the month
- ▶ Payment arrangements can be made by calling Brawna at extension 4602 or by emailing her at bsell@newenterpriserec.com

Ways to pay

- ▶ At the co-op office
 - ▶ At our two night deposit boxes. One is located beside the front entrance doors and the other is in our driveway
 - ▶ By mail
 - ▶ With Auto Pay — With Auto Pay, your bill is deducted from your checking or savings account or charged to your credit/debit card on the 20th of each month
- MasterCard, Visa and Discover cards are accepted
- ▶ On our website, newenterpriserec.com, by credit/debit card or by check
 - ▶ By phone with credit/debit card or checking account
 - ▶ With your smartphone or tablet. Go to your Apple Store or Google Play to download the free app, SmartHub

Online banking payments

- ▶ When you use your bank's website to pay your electric bill, it may not be paid to New Enterprise REC until after the due date. These bank payments are mailed to us. Payments received after the due date are charged a penalty. Instead of going to your bank's website, why not log onto to our website, newenterpriserec.com? You can pay your bill using a checking account or MasterCard, Visa, or Discover card. Your payment is posted to your account within a few minutes, avoiding mail deliveries and unnecessary penalties
- ▶ You can schedule your payments 30 days in advance through our website. So you choose the date the payment is posted to your account and removed from your financial account
- ▶ There are no fees charged for us to accept your payment

When to pay

- ▶ The due date is the 23rd of the month. If the 23rd falls on a weekend or holiday, the due date is the business day after the 23rd. **Always look at your bill to confirm the due date**
- ▶ Yard lights can be rented from the cooperative at \$8.50 per month. All maintenance work is done by co-op employees without any additional charge. Just contact the office if your light isn't working properly

Family in Need Fund

The Family in Need Fund is a program that helps families in need of hardship assistance. Consumer-members volunteering for this round-up program agree to have their monthly bill rounded up to the nearest dollar, with the extra change going to the Family in Need Fund. A one-time payment can also be made. Let us know you want the amount to go to Family in Need. This is a tax-deductible program that assists New Enterprise REC consumer-members ONLY.

Sales tax

New Enterprise REC is required by the state of Pennsylvania to charge sales tax on any meter not having a *Pennsylvania Sales Tax Blanket Exemption Certificate*.

These certificates are updated every three years. Should a certificate not come back, sales tax is charged to your account. So it is very important to return these certificates.

If you get a form and your account is a business, write "taxable" on your certificate and return it.

Look at this month's bill. Is sales tax being charged? Call the office to have a *Pennsylvania Sales Tax Blanket Exemption Certificate* sent to you.

Life support

For some members, electric service is more than a convenience; it

is a necessity. New Enterprise REC realizes some homes are equipped with life-sustaining medical equipment that requires a reliable source of power. Our commitment to you is to provide electric service safely and with as few interruptions as possible.

Unfortunately, outages occur due to unpredictable acts such as severe weather, animal interference, broken tree limbs, fire or accidents. If your health or the health of someone in your household depends on electricity, we offer the following suggestions and strongly encourage you to implement them:

- ▶ Obtain a backup source of power recommended by the manufacturer of your equipment you have in your home. For example, battery backups or standby generators can provide you with electric power if service from the cooperative is interrupted
- ▶ Talk with relatives or friends today and devise a plan whereby the individual who relies on this equipment will have somewhere to stay in the event of a power outage
- ▶ Let Bobbi at our office know of the situation. Her phone number is 814-766-3221 or 800-270-3177, extension 4606. She will mail you a form to be completed by your physician
- ▶ By having this form on file, your account will be marked as having life-sustaining equipment. Even though your account is marked, this does not guarantee uninterrupted electric service, nor does it guarantee immediate attention to your individual service during an outage

Unauthorized pole attachments

Electric poles are intended to only have equipment used to provide electricity to our consumer-members. Unfortunately, that isn't always the case. Below are some examples of things that SHOULD NOT be on an electric pole:

- ▶ Satellite dishes
- ▶ Birdhouses, flower boxes or basketball hoops
- ▶ Deer stands
- ▶ 911 address signs
- ▶ Signs
- ▶ Nails, staples or tacks

The above are just a few examples of things we have seen on poles. Should these items be found on a pole, they will be removed. The cost of removing the items will be charged to the consumer-member.

What to do in case of an outage

- ▶ Check your fuses or breakers
- ▶ Check with your neighbors to see if they have power
- ▶ Call New Enterprise REC at 814-766-3221 or 800-270-3177. During business hours, press 3 to report an outage. After hours, listen to the message for instructions of leaving a message
- ▶ Have the following information ready: account name, service location, contact telephone number for a return call and time the power went out
- ▶ Let the co-op know if you saw any problems such as a broken pole, lines down, trees or limbs on the electric lines, etc.

Budget Billing

What is Budget Billing? With Budget Billing, the computer looks back at your past 12 months of electricity use, averages it and rounds to the nearest \$10. This is done each month to keep your budget amount in line. Should your budget amount need to be increased or decreased, the computer will automatically do this. This helps many people with those large winter bills. There are only three requirements to be put on Budget Billing:

1. The account balance must be zero
2. All budget payments must be paid on or before the due date each month
3. You need to have been receiving electricity from this account for one year. If you are interested in being on Budget Billing or have questions, please feel free to contact Wendy at extension 4612.

Storm checklist

BE SURE to assemble supplies to have on hand rather than rushing around when the storm is coming and waiting in long lines for milk or bread. Rotate your supplies to keep them fresh, and use the following checklist to prepare for power outages:

Have plenty of food

- ▶ Keep a 3-5-day supply of drinking water in plastic bottles. Plan on at least 1 gallon of water per person, per day.
- ▶ Store a manual can opener with enough nonperishable foods for 3-5 days. Canned meats, tuna fish and peanut butter are good foods to store. Don't forget pet foods!
- ▶ Conserve water by using paper plates and plastic utensils.
- ▶ Have a camp stove or grill for outdoor cooking.

Keep things going

- ▶ Keep plenty of gas in your car.
- ▶ Keep extra batteries, matches, propane, charcoal and firewood.

Stay in touch

- ▶ Have a portable, battery-powered radio and alarm clock.
- ▶ Have one non-portable phone that will work even if power is interrupted.
- ▶ Plan where to meet and how to communicate with family members if separated.
- ▶ Keep essential family member con-

tact information near your phone, in your wallet and in your glove compartment.

Stay happy, healthy and warm

- ▶ Coordinate with neighbors for care of the elderly and disabled living alone.
- ▶ Maintain a supply of prescriptions, nonprescription drugs, vitamins and special dietary foods.
- ▶ Playing cards, books, drawing and writing supplies, and board games help pass the time. If you have a video camera and tapes, your family can make a storm documentary.
- ▶ Keep sanitary and personal hygiene supplies replenished. Premoistened cleansing towelettes are useful and help conserve water.
- ▶ Use plastic trash bags and ties for garbage.
- ▶ Put first-aid kits in your home and car.
- ▶ Make sure you have cold-weather clothing, foul-weather gear, blankets and sleeping bags.
- ▶ Consider purchasing alternative UL-approved heating devices. For example, a fireplace insert or woodstove will keep the heat in your home instead of up the chimney.
- ▶ Use flashlights and other battery-operated lighting instead of candles.
- ▶ Keep fire extinguishers fully charged.
- ▶ Fill your bathtub with water for bathroom use before the storm (if you have a well). ☀

Critical Care List

The Critical Care List tells New Enterprise which consumer-members on our system depend on electricity for in-home medical equipment. While we do everything we can to prevent interruptions in electrical service, outages do happen. Most outages can be taken care of within a couple of hours, but unfortunately, some last longer.

During these outages, we do our best to get each of our consumer-members back in power as soon as possible. Those on our Critical Care List are given higher priority. Even though higher priority is given, outages may still be lengthy. Plans should be made in advance for unexpected outages. This could include extra bottles of oxygen or a "calling tree" of friends, family, or caregivers who can be called upon during these emergencies. For planned outages, we make every attempt to contact people with medical equipment.

To be put on the Critical Care List, a form needs to be completed by your physician. Call Bobbi at our office at extension 4606 for the proper form. Once we receive it back, we will add your name to the list.

If you already have a form on file, you do not have to call for another one. We do update these records once a year. If your form isn't returned, your name will be removed from the list. It is very important to get your form completed and back in our office.

Again, being on this list is not a full assurance that things will be OK, but it helps everyone involved make the best of the situation. New Enterprise REC is proud that we have one of the lowest outage ratings in the state. Maintaining a working Critical Care List is just a part of our outage management system.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Placing hot food in the refrigerator makes the appliance work harder than necessary, using more energy. Allow food to cool down before you place it in the fridge.



Space heaters – warmth vs. cost

By Wendy Conley,
Customer Service Representative

AS THE COLD weather has approached us, some members are considering the use of space heaters as supplemental heat. Most heaters are 1,500 watts, and regardless of the size and style of the heater, they produce the same amount of heat. They differ in the way the heat is dispersed. A radiant heater will give you direct warmth, while a conventional heater will warm the room. The conventional heater works well as long as it is temperature-controlled in a confined room. When you are trying to heat a large open room, the savings are sent right out the window.

We are asked frequently how much a heater of this type costs to run. Again, it depends on the type of room you are heating and how often you

are using the heater. If you are using the heater 24/7, you can add approximately \$100 on top of your normal utility bill. You would see a small increase on your bill if you are using the heater to heat a small enclosed room such as a bathroom and then turn it off after the room is warm.

When purchasing a heater, try to find one with a temperature control. When the desired heat is achieved, then the heater will kick off. This will help with savings as the heater would



not be running continuously. Also, turn back your main heating system thermostat while using the heater if you are not using it in a confined room. Select a heater that will turn off automatically if it falls over. ⚡

Smart management. Smart life. SmartHub

LIFE IS FAST, and it can be hectic, but it doesn't all have to be complicated. Paying your New Enterprise Rural Electric Cooperative (REC) bill shouldn't be a complex task, and with our SmartHub web and mobile app, it won't be.

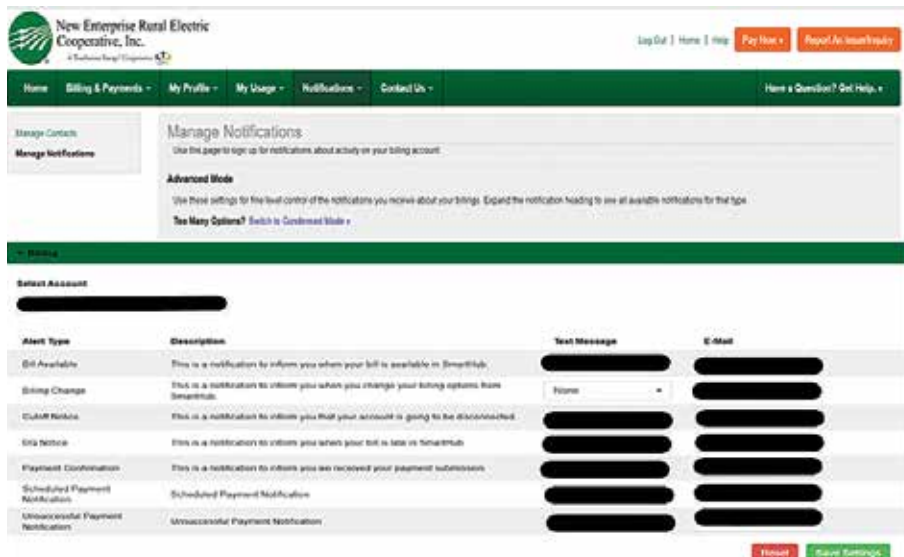
You may have heard about SmartHub,

our innovative tool for account management, but what can it do for you? SmartHub can help you take control of your New Enterprise REC account like never before, giving you more time to focus on other responsibilities.

With SmartHub you can be notified

by email or text. Below are a few notifications you can set up:

- ▶ When your bill is available
- ▶ When your meter is going to be disconnected for non-payment
- ▶ When your payment has been received
- ▶ A reminder for a scheduled payment
- ▶ A reminder your payment is due



Access SmartHub by visiting newenterpriserec.com or by downloading the app on your mobile device through the Apple App Store (iOS devices) or Google Play Marketplace (Android devices).

Plenty of things in life are complicated. Manage your New Enterprise REC account simply, quickly and easily with SmartHub. ⚡