

Holmes- Wayne

Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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HWEC's commitment to affordable electricity

Each month, you budget for your phone, electricity, house and car payments. Generally you know how much each bill will cost and plan your spending accordingly. But what if you couldn't control your energy costs? What if, each month, they climbed beyond your reach?

At Holmes-Wayne Electric Cooperative, we deliver affordable power to you every day. It's why electric cooperatives were created, and it's a commitment we plan to keep. But national energy legislation could force prices higher than many consumers can afford, effectively taking us back to the dawn of the 20th century.

In the 1920s and early '30s, central station electric service was a luxury that only 10 percent of rural residents nationwide enjoyed — and those who had power paid dearly for it. When Franklin D. Roosevelt visited Warm Springs, Ga., in 1924, he was dismayed to find electricity for his small cottage cost four times what it did at his estate in New York. After being elected president, he created the federal Rural Electrification Administration by executive order to make power affordable for all Americans. As a result, electric co-ops were born.

Innovations in line building pioneered by co-op engineers and the competitive pressure co-ops placed on investor-owned utilities to serve rural areas slashed the cost of providing electric service in the countryside by 50 percent or more. In the decades since, co-ops have established a proven track record of offering stable and affordable electric rates. Data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), in fact, shows that, since 2000, co-op electric rates have consistently run lower than the industry average. This is further proof that we're committed to keeping electricity bills within your means.

But the struggle for affordable power that farmers and their neighbors fought three-quarters of a century ago has flared up again. EIA predicts the price of electricity for residential consumers will climb dramatically. A large factor in that price change will be based on the outcome of climate change legislation by Congress. Current proposals in Congress could as much as double your electric bill.

Electric cooperatives are needed once again to make sure affordable power will be available in 2030 and beyond. Our job, (Continued on page 26)

President's Report

By
Glenn Miller



Our Energy, Our Future
A Dialogue With America

HWEC commitment

(—continued from page 25)

on your behalf, is to work closely with Congress to find the best solutions for addressing climate change while keeping the price of electricity within your means.

Holmes-Wayne Electric remains committed to providing you with safe, reliable and affordable power — but we need your help. Through the “Our Energy, Our Future”™ grassroots awareness campaign, co-op consumer members across the nation are speaking out about the importance of keeping electric bills affordable. New energy and climate change policies being debated in Congress could turn your monthly budget upside-down. Now is the time to ask our elected officials: Will you please work with electric cooperatives to be sure public policy meets my need for affordable electricity?

Visit www.ourenergy.coop today and send an e-mail to your elected representatives sharing your concern.

Spring farm safety

by CHRIS GRAMMES

Those who live on a farm know that not only is it hard work, but it can be dangerous, too. Each year, farmers are electrocuted when large farm machinery comes into contact with overhead power lines.

Often, the situation occurs because a newer, bigger piece of equipment no longer clears a line the way a smaller one did. In addition, shifting soil may also affect whether or not machinery avoids power lines from year to year.

The following tips will help keep everyone on a farm safe:

Look over work areas carefully for overhead power lines and utility poles.

Make sure you have ample clearance when moving large machinery such as planters, combines, grain augers, pickers, balers and front-end loaders.

Do this every year as equipment sizes or soil conditions may change.

Store large equipment properly if near or under power lines.

When planning new construction, factor in existing power lines.

Be extra careful when working around trees and brush; they often make it difficult to see power lines.

Train all farm workers to keep an eye out for overhead power lines.

Sources: *Safe Electricity* www.safeelectricity

Energy Policy 101

An ever-growing list of terms and acronyms describe aspects of public policy that can have a very real impact on electric bills at home. As energy policy gets shaped through the actions of a new administration and Congress, expect to hear more about the terms below.



Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS)

Laws passed by 28 states and Washington, D.C., (as of 2008) that require investor-owned utilities, some municipal electric systems, and electric generation suppliers to add increasing amounts of ‘clean and green’ energy to their power supply mix by a certain date. Eighteen states call for electric co-ops to meet RPS mandates.



Clean Renewable Energy Bonds (CREBs)

Federal bonds that act as interest-free loans and provide not-for-profit electric co-ops with a way to invest in renewable generation. Co-ops had used \$450 million in CREBs for renewable generation projects by the end of 2008.



Production Tax Credit (PTC)

A federal tax incentive designed to support the introduction of new renewable energy sources (such as wind, geothermal, biomass, and small hydropower) by investor-owned utilities. Electric co-ops are not eligible for the PTC, but can use CREBs for the same purpose.



Cap and Trade

A system of regulating greenhouse gases (GHG), like carbon dioxide, where each source (like a power plant) has a limit placed on the amount of gases it can release—the cap. Those who emit less than the cap can sell their extra allowances to those who are not able to make reductions as easily—the trade.



Carbon Tax

A proposed tax on energy sources that emit carbon dioxide, based on the carbon content of a particular fuel, meant to curb both carbon emissions and consumption of coal, natural gas, and oil. The resulting revenue could be used to fund environmental projects, reduce other taxes, or returned to taxpayers via rebates.

Source: National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

Do you live in Wayne County or Ashland County?

If you answered “yes” to the above question, we want to notify you of a future billing change for your Holmes-Wayne Electric monthly bill.

“As a growing organization with over 18,000 accounts processed per month, it is time to transition into a two-bill cycle,” said HWEC Billing Supervisor Lisa Baker. “Currently, all accounts go through the same billing cycle. As we continue to grow, we are at the point in our numbers that maintaining one cycle billing could create some bottlenecks throughout the month. By dividing our service territory into two separate billing cycles, we are allowing the cooperative to manage processes efficiently for future growth.”

Starting in May, members living in Ashland or Wayne counties will have their bills processed around the middle of the month and will be due the following 5th day of the month.

Members should note that the bill received in July will be for a longer time period. This transition is being implemented during a low-consumption period, spring time, when neither heating nor air conditioning is significantly used, in order to avoid any exceptionally high bills.

“We are using every communication route possible to make this transition as easy as possible for our members,” Baker explained. “Members will receive communication not only through this publication, but additional reminders with their monthly bills, and phone call reminders.”

If you have any questions regarding your billing process, please feel free to contact the office toll-free at 866-674-1055.

Celebrate Earth Day 2009 in Wooster

Join us at the second annual OSU Wooster Campus Scarlet, Gray and Green Fair on April 22 (Earth Day) and see what it means to say, “Green is for Life!”

The 2009 Green Fair will build on the success of the 2008 fair, which was a signature community event with more than 1,700 participants, 105 exhibitors and 32 sponsors who contributed a total of \$18,500.

There again will be more than 100 exhibits featuring sustainable products, services and tech-

niques that you can use to help green your life, home and community, such as plug-in battery and hybrid vehicles, solar panels, wind turbines, energy-saving building materials, organic foods, composting and water conservation products, environmental displays, bio-safe home products, battery-powered bicycles and

much, much more.

In addition, there will be demonstrations, student contests and locally grown and prepared foods. Doors open at 11 a.m. for the opening ceremonies, and the fair runs from 11:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The fair will be held at and around Fisher Auditorium at 1680 Madison Avenue on the

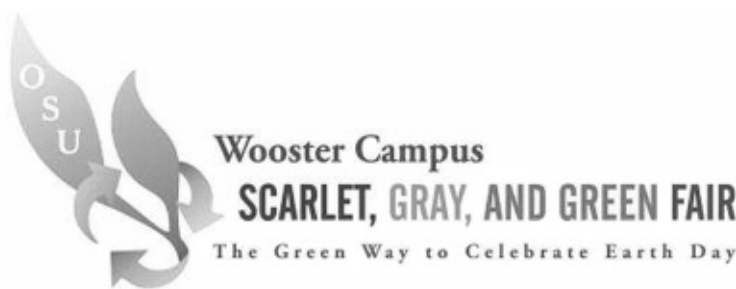
OARDC campus in Wooster.

Holmes-Wayne Electric Cooperative is a proud sponsor of the fair and is looking forward to participating in this educational event. We

again will have displays on green energy, energy-efficient light bulbs, electric safety and, new this year, our plug-in hybrid electric vehicle. We hope to see you there!

Admission is totally free and open to all.

Further detailed information is available at www.wcsen.org/WCSGGF.



Called to help again

It has been a long, cold winter in Ohio with many record-low temperatures. We all are waiting for the warm, mild winds of spring. HVEC also saw a record year of calls made by sister cooperatives requesting assistance with electric outage restoration, both within Ohio and out of state.

As you may have read in previous publications, the calls came as early as September with Hurricane Gustav. HVEC crews assisted with power restoration in Louisiana for a cooperative with more than 100,000 accounts without power. The two crews returned home two days before hurricane-force winds, created by the combination of a cold front and the remnants of Hurricane Ike, arrived in Ohio and played havoc on our own distribution system.

As noted last month, a few days before Christmas, four members of our HVEC staff, along with equipment, headed to western Ohio to assist in restoration of damage resulting from an ice storm that impacted northwestern Ohio. The triple-whammy of an ice storm, sub-zero temperatures and high winds caused power outages that placed more than 13,000 Ohio electric cooperative members into the dark.

By late January, southern Ohio was hit with ice while we received only a significant snowfall. Cooperatives along the Ohio River requested assistance and HVEC linemen responded again.

Class A linemen Mike Rowe, Al Schonauer and Jeff Young and Apprentice Lineman Josh Johnson assisted in restoration efforts of more than 50,000 cooperative members who found themselves without power. Within a few days, Kentucky was asking for help from one of the worst natural disasters the state had faced. Class A linemen Fred Combs, Steve James, Mike Martin, Daryl Reynolds and apprentice linemen Darin Stefano and Steve Asbury spent almost two weeks assisting with restoration efforts.

Two weeks after the severe ice storm that coated Kentucky and other southern states, the Midwest again saw high winds and HVEC service territory experienced 80 mph winds that created a need for restoration during a 24-hour period. Upon all HVEC members having been restored, linemen again assisted other cooperatives — this time in West Virginia. Class A Lineman Harry Morris and Apprentice Lineman Josh Johnson restored power to members in West Virginia who remained without power from the wind storm.

“It really says a lot about our organization and the linemen here at Holmes-Wayne,” said Glenn Miller, president/CEO. “Many of them have young families, and on a short notice for several weeks they are willing to leave their families and work in rough weather conditions to restore power to complete strangers. They not only are committed to serving the members of Holmes-Wayne Electric, but also are willing to share their talents with other rural cooperatives in need.”



Stay plugged in to what's happening with your electric cooperative at your annual meeting.

**Holmes-Wayne Electric Cooperative
will hold its Annual Meeting on
Thursday, June 25 at
West Holmes High School.**

Receive Trustee election results, updates on local and national issues, take part in health and information fairs and enjoy a delicious dinner. Keep reading *Country Living* for more information on this year's Annual Meeting.