



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT/CEO

Unplug with meaningful community programs

Most adults have a vague memory of a time when “checking for messages” meant listening to an answering machine. We carried on with our days without relying on cellphones and managed just fine. But today, we are more connected than ever through our smartphones and other devices.

Our phones are so much more now — from cameras to calendars to social media connections — and truly disconnecting from them can be tough. But it’s even harder for our kids to unplug because they only know life with these tiny screens. It’s difficult for them to imagine life without computers, gaming devices, tablets, or cellphones.

But there’s great value in unplugging for children *and* adults, even if it’s for just a short period of time. For kids, time away from the screen to be outside with other children allows them to connect with nature and others in a way that a virtual experience simply does not allow. They are able to experience life in the moment and allow their creativity and energy to break free.

Fortunately, we have access to great community programs and organizations like 4-H, outdoor education camps, and FFA that provide children and teens with a safe place to play, learn, and grow, while cultivating new skills and interests.

These types of clubs and programs offer kids an opportunity to explore activities and interests outside of school academics. Children can investigate areas they might not otherwise have access to and discover new interests and passions. They often learn new skills and strengthen existing ones. It’s no secret that the broader the range of experiences and activities children are exposed to, the more likely they are to find their own path and possibly a career. Community programs also foster important leadership development and public speaking skills. Through guided and informal play and activities, children learn problem-solving and interpersonal skills that enable them to resolve conflicts peacefully and improve interpersonal relationships.

Adults can also find meaningful opportunities to spend time with the kids when we all unplug. From board games to craft projects to playing in the park, there are many ways we can unplug for some family fun.

While you and your children are disconnecting, take a moment to identify potential energy savings. Unplug electronics that are not in use to avoid “vampire” energy loss. This is the energy that is drained from technology and electronics even when they are not in use. For example, although it is turned off, your TV is waiting to receive a signal from the remote and your DVR is waiting to record the next show or perform an update.

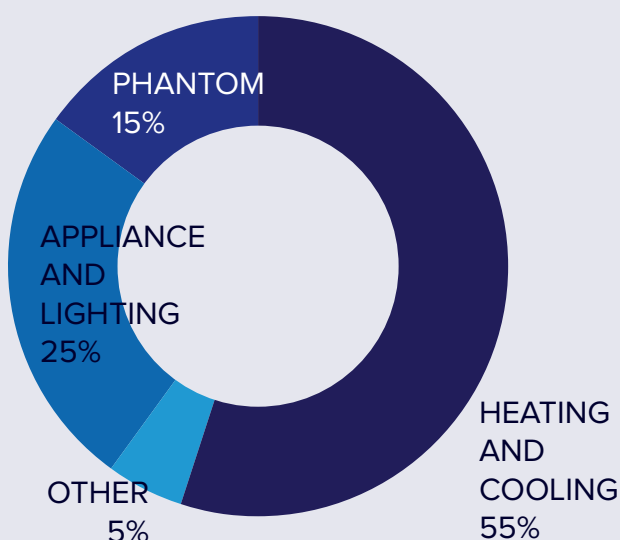
Let’s encourage youngsters to step away from the screens to play and be part of an organization that helps them connect with others and find meaningful interactions and explore new activities and interests.

When you do plug back in, Holmes-Wayne Electric Cooperative is here to help you save money and energy by connecting you with our energy-saving programs and services. While we’d love to see you in person, we’re also just a call or click away.



Glenn W. Miller
PRESIDENT/CEO

UNPLUG AND SAVE





In a blink

Have you ever noticed your lights blinking during a thunderstorm? Or perhaps you've noticed a blinking microwave clock when you arrive home. When this happens, you've likely experienced a brief disruption to your electric service, which is a result of a power blink.

What's a power blink?

Power blinks are brief service interruptions, but they're typically caused by a fault (short circuit) on a power line or a protective device that's working in reaction to the fault. Faults can occur through a variety of instances, like squirrels, birds, or other small animals contacting an energized power line; tree branches touching a power line; or lightning and other similar events. In fact, when it comes to power disruptions caused by critters, squirrels reign supreme.

How do we limit/prevent blinks?

We may not be able to control the wildlife in our community, but we do invest over \$1 million a year in right-of-way management. This includes a four-year cycle of trimming and vegetation management. One tree contact can cause an outage for thousands and is the reason why it is critical that we manage the tree growth near our lines. Not only do clear rights-of-way help reduce power outages, but they also assist our crews in working in a safe environment to maintain lines and efficiently restore power.

How you can help

As a member you also can help by not planting trees near our power lines and notifying us of any trees that are leaning in our rights-of-way, especially after storms. Also, members have assisted by notifying us of dead trees that are outside of the rights-of-way but are large enough that they could fall onto our lines. With your help, we can continue to limit blinks and outages that are caused by tree/limb contact.

Blinks mean the infrastructure safety equipment is working

Any of the events noted above can cause your power to blink, but you may also experience a brief interruption when protective devices that act like circuit breakers are working to detect the fault. Believe it or not, these brief power blinks caused by protective devices are actually good because that means the equipment is working as it should to prevent a prolonged outage. Otherwise, every time a critter or tree limb makes contact, you would experience an outage.

Regardless of the cause of your blink, Holmes-Wayne Electric's staff works year-round to provide you with reliable electric service. Staff members design new services to prevent faults, crews clear the rights-of-way, and, always, our line crews will be on their way to inspect the damage and make necessary repairs after a power outage.

2021 VEGETATION MANAGEMENT SCHEDULE



Tree Trimming

- Alpine
- Hefferline
- Moreland
- Sugarcreek
- Trail



Spraying

- Reedsburg
- Ripley
- West Millersburg



Plant it ...
to shade
your house
not our power lines.



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TIPS FOR A SAFE HARVEST

In addition to being one of the most labor-intensive professions, farming is also considered one of the most dangerous jobs in the U.S.

Agriculture is the backbone of our country, and our livelihood greatly depends on the crops provided by American farmers. In addition to being one of the most labor-intensive professions, farming is also considered one of the most dangerous jobs in the U.S.

The hard work and long hours are tough, but rushing the job to save time can be extremely dangerous — even deadly — when farming near electrical equipment.

Every year, we see collisions where tractors and other farming equipment accidentally collide with utility poles and power lines, causing injuries and power outages. These dangerous accidents can be avoided by looking up and around your surroundings when operating large farm machinery. If you're preparing for harvest season, please keep the following safety tips in mind:

- Maintain a 10-foot clearance around all utility equipment in all directions.

- Use a spotter and deployed flags to maintain safe distances from power lines and other electrical equipment when working in the field.
- If your equipment makes contact with an energized or downed power line, contact 9-1-1 immediately and remain inside the vehicle until the power line is de-energized. In case of smoke or fire, exit the cab by making a solid jump out of the cab (without touching it), and hop away to safety.
- Consider equipment and cargo extensions of your vehicle. Lumber, hay, tree limbs, irrigation pipes, and even bulk materials can conduct electricity, so keep them out of contact with electrical equipment.

September 19–25 is National Farm Health and Safety Week, but practicing safety on the farm year-round yields positive results. We hope you never find yourself in a situation where farming equipment contacts power lines or poles, but if you do, we hope you'll remember these safety tips.



**Holmes-Wayne
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*Providing reliable
electricity while
maintaining beauty*

Right-of-way tree clearing and vegetation control allows for reliable electricity for our members. EPA-approved herbicide targets woody plants only, and in doing so, we are promoting wildflowers and grasses.



HOLMES-WAYNE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE LOCAL PAGES

Congratulations to HWECC staff member

Nolan Hartzler



Nolan completed his associate of applied science degree at Collin Community College in geospatial information science. He is responsible for managing the cooperative's geographical information system (GIS) and supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) program.

Nolan also manages all GPS projects and maintains the mapping database. His direction of our outage management system and daily field work dispatching is critical to cooperative operations.

Nolan's role allows the cooperative to efficiently monitor power load and key infrastructure systems and remotely transfer equipment controls. This contributes to the safety of our field staff and also allows for preventive maintenance and outages as well as efficient power restorations.

The outage management system allows all staff to view HWECC's entire system electronically from the field, office, and home, including a visual map of location of trucks, data of all poles, transformers, regulators, and substations at a click of button. This is essential during regular business tasks as well as during outage scenarios.

Such examples include a recent car/pole accident. Crews could view electronically the pole size based on data information to immediately know what size and equipment located on the pole needed to be loaded on trucks to restore power. Nolan can place certain lines on a non-reclosing switch, creating another layer of safety for working crews.

Congratulations, Nolan, and thank you for your dedication to our community to keeping our staff safe and the power flowing!



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CONTACT

866-674-1055 (toll-free)

www.hwecoop.com

OFFICE

6060 St. Rte. 83

P.O. Box 112

Millersburg, OH 44654-0112

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