

# From the CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER:

## Looking back, moving forward



**by Craig Eccher**  
*Executive Vice President  
and Chief Operating Officer*

The new year greeted us here at Tri-County with more than the normal sense of reflection and anticipation. Seven of our long-term employees retired last fall. These employees, with a combined 175 years of experience, were an important part of our workforce and will certainly be missed.

Employees who retired in December were Elizabeth Diehl, staff assistant; Alex Hartley, director of member services; Keith "Bud" Sutton, manager of contract services; Bert

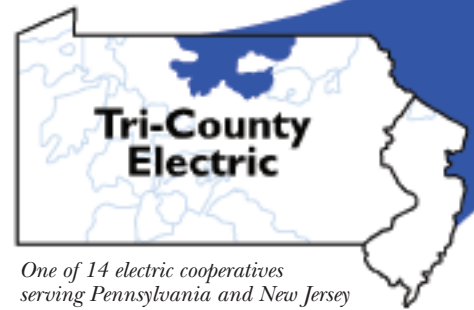
Cunningham, vice president of human resources; Eleanor Conrad, manager of member accounting; Frank Weeks, manager of field services; and Dick Davey, manager of purchasing.

I offer my thanks to each of these new retirees for their many years of dedicated service to the cooperative and wish them the best in their future endeavors.

With the departure of these fine folks, we made some changes to our operating structure. By reallocating some of the duties and responsibilities within our departments, we are able to operate more efficiently while taking full advantage of the many skills our existing employees bring to the table. This reorganization also allows us to achieve additional synergies and further strengthen our partnership with our sister cooperative to the east, Claverack Rural Electric.

Most of the organizational changes stem from restructuring of our Engineering and Operations departments. Traditionally, our Engineering Department handled functions related to system design, system upgrades, and new construction; the Operations Department took care of system maintenance, outage restoration, connections and disconnections, and other member-service requests.

Because virtually all of these functions involve personnel from both departments, we decided to consolidate them and put engineering and operations under common leadership. John Lykens, previously the senior director of operations for Claverack and Tri-County, has been promoted to the new position of director of engineering and operations. His services will continue to be



*One of 14 electric cooperatives  
serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey*

shared by both cooperatives.

We also created two additional positions within this department — manager of technical services and manager of purchasing. Both positions will provide services to Claverack and Tri-County.

Steven Allabaugh, a licensed professional engineer, has been hired as manager of technical services. In addition to supervising electronic technicians at both cooperatives, Steve will provide Claverack and Tri-County with engineering services that were previously handled by outside consultants.

At the time of this writing, we were still in the process of hiring a manager of purchasing, who will be responsible for equipment purchases, as well as facilities and fleet management, for both co-ops.

On the Tri-County side, long-time co-op employee Gary Dunn has been named manager of field operations. In his new capacity, Gary will oversee all field operations for Tri-County, including new service construction and design, and line maintenance and repair.

Two more veteran Tri-County employees, journeyman linemen Gerald Duffee and Tim McCurdy, have also accepted supervisory positions within the Engineering and Operations Department. Gerald has

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### Tri-County Rural Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

22 North Main Street • P.O. Box 526  
Mansfield, PA 16933  
Mansfield – 570/662-2175  
Coudersport – 814/274-8740  
Web Site: [www.tri-countyrec.com](http://www.tri-countyrec.com)  
E-mail: [trico@epix.net](mailto:trico@epix.net)

**For Emergencies call**  
1-800-343-2559

### Robert O. Toombs *President & CEO*

#### Staff

Craig Eccher <i>Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer</i>	Barbara Johnson <i>Director, Financial Services</i>
Annette Bender <i>Executive Assistant</i>	John Lykens <i>Sr. Director, Engineering &amp; Operations</i>
Bryan Berguson <i>Director, Member Services</i>	

### Board of Directors

James R. Davis <i>Chairman</i>	Gerald A. Kite <i>Vice Chairman</i>
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### Office Hours

7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. (Mon.-Fri.)

# Understanding watts behind your electric consumption

by Jeff Fetzer

**W**hen you flip on a light switch, fire up the electric range, or plug in a refrigerator, you consume electricity, which is measured in kilowatt-hours (kWh). However, you may not realize how much electricity various appliances and electronic devices in your home use when they are running.

Knowing kWh consumption, though, can help you make wise conservation choices.

A kilowatt-hour equals 1,000 watts of electricity used over one hour's time. A 100-watt light bulb would have to be on continuously for 10 hours to use one kWh. If you were to use a 100-watt bulb for an hour, you would consume 0.1 kWh. At Tri-County's retail rate of roughly 11 cents per kWh, one hour of light would cost a little over a penny.

Some appliances, especially those that generate heat, use much more electricity. An electric space heater, for example, might use a 1,500-watt element. As a result, for each hour that it operates, it uses 1.5 kWh.

With electricity supplied by Tri-County, the rate you pay per kWh may vary with the amount you use. For residential members, our current rate is 11.1 cents for the first 800 kWh per month and 9.9 cents for everything topping 800 kWh.

Using these rates, a 100-watt light bulb left on for 10 hours a day for a month is going to show up on your light bill as about \$3.30. Using a space heater for the same amount of time is going to cost nearly \$49.50 a month.

While turning off the lights every time you leave a room — or better yet, switching to extremely efficient compact fluorescent lighting — can shave a few dollars off your electric bill, you will get a much bigger bang for your buck by reducing the amount of hours that the space heater runs.

## Calculating costs

You can calculate how much it costs to power just about anything in your home if you know the wattage rating of the appliance or electronic device, which is typically listed on a label or serial plate attached to the product. Simply multiply the wattage by the total hours you use the appliance each month and divide by 1,000. This will give you the kilowatt-hours used each month. Finally, multiply the kilowatt-hours by the current energy rate to determine the monthly cost of the appliance.

For those who are mathematically inclined, the formula for calculating an appliance's energy use and cost (in cents per kWh) looks like this:

$$\frac{\text{Appliance wattage} \times \text{hours in use}}{1,000} \times 11 \text{ cents } (.11) = \text{Average cost}$$

The chart below shows some common appliances found in the home, along with the average wattage rating of the appliance, the typical number of kilowatt-hours per month the appliance would be used, and the estimated cost of operating the appliance for one month based on Tri-County's existing average rate of approximately 11 cents per kWh. Please note that these costs are approximations, as actual numbers will vary due to the age and efficiency of the appliance, time or volume of use, and temperature settings.

For energy use tips or further information, please call the Tri-County Member Services Department at 1-800-343-2559.

Load	Average wattage	Estimated kWh consumed monthly	Cost per month
Air Conditioner, room: (6,000 Btu/hour) – EER 5	1,200	133	\$14.63
(12,000 Btu/hour) – EER 6	2,000	222	\$24.42
Clock	4	3	\$0.33
Clothes Dryer (five loads per week)	5,000	100	\$11.00
Coffee Maker	894	12	\$1.32
Computer	170	10	\$1.10
Dehumidifier	500	360	\$39.60
Dishwasher	1,200	30	\$3.30
Fan-Window	200	40	\$4.40
Freezer: Standard (15 cu.ft.)	340	134	\$14.74
Frost-free (15 cu.ft.)	440	150	\$16.50
Furnace fan (cold month)	300	130	\$14.30
Hair dryer	1,000	3	\$0.33
Heater – portable (three hrs./day)	1,350	122	\$13.42
Humidifier	80	20	\$2.20
Iron	1,100	11	\$1.21
Lighting (based on five hrs./day)			
Incandescent bulb	100	15	\$1.65
Compact fluorescent bulb	25	4	\$0.44
Microwave oven	1,450	23	\$2.53
Range	12,000	100	\$11.00
Refrigerator-Freezer: Standard (12 - 16 cu.ft.)	400	125	\$13.75
Frost free (12 to 16 cu.ft.)	600	165	\$18.15
Sewing machine	60	45	\$4.95
Satellite dish	75	1	\$0.11
Slow Cooker	200	24	\$2.64
Stereo	150	70	\$7.70
Television – Color	200	24	\$2.64
Toaster	1,100	4	\$0.44
Vacuum cleaner	700	5	\$0.55
VCR	75	5	\$0.55
Washer (automatic)	600	12	\$1.32
Water heater: Standard	2,500	110/person	\$12.10/person
Quick recovery	4,500	160/person	\$17.60/person
Water pump: Deep	1,736	60	\$6.60
Shallow	1,060	30	\$3.30

## Looking back, moving forward

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been promoted to the position of district operations supervisor and will oversee day-to-day operations of the co-op's five line crews.

In his new role as manager of contract services, Tim will be responsible for overseeing the co-op's right-of-way maintenance efforts and contracted line construction crew activities.

We'll also be seeing change within our Member Services Department as Bryan Berguson has been named director of member services. Bryan has worked for our affiliated companies, Wellsboro Electric and C&T Enterprises, for many years, most recently as vice president of information technology.

As difficult as it was to say goodbye to our longtime co-workers who retired last month, I am very excited about the changes that are taking place here at Tri-County. We are fortunate to have a talented and dedicated group of employees, and I believe that this reorganization will help us to maximize their many skills.

The ultimate goal of these changes is to better serve your needs through improved efficiency, technology, and customer service. You can look forward to learning more about our new staff in upcoming issues of *Penn Lines*.

## Co-op's Coudersport office has new address

Due to the 911 readdressing program being carried out in Potter County, Tri-County's Coudersport office has a new address:

**16 Damascus Road  
Coudersport, PA 16915**



Tri-County President & CEO Bob Toombs, far left, congratulates retiring Tri-County employees during a dinner in their honor held at the Lakeview Lodge near Lawrenceville. The retirees, who had a combined 175 years with the co-op, are, from left, Frank Weeks, Bert Cunningham, Bud Sutton, Eleanor Conrad, Alex Hartley, Dick Davey, and Liz Diehl. Looking on is Craig Eccher, executive vice president and chief operating officer for Tri-County, far right.

## Reporting an Outage

Even with the advances of our computerized outage management system, members still play a vital role in the co-op's power restoration efforts.

The more information you are able to provide, the sooner Tri-County can have you and your neighbors back on line.

Here are seven simple steps to follow when an outage occurs:

1. Never attempt to fix or move an electric line yourself. Fallen lines often remain energized. Contact with live wires can result in injury or death.
2. Check your circuit breakers and fuses. If nothing appears out of the ordinary, see if your neighbors are also out of service.
3. Call 800-343-2559 or 570/662-2175 to report an outage. Operators are ready to answer your call 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
4. Provide the telephone number

of the account that is out of service. Our operators can quickly pull up your account information and map location by typing your telephone number into the outage management system.

5. Report when you lost power. If you are unsure of the exact time, please tell us and offer your best estimate. Also tell us if all or only some of your lights are out, or whether your lights are flickering or dim.

6. Check on your neighbors. Tell the Tri-County operator whether or not your neighbors have electricity.

7. Give us the details. Be sure to tell our operators any additional information that may be related to the outage or helpful to our crews. Report the occurrence of downed lines, trees on electric wires, sparking transformers, flashes of light, explosions or unusual noises, broken poles, tree-blocked roadways, car accidents, etc.



# Tri-County begins awarding assistance grants



Tri-County Rural Electric awarded its first member-assistance grant through the co-op's Family-In-Need Fund last fall.

The fund was started in October 2004 as way to assist cooperative members struggling to pay their electric bills. The program targets members who have exhausted other forms of assistance. A qualifying member receives a credit on his or her electric bill.

The recipient of the first Family-In-Need Fund grant received a \$100 credit on her electric bill in October. Since then, two more assistance grants have been awarded to cooperative families that have fallen on difficult times. Grant recipients are determined by the local Salvation Army.

In just over a year of operation, more than 600 co-op members have signed up to participate in the Family-In-Need program by voluntarily

allowing the co-op to round up their monthly electric bills to the next dollar amount. The difference between the actual bill amount and the rounded-up amount goes into the Family-In-Need Fund.

The fund balance recently surpassed the \$2,000 mark — not bad for a year's worth of pocket change.

## Family-In-Need Fund It's common cents.

**W**ith the sharp rise in energy costs this year, we expect to see an increase in the number of cooperative families struggling to keep up with their electric bills this winter. You can help your neighbors in need by signing up to participate in Tri-County's Family-In-Need Fund.

Participating in the program is inexpensive — less than \$1 a month — and helps unite the entire co-op as members help each other through difficult financial times.

### Contributing is Easy

The concept behind the Family-In-Need Fund is simple. You allow Tri-County to "round up" your monthly electric bill to the next dollar

amount. The difference between the round-up amount and your actual bill amount — which can be no higher than 99 cents in one month — goes into this new fund.

For example, if your electric bill is \$100.32, then you would pay \$101. The extra 68 cents goes into our Family-In-Need Fund.

Obviously, participating in the program can make balancing your checkbook a little easier as well.

### A Few Cents Can Make a Difference

Your donation of less than \$1 a month doesn't amount to a large sum of money over the course of the year. On average, you would end up donating about \$6 annually.



But your pocket change, when pooled with contributions from other participating members, can truly make a difference for a family without the means to pay its electric bill.

### Here's How You Can Help

Just fill out the form below and enclose it with your next electric bill. If you decide you no longer want to participate in the program, simply call the office and ask to stop.

The success of this program depends on the generosity of members. Neighbors helping neighbors — it's the cooperative way. Please send in your form today.

### Yes! I want to become a volunteer for the Family-In-Need Fund!

*I understand that my bill will be rounded up to the next dollar amount. My total bill will include my monthly contribution to the program, and I am responsible for paying that amount. I also understand that to stop donating to the fund, all I need to do is call the office and ask to stop.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Account No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

*Your donation is tax-deductible. Thanks for helping.*