

Tri-County  
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  
7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

FROM THE PRESIDENT/CEO

# Make conservation, efficiency part of daily routine



by Craig Eccher

**TURN ON** the lights and TV, boot up the computer, and head to the kitchen to start dinner. Arriving home from work, most of us walk through this familiar routine every day.

It's a routine that involves the reliable flow of electricity just about every step of the way. And every light switch or appliance we

turn on sends the electric meter outside spinning a little faster and the monthly bill a little higher.

Meanwhile, it's hard to escape the media coverage surrounding rising energy costs.

We ask ourselves, "Is there anything one person can do to make a difference?" The answer is, "Yes," and it starts with learning all we can about energy conservation and efficiency.

Conservation occurs when we reduce total consumption of electricity. This is often achieved by simply turning off anything that consumes electricity when not needed.

Energy efficiency occurs when we replace or upgrade the essentials in our lives — appliances, lighting, insulation — in a way that enables us to realize the same benefit with less electricity.

One of the simplest efficiency measures you can do is as easy as screwing in a lightbulb — specifically a compact fluorescent bulb, which uses about one-third of the energy as traditional incandescent bulbs and provides the same amount of light.


If you want an even bigger bang for your buck, you need to look to the largest user of electricity for the standard household: the hot water tank. You can reduce

consumption by wrapping your electric water heater with fiberglass insulation, or you can go a step further by purchasing an energy-efficient Marathon-brand water heater from your electric co-op. Another option is to allow Tri-County to install a load control switch on your water tank, which will automatically reduce your electric bill by \$5 monthly.

If you are planning to buy a new appliance, look for one that is Energy Star-qualified. These appliances incorporate advanced technologies that use 10 to 50 percent less energy than standard models, saving you money and helping to reduce demand for energy.

If you would like to get a handle on just how much electricity your various appliances use, Tri-County is now stocking a device called Kill-A-Watt. Simply plug this digital electric meter into a standard 120-volt outlet, plug your appliance into the meter, turn it on and see just how many kilowatt-hours of electricity are being consumed.

With this information in hand, it's up to you to take action. The cumulative effect of taking small conservation and efficiency steps in your homes and businesses will have a direct impact on our nation's entire electric grid — reducing demand during peak periods, cutting emissions of greenhouse gases, and lowering overall costs to co-ops and consumer-members. Energy efficiency also helps manage load growth and delays the need to build new electric generation facilities.

America's electric co-ops are working with public officials at all levels to identify and adopt achievable and balanced solutions to rising energy costs. One of the quickest remedies involves embracing conservation and efficiency and making them part of our daily routine. 

# Carpenter on a mission in God's Country

BY JEFF FETZER

**TRI-COUNTY MEMBER** Calvin Horning moved to God's Country more than two decades ago on a mission to help mold young Christians. Today, he specializes in crafting wood moldings.

Horning, owner of The Carpenter's Shop in Ulysses, relocated to Potter County, "God's Country," in 1974 along with his wife, Mabel, as part of an informal mission



**HE DELIVERS:** Eugene Horning of Denver, Pa., loads hardwood moldings crafted at The Carpenter's Shop onto his delivery truck. The shop, which is served by Tri-County Rural Electric, specializes in manufacturing high quality molding and trim for the kitchen cabinet industry. Eugene is the brother of business owner Calvin Horning.

project. Married just over a year at the time, the Hornings had been asked by their local minister in Goodville, Lancaster County, if they would consider moving to the northern part of the state to assist a sister church in the development of a youth ministry program.

A third-generation woodworker, Calvin jumped at the opportunity to evangelize in an area of Pennsylvania known for its prized hardwoods.

Working in a voluntary capacity, the Hornings developed a youth program at Birch Grove Mennonite Church in Port Allegany that became so successful it



eventually outgrew the church.

"Our mission was to evangelize young people for Christ," says Calvin Horning. "When we started out, there were only four or five young people involved in the church. It just snowballed," filling the pews with 80 to 100 teens each week.

Horning had another mission in life: to own and operate his own custom woodshop.

"In my heart, I knew I wanted to work with wood," he says. "It was a lifelong dream."

Horning relates that his grandfather was a carpenter and woodworker who built everything from roll-top desks to homes and barns. Calvin's father carried on the building construction end of the business, at one time carrying a crew of about 28 employees.

## Addicted to sawdust

"I liked what my granddad did and just wanted to have a shop," says Horning. "I spent a lot time in his shop when I was a kid. I got addicted to sawdust at a very young age."

While his passion for custom woodworking mirrored that of his grandfather's, Calvin actually followed in his father's

**ALL IN THE FAMILY:** Calvin Horning and his daughter, Shalee Dart, pose in front of samples of hardwood panels known as TCS Accents at The Carpenter's Shop in Ulysses. Horning developed the interlocking wood "brick" panels to utilize wood by-products from his millwork business. The panels can be an attractive addition in kitchens, dens and family rooms. Shalee serves as the bookkeeper for her father's business. Her brother, Shawn, will begin working as a full-time employee this summer as the operation looks to expand its sale of hardwood lumber to woodworkers throughout the region.

footsteps in the early part of his working career: During the first 10 years of his youth ministry work, Calvin was employed by a Galeton-area building contractor. In 1984, he began his own contracting business.

But the goal of running a woodshop was always in the back of his mind. In 1978, he began buying woodworking equipment, setting up shop in his home on Baker Creek outside of Coudersport and producing trinkets, doll houses and small pieces of furniture.

"I started buying industrial equipment right out of the gate because I knew where I wanted to go," Horning relates. "I had a dream."

In 1987, Horning moved the equipment out of his basement and into a facility in Coudersport that he would call The Car-

penter's Shop. The business specialized in custom architectural millwork, crafting moldings, jams, custom doors, and wainscoting, for private contractors and local home owners.

In 1997, Horning was on the move again, this time to the operation's present facility at 2228 State Route 49 West in Ulysses. Today, The Carpenter's Shop employs 10 full-time workers and two part-timers and is coming off its best sales year ever.

### Trying times

Just a few years ago, Horning notes, the shop was on the brink of failure. In 2002, the shop's two largest customers went out of business.

"We were only weeks away from being out of business,"

Horning says. "We were getting almost no orders locally, so I had to find a new market — companies that were exceptional at taking care of their vendors."

He hit the road and pitched his shop's high-quality products and quick turnaround time to a number of kitchen manufacturers.

"I prayed diligently, and I never gave up



**FIT FOR A KING:** Tri-County member Calvin Horning of Coudersport displays a piece of cherry crown molding milled in his shop. The operation produces more than 300 profiles of wood moldings and trim, as well as custom doors, hardwood flooring, custom staircases, fireplace mantles and paneling. More information about product offerings from The Carpenter's Shop can be found online at [www.thecarpentersshopinc.com](http://www.thecarpentersshopinc.com) or by calling the office toll-free at 1-888/889-2998.

hope," he says. "I went out and found companies that were just waiting for a company like ours."

He did so by guaranteeing no back orders, pledging to deliver product twice a week and fulfill orders within seven days.

"We bend over backwards to meet those promises," says Horning, "and we have proven ourselves to our customers since 2002. Now they are very loyal to us."

Despite a sluggish economy, business has rebounded, says Horning. The Carpenter's Shop is in growth mode once again, and Horning is contemplating an expansion project.

"I have a broad plan for where I want to be," he says. "Our buyers are demanding growth. We know we can get the business. It's out there waiting on us, but we have to get more space."

Horning says about 80 to 85 percent of his operation involves producing high quality hardwood molding and trim for kitchen manufacturers in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York state. His largest customer is Signature Custom Cabinetry in Ephrata. The second largest segment of his business is made up of local contractors, followed by do-it-yourselfers (DIYs). The shop also builds custom furniture and kitchens for customers, and is known for its custom radius work.

Last year, the shop processed over 375,000 board feet of lumber, predominant-

ly cherry, hard maple, soft maple, ash and oak. The shop produces over 300 profiles of wood molding and decorative trim, as well as hardwood flooring, custom doors, spiral staircases, tongue-and-groove paneling and fireplace mantles.

### New endeavors

This summer, Horning's son, Shawn, will be joining the business and working to promote the sale of quality hardwood lumber to contractors, customer builders and the DIY crowd.

The entrepreneur says he has also begun focusing on developing new products utilizing by-products of

materials already being processed at the shop. Using the "shorts," or woods scraps of less than 12 inches, the shop has begun producing and selling a product called TCS Accents. These interlocking hardwood "bricks" can be used as decorative paneling.

"People see them and they want to find a way to use them in their homes," says Horning. "They are really pretty, and they can be used as wainscot, as soffit over an island, as a back splash or on a kitchen peninsula."

Horning says The Carpenter's Shop is also developing a prefabricated hardwood-panel drop ceiling system. The prototype is being installed in the shop's front office.

"That will be our product, and it will be retailed right out of the shop," Horning says. "We believe it has tremendous potential. It can be used in hotel foyers, ceilings in bars, even in kitchens, dens or any area that someone really wants to upgrade. It looks extravagant, but it's very easy to install."

The 57-year-old says he will continue seeking new ways to bring business to his Potter County shop.

"I'm the type of person that gets bored if things are always idle," says Horning. "I'm about growth and expanding. I guess what I'm admitting is that I'm never content."

But he is happy.

"I love what I do," he says. "I've sweat the blood and the tears, and now it's fun. Now it's a blessing." 🌟



**CHOP CHOP:** Millwright Don Vought of Coudersport operates the chop saw in the Ulysses shop. The Carpenter's Shop, in its 20th year of business, employs 10 full-time workers, as well as two part-timers.

# Co-op offers scholarship to MU students

Applications are being accepted for a \$1,000 scholarship that is available for the 2008-2009 academic year to a Mansfield University student who is a Tri-County member or dependent.

To be eligible for consideration, students must:

- ▶ be enrolled full time at Mansfield University
- ▶ demonstrate financial need

- ▶ be a member or dependent of a member of Tri-County Rural Electric Cooperative
- ▶ demonstrate the highest traits of leadership, citizenship and character.

Applications may be obtained by contacting Bryan Berguson, Tri-County director of member services, at 1-800-343-2559. Applications are also available online at [www.tri-countyrec.com](http://www.tri-countyrec.com).

Tri-County endowed the scholarship fund at Mansfield University in 2000, with a goal of providing financial assistance to a member or dependent of a member pursuing a degree at the university.

A member of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, Mansfield University attracts many students from throughout the cooperative's service territory. ☀

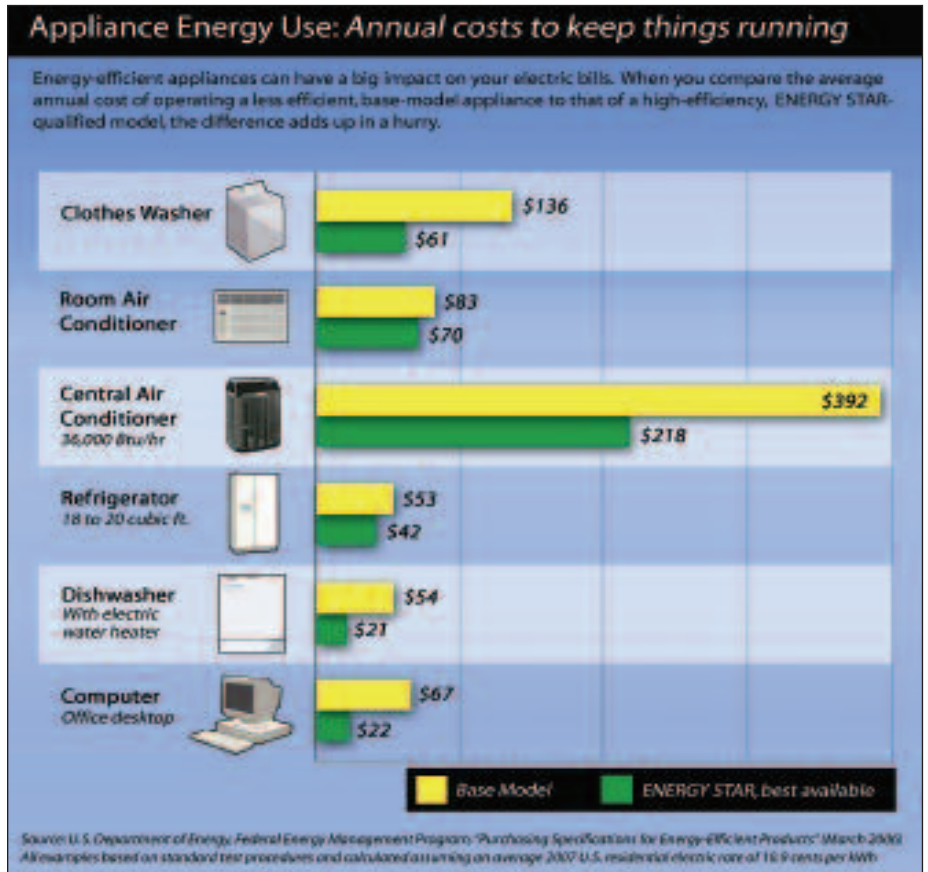
## Access your account from home with E-bill

With E-bill, Tri-County's internet bill presentment and payment program, you can access your account information 24 hours a day, seven days a week from the comfort of your home.

E-bill gives members the ability to :

- ▶ Pay your bill online using your checking account, MasterCard, Visa or debit card
- ▶ View your current bill online
- ▶ View your billing history
- ▶ Change your account information
- ▶ Enter meter readings
- ▶ Receive your bill online

To explore the features of E-bill, visit the Tri-County website, [www.tri-countyrec.com](http://www.tri-countyrec.com), and click on the E-bill option on our home page. For more information about E-bill, contact the Tri-County office at 1-800-343-2559.



## SAFETYzone

### Farm equipment safety

Imagine that you are driving a combine to the field through a back gate when things come to a screeching halt. You look back to see what's stopping you only to discover that you're tangled in an overhead power line! What do you do?

- ▶ First, don't climb out. Unless you're in immediate danger, stay where you are and call for help.
- ▶ Most utility lines are uninsulated, bare wires. Do not let your body become a direct link between the power line and the ground by stepping down from the machine.
- ▶ If you must leave the combine, jump as far away as you can, making sure that no part of your body touches the combine and the ground at the same time.
- ▶ Once you're off the combine, do not go back until your local electric co-op disconnects the power line.

Of course, it's best to avoid contact with power lines in the first place. Always make sure there is adequate clearance when maneuvering high-profile equipment around electric lines. When in doubt, take another route.

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