
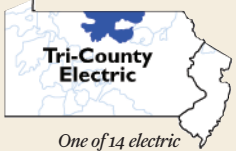


Tri-County
Rural Electric
Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Tri-County
Electric
One of 14 electric
cooperatives serving
Pennsylvania and
New Jersey

Tri-County REC
22 North Main Street • P.O. Box 526
Mansfield, PA 16933
Mansfield — 570/662-2175
Coudersport — 814/274-8740
Website:
www.tri-countyrec.com
Email:
trico@tri-countyrec.com
For emergencies call:
1-800-343-2559

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

James R. Davis
Chairman
Barbara J. Seeley
Vice Chairman
Alston A. Teeter
Secretary/Treasurer
Donald H. Blackwell
Alfred G. Calkins
Lowell W. Geiser
Ferd W. Irish
Gerald A. Kite
Nicholas Reitter

Craig Echer
President & CEO

STAFF

Annette Bender, Executive Assistant
John Lykens, Director,
Engineering & Operations
Barbara Johnson, Director,
Financial Services
Bryan Berguson, Director,
Member Services

OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday
7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

GUEST COLUMN

Pull the plug on home
electrical safety hazards



by John Lykens
Director of Engineering
and Operations

FARMERS and home gardeners have begun tending their fields and gardens. Cold days and nights have given way to more moderate temperatures. Hunters have taken to the fields looking to bag their spring gobbler. May is definitely a welcome month. It's also National Electrical Safety Month, a fitting time to inspect your home for potential household electrical safety hazards.

For your family's safety, it is critical to understand the hazards associated with household electricity and ways to prevent accidents, injuries and disasters from occurring through its use.

Each year, approximately 400 individuals are electrocuted in their homes. That's approximately 400 too many! Electrocution by definition is death caused by electric shock. This can occur any time an individual comes in contact with a bare, uninsulated, energized wire or object that has become energized. Areas of concern include receptacles, switches, lamp and appliance cords, extension cords, light fixtures, and main entrance panelboards (breaker boxes).

To help reduce the exposure to electric shock in your household:

- ▶ Ensure all electrical outlets near water, including those in the kitchen, bathroom, laundry room and outside, are protected with ground fault circuit interrupters.
- ▶ Install outlet caps in all unused receptacles or replace outlets with tamper-resistance outlets.
- ▶ Replace missing, cracked or broken outlet or switch cover plates.
- ▶ Check cords for damage and cracks and replace worn cords and plugs.
- ▶ Only use extension cords in good condition and only on a temporary basis.


▶ Ensure all breaker slots in the panel-board are occupied by either a circuit breaker or circuit breaker blank.

Problems associated with household wiring also account for nearly 55,000 home fires each year, resulting in the loss of more than 500 lives and 1,400 injuries.

Over half of all homes in the United States were built prior to 1973 — before most homes were wired to handle today's appliances and electronics. As a result, the electrical wiring in many older homes is inadequate to safely serve homeowners' growing electrical demand.

The following suggestions can help reduce the likelihood of electric-related fires in your home:

- ▶ Ensure lightbulbs do not exceed the wattage rating of the fixture. (Higher wattage bulbs will cause the fixture to overheat.)
- ▶ Inspect all cords and plugs for damage, cracks and wear. Replace damaged and worn cords immediately.
- ▶ Never run electric cords under carpet or rugs.
- ▶ Unwrap cords and extension cords when in use. Wrapped cords may overheat.
- ▶ Keep cords away from hot surfaces that can damage cord insulation.
- ▶ Install Arc Fault Circuit Interrupter (AFCI) circuit breakers in the home's panelboard to eliminate potential fire hazards resulting from arc faults. Arc faults occur due to loose or improper connections, damaged cords and wires, and pierced wires from nails.

Electricity and its safe use is vital to our 21st century way of life. Understanding hazards associated with electricity and taking the necessary steps to mitigate these hazards may save your life and the lives of your loved ones. Please take a few minutes to apply the suggestions and remember: Safety is no accident. 

Tri-County selects Youth Tour participants

SIX high school juniors from Tri-County's service territory will be joining thousands of students from all over the United States in June for the National Rural Electric Youth Tour, a week-long tour of our nation's capital.

The students will visit historical sites including the Vietnam and Korean War memorials, the Smithsonian museums, National Cathedral, National Zoo and the World War II Memorial.

Selected on the basis of an application, essay and extracurricular activities, the following students will represent Tri-County on the 2009 Youth Tour June 14-19: Jessica Miller, Austin Area High School; Clarice Tice, New Covenant Academy; Emily Smith, Galeton Area High School; James Freeborn, Northern Potter High School; Andrea Fulmer, Cowanesque Valley High School; and Elizabeth Vollman, Liberty High School.



Jessica Miller is the daughter of Blaine and Leona Miller of Austin. Jessica is junior class secretary, a member of the National Honor Society and plays on her school's varsity volleyball and softball teams. She enjoys playing badminton, basketball, bike riding and hunting. Following high school, Jessica plans to study veterinary medicine.



Clarice Tice, the daughter of Thomas and Barbara Tice of Millerton, is a junior at New Covenant Academy in Mansfield. She has participated in soccer, basketball, band and chorus. Clarice has been active with youth group for five years, contemporary service for six years, and served as a Tioga County Dairy Maid for one year. Clarice's future plans include attending college.



Emily Smith, the daughter of James and Susan Smith of Gaines, is a junior at Galeton Area High School. Emily participates in band and has been selected for district band, is varsity co-captain of

the volleyball team and plays on the softball squad. She also performs in school plays, enjoys art and has been involved with the Yellow Ribbon Club. Following high school, she intends to pursue a career as a lawyer.



James M. Freeborn, a junior at Northern Potter High School, is the son of James and Jeanine Freeborn of Harrison Valley. James has participated on his school's track and basketball teams, is a member of the prom committee, and has been involved with the Future Farmers of America program. A taxidermy apprentice, James' career goal is to become a metallurgist.



Andrea Fulmer, daughter of Dan and Vicki Fulmer of Westfield, attends Cowanesque Valley High School, where she serves as vice president of the junior class. She has participated in student council for five years, is secretary of the CV Catering Company and has played on the school's tennis team for three years. Andrea also plays trumpet in the high school band and enjoys writing, reading and listening to music. Andrea hopes to pursue a career as an author or editor.



Elizabeth Vollman is the daughter of Nancy and David Vollman of Trout Run. A junior at Liberty Junior-Senior High School, Elizabeth serves as a class officer and is a member of the National Honor Society. She also plays in the school band, sings in chorus and qualified for district chorus in 2009. She is a member of the prom committee, Peer Helpers, Future Business Leaders of America and serves as Key Club vice president. She has been a member of the Liberty Community 4-H for nine years, is a Bible school counselor, and enjoys film studies, acting, politics, history, reading and writing. Elizabeth's career goal is to become a film producer or director. ☀

Help your co-op 'Beat the Peak' this summer

Tri-County members can help the cooperative control its power costs by taking part in "Beat the Peak," an energy conservation program that will debut this summer.

The Beat the Peak Program calls on members to voluntarily conserve their electric use for several hours on the hottest weekdays throughout the summer.

By limiting your electric use during times of peak energy demand, when generation prices are at their highest, you can help Tri-County save money on power purchases.

During normal demand periods, your cooperative pays only pennies per kilowatt-hour for power. During peak demand periods, the cost can escalate to \$1 per kilowatt-hour, and these higher costs get passed on to co-op members.

Peak demand periods occur in the afternoon and early evening hours of the hottest weekdays of the summer. Tri-County will alert members about an upcoming peak through radio spots that will be broadcast on stations throughout our service territory.

The radio spots will ask members to help the cooperative 'Beat the Peak' by limiting energy use between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. on those hottest days of the year. Some easy ways to help us Beat the Peak include turning off all unnecessary lights or appliances, increasing the thermostat setting on air conditioners, and delaying use of major appliances such as dishwashers, washing machines, clothes dryers and dehumidifiers.

"The Beat the Peak program provides the cooperative membership with a relatively painless way to take control of our generation costs," said Tri-County President and Chief Executive Officer Craig Eccher. "Together, we can use our electricity resources wisely and save money for all cooperative members. We would truly appreciate your cooperation in this new initiative."

Office Closing

All Tri-County offices will be closed Monday, May 25, in observance of Memorial Day.

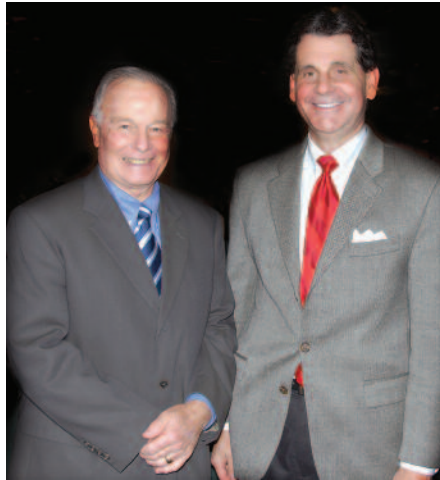
Tri-County Electric chairman re-elected to national board

Dr. James R. Davis, board chairman for Tri-County Rural Electric Cooperative, has been re-elected to serve on a national cooperative banking board.

Davis won re-election to his second three-year term on the National Cooperative Services Corporation (NCSC) board of directors during its annual organizational meeting Feb. 16, 2009.

"I am honored to represent Tri-County and the Northeast on the NCSC board," Davis said. "NCSC provides invaluable services to its member cooperatives, and I am looking forward to my continued involvement with the organization."

NCSC is a member-owned cooperative association that provides electric cooperatives and their affiliates with specialized financing and related services. The banking cooperative is governed by an 11-member board of directors chosen from five geographically defined districts in the country. Davis represents



ON BOARD: Sheldon C. Petersen, vice president of National Cooperative Services Corporation (NCSC), congratulates Tri-County Rural Electric board chairman Dr. James R. Davis of Elkland (left) on his re-election to the NCSC board of directors. Petersen is also governor and CEO of National Rural Utilities Finance Corporation, which works in conjunction with NCSC.

the Northeast as District 1 director.

A self-employed educational consultant and advising faculty member of NOVA Southeastern University, Davis is retired from the Northern Tioga School District, where he had served

as assistant superintendent.

Davis holds a doctorate degree in educational administration from New Mexico State University, a master's degree in guidance and counseling from Alfred University, and a bachelor's degree in mathematics education from Mansfield University.

He and his wife, Elaine, reside in Elkland. They have three grown sons: Tom, Matt and Jared.

Davis has served on the Tri-County board of directors since April 2001 and has held the board chairman position since July 2005. He also serves on the boards of Allegheny Electric Cooperative, Tri-County's wholesale power supplier, and River Valley Country Club, Westfield.

NCSC, based in Herndon, Va., oversees over \$850 million in assets and operates through a management agreement with the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC). CFC, formed in 1969, is a member-owned financial institution that provides state-of-the-art financial products to approximately 1,050 electric cooperative members in 49 states, the District of Columbia and three U.S. territories. CFC has total loans and guarantees outstanding that exceed \$20 billion. ☀

Even out your payments with Budget Billing

You can avoid fluctuations in your electric bill from month to month by participating in Tri-County's Budget Billing plan.

The program allows you to level out your monthly payments throughout the year, eliminating seasonal spikes in your electric bill, as well as billing fluctuations caused by estimated meter readings or changes in your electric use.

Participants in budget billing pay the same amount each month for 11 months. The budget amount is based on the average of your electric bills for the previous year. In the 12th month of your budget billing cycle, we perform a "true-up," comparing your budgeted amount with your actual cost for the year. Your bill total in the settlement month will reflect the difference between the actual and budget amounts.

After the true-up, Tri-County reviews and adjusts your budgeted amount for the next year based on your electric use from the previous 12 months, taking into account any rate adjustments that may have been implemented.

If you are interested in setting up a budget billing plan for your account, please call the financial services department at 800/343-2559.

We will calculate your monthly payment amount and mail it to you, along with a sign-up form and further budget information.



SEEING THE LIGHT: Tri-County member Tony Place of Lawrenceville, an outside sales representative for Denney Electric Supply of Wellsboro, shows a lighting product to Ed Szymanik of Ulysses (center) and Stash Nawrocki of Genesee during the Spring Energy Fair hosted by Tri-County Rural Electric and Wellsboro Electric Co. April 3 at the North Campus of Penn College of Technology. The inaugural energy fair featured 15 vendors and drew approximately 100 attendees.

How to hire a good electrician

You can save yourself time, trouble and money when hiring an electrician by asking a few questions before the job begins.

Ask about the work they do.

Describe the job you have in mind and ask if the electrician specializes in this type of work.

Ask if a permit is required.

A qualified electrician should be familiar with all electrical codes and statewide building codes and can determine if a permit is required on your particular job.

Ask about certification, licensing insurance and workers' compensation.

An electrician's certification and state license are proof he or she has mastered the trade. For insurance reasons, it's always best to hire a licensed electrician, especially when a permit is required. You also do not want to be sued if a worker is injured while working in your home.

Ask for an estimate.

On small jobs, you may want to get an estimate over the phone. On larger jobs, ask for an hourly rate. Expect to pay more if a helper is needed. On larger jobs, ask for estimates from two or three contractors.

Ask the electrician to purchase all the materials for the job.

You may think you'll save money by buying the materials yourself, but it's often better for the electrician to make all the purchases and be responsible for any warranties.

Ask who is responsible for any repairs caused by the job.

To install a new circuit in your home, an electrician may need to drill or cut holes in the walls. The repair work may not be done by the electrician. The same is true if you're having landscaping lights installed outside and the contractor needs to dig trenches in the lawn and uproot shrubbery.

Ask about how to pay for the services.

On small jobs, the contractor may expect payment when the job is completed. On larger jobs, the contractor will typically ask for a percentage before work begins. ☀

The above article is reprinted by permission of Living in South Carolina magazine, All Rights Reserved.

Call 8-1-1 before digging into spring projects

With the arrival of spring, many members are gearing up for outdoor construction projects. If you are planning excavation work, get your project off to a safe start by calling 8-1-1 before you dig.

8-1-1 is the abbreviated national telephone number homeowners and professional excavators can call to contact their state's One Call center. Homeowners and contractors



can still call the long-standing Pennsylvania One Call number, 1-800-242-1776, if they wish.

State law requires anyone doing excavation work with power equipment to notify the Pennsylvania One Call System three days before digging begins.

The purpose of the Pennsylvania One Call System is to prevent damage to underground facilities such as electric, cable, telephone, gas, water and sewer lines during excavation projects.

Digging by an uninformed homeowner or contractor not only has the potential to damage utility lines, it can also be extremely dangerous when underground electric or gas lines are involved.

By calling 8-1-1 at least three working days before you plan to begin your project, you or your contractor will know exactly what lies beneath the surface – safeguarding everyone involved.

State law requires that the person performing the excavation be responsible for notifying the Pennsylvania One Call System. There is no charge involved when a homeowner is doing work on his or her own residential property.

If you are a homeowner who has hired a contractor, the contractor is required by law to make the call to the system to have underground lines located.

Additional information about the Pennsylvania One Call System is available at www.pa1call.org.

ENERGYmatters

Solar-powered patio lighting

Outdoor lighting powered by solar energy is an excellent use of solar technology that improves your home's appearance without adding to your electric bill.

Each light fixture consists of a solar collector (a photovoltaic panel) that converts daytime solar energy into electrical energy, which is stored in a rechargeable battery. At night, the battery is used to light the fixture, typically a soft white light using the latest in LED (light emitting diode) technology. Colored lenses are also available. Each solar light operates independently and there is no need for trenching, wiring or even a transformer. You can see how this makes it easy to use in remote areas and locations near water.

Models are available to both turn on manually or turn on automatically; by either a motion sensor or a light-sensing control. All solar lights require unobstructed sunlight during the day to recharge their batteries. With fully charged batteries, most models will stay illuminated for up to 15 hours. When it is shady, cloudy, rainy, or snowy during the day, performance will be diminished. While they will not produce nearly the amount of light as low-voltage or 120-volt path lights, their output provides sufficient light to mark entrances, accent walkways and steps, and to indicate the location of darkened obstacles at night.

These tips and many more like them can be found in the Home Energy Library of Tri-County's online HomeEnergySuite. To access the suite, visit www.tri-countyrec.com and click on the HomeEnergySuite icon on our home page.