

Tri-County Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



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
Web site:
www.tri-countyrec.com
E-mail:
trico@tri-countyrec.com
For Emergencies Call:
1-800-343-2559

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OFFICE HOURS

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

GUEST COLUMN

Getting you in hot water



by Bryan Berguson
Director of Member Services

“PEOPLE you can count on” is more than just a slogan at Tri-County Rural Electric.

The employees at your electric cooperative strive to be “people you can count on” to keep the power flowing to your homes and business, as well as for a variety of special services and products we make available to our members. It is exactly the reason we decided to

start carrying the Marathon brand of hot water heaters. They are truly “A hot water tank you can count on brought to you by people you can count on.”

Tri-County began selling and leasing Marathon water heaters to members in April 2006 after thoroughly researching the hot water tank market. We wanted to be able to provide members with a water heater that was highly efficient and built to last. With the highest energy factor rating on the market, and a life-time guarantee against leaks, Marathon was the logical choice.

The Marathon water heater is unique in that it features an all-plastic tank. But that isn't the only thing that makes these high-quality water heaters stand out.

In a standard tank, leaks often start at a seam. Constructed of seamless, blow-molded polybutylene, the Marathon's plastic tank has less of a chance of leaking. A layer of fiberglass adds strength, making it stronger than a steel tank. So sure of its dependability, Marathon guarantees a full replacement if the tank ever leaks due to normal use.

Traditional steel tanks contain a rod called an anode rod. Made of magnesium or aluminum, the anode rod is formed around a steel core wire and screwed into the top of the tank. It serves as a sacrificial part designed to wear out in order to protect the steel tank. When the anode rod is completely consumed, the


steel tank quickly loses its structural integrity. The Marathon tank, which contains no steel parts, does not require an anode rod, thus having one less part to wear out.

The dip tube or fill tube of the Marathon water heater is made from a high-temperature, commercial-grade plastic for greater durability. It is offset from the bowl-shaped tank bottom to create a whirlpool effect during fill up, which helps prevent sediment buildup.

All hot water tanks fill with sediment over time, and that build up of sediment reduces the capacity of the tank and its efficiency. Periodically draining your tank, which is recommended for all hot water tanks, will prevent that sediment from accumulating. Because the drain hole on the Marathon is directly in the center of the bowl-shaped bottom, when you drain off a little water periodically, any sediment in the bottom of the tank will drain out.

If you neglect to periodically drain water from the tank and get a large build up of sediment, the Marathon tank can be cleaned out with a standard Shop Vac. That's right, a Shop Vac. The element ports are large enough to insert a Shop Vac hose, allowing you to vacuum the deposits right out of the tank.

Making hot water is one thing all electric tanks do very efficiently; keeping it hot is something else entirely. The Marathon tanks feature Envirofoam™ insulation with an R-value of 24. That's enough insulation to ensure just a 5 degree heat loss over a 24-hour hour period. These tanks will get your water hot and keep it hot!

Tri-County stocks 50-, 75-, 85- and 105-gallon Marathon tanks and can obtain smaller tanks through special order. If your budget is tight, we have lease plans to keep your monthly costs low. If you're in the market for a tank you can count on from the people you can count on, call the member services department today and we'll get you in hot water — the good kind. 



REPRESENTING: Tri-County's Youth Tour student delegates meet with U.S. Congressman John Peterson in his office on Capitol Hill. Pictured are, from left, Travis Baker, Rebecca Ostrom, Rachel Spencer, Sarah Bunch, Rep. Peterson, Katherine Kasper and Carrie Dinger.

Youth Tour: Making friends and living history

SIX STUDENTS representing Tri-County traveled to Washington, D.C., this summer to tour the capital city, explore the country's past, and meet others, like themselves, who will help shape the nation's future.

The students, all children of Tri-County members, took part in the Rural Electric Youth Tour, which drew more than 1,400 students from across the country to the nation's capital the week of June 10. The tour is organized annually by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), the service arm for the nation's 900 electric cooperatives.

Representing the cooperative on Youth Tour were: Travis Baker, son of Damon and Kenda Baker, Cowanesque Valley High School; Sarah Bunch, daughter of Lonnie and Rose Bunch, Coudersport High School; Rebecca Ostrom, daughter of John and Dianne Ostrom, Liberty High School; Carrie Dinger, daughter of Bob and Kathy

Dinger, Mansfield High School; Katherine Kasper, daughter of Bryan and Laurie Kasper, Mansfield High School; and Rachel Spencer, daughter of Robert and Ruth Spencer, Liberty High School.

The Tri-County delegates, who will be entering their senior year of high school in the fall, boarded the motor coach at the co-op's Coudersport and Mansfield offices Sunday morning, June 10, and traveled to the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Crystal City, Va., where they would stay for the next five nights.

Following dinner and an orientation session for the 82 Pennsylvania and New Jersey students participating in the tour, they settled in for the night, awaiting the coming week of sight-seeing, socializing and

exploration of the nation's history and government.

The 2007 Youth Tour got rolling Monday morning with National Youth Day. Highlights of the action-packed morning included an inspirational

keynote address by Michael Schlappi, a four-time Olympic medal winner who competes in wheelchair basketball. Other speakers included former Nebraska state Sen. Dave Landis, who gave a character portrayal of George Norris, a pioneer in the rural electric cooperative movement.

Following lunch, it was on to Mt. Vernon for a tour of George Washington's historic home on the Potomac River, along with its beautiful gardens and orchards. Rounding out



NEW FRIENDS: Sarah Bunch, left, daughter of Tri-County members Lonnie and Rose Bunch of Coudersport, poses with one of the many new friends she met during the 2007 Youth Tour in D.C.



ON TOUR: Students representing Tri-County on the Rural Electric Youth Tour, held June 10-15, relax on the face of *The Awakening*, a sculpture at Hains Point along the Potomac River.

other thing that I really enjoyed was meeting the other students from Pennsylvania and New Jersey. I made so many new friends during the trip.”

Tri-County has been a supporter of Youth Tour for many years. Each year the cooperative seeks out students from its service territory who have an interest in learning more about the nation’s capital and the rural electric cooperative movement.

Applicants must be high school juniors whose parents or legal guardians are members of the co-op. Students must complete an application form and brief essay for consideration.

Application information is generally available in February at local schools and in *Penn Lines* or through Tri-County’s Web site, www.tri-countyrec.com.

Youth Tour, sparked by a speech by then-U.S. Sen. Lyndon Johnson at the 1957 National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Annual Meeting, has been held annually since 1964. 🌞

the day was an evening boat cruise on the Potomac, where the Pennsylvania delegates were able to dance and mingle with Youth Tour participants from other states.

On Tuesday, Tri-County students visited with U.S. Congressman John Peterson in his office on Capitol Hill. They, along with all of the Youth Tour students from Pennsylvania, then met with Sens. Arlen Specter and Bob Casey Jr. on the steps of the Capitol for a question-and-answer session.

Other highlights of the week included a tour of Arlington Cemetery, and visits to the Smithsonian Museums, National Zoo, the Jefferson, Lincoln and Roosevelt monuments, and the Vietnam, Korean War, and World War II memorials.

Students also enjoyed a performance of “Peter and Wendy” at the Arena Stage, as well as the popular All States Dinner Dance, which brought together all 1,400 Youth Tour students from 47 states for an evening of dancing, games, videos and socializing in the basement of the Hyatt Regency.

“It was a very enriching experience,” said Tri-County Youth Tour delegate Sarah Bunch of Coudersport. “I’ve

always loved the D.C. area, and I’m very history-minded, so getting a chance to go and tour the capital and get that taste of history really appealed to me. The



Tri-County President & CEO Craig Eccher testifies before the Pennsylvania House Republican Caucus June 18 at the Capitol Building in Harrisburg. Eccher and other utility executives were invited to participate in a presentation on electricity rates and the impact that deregulation and the state’s Customer Choice Act have had on electric generation pricing.

Scaring away phantom load

Just because you've shut down your television set for the night doesn't necessarily mean it's "off." In fact, televisions and many other appliances and consumer electronics draw power around the clock, even when they've been switched off. There's even a name for this type of wasted electricity: phantom load.

Phantom load is electrical consumption by equipment that operates continuously, even when you think the device has been turned off. Devices that cause phantom loads can often be recognized by digital clocks or small lights that continue to operate when the equipment is not running.

Before the age of microprocessors, remote controls and digital electronics, when an appliance or electrical device was turned off, there was no electrical consumption taking place. That's no longer the case. Many home appliances and electronics draw power 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Modern televisions, computers, VCRs, DVD players, stereos,

microwaves, digital coffee makers, cordless telephones and clock radios all use energy any time they are plugged in.



Digital displays and instant-on remote control features found on these devices contribute to this use.

Battery-powered tools, cell phones, digital cameras, I-Pods and laptop computers all require energy to recharge batteries. Unfortunately, those low-voltage transformers, or power cubes, that plug into your AC outlet to recharge

your batteries and electronic devices draw energy even after the battery has been fully charged.

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, phantom load accounts for about 450 kilowatt-hours of energy consumption for the average home each year. TVs are considered to be the largest contributor to standby electricity, accounting for nearly half the typical home's annual phantom load. The electricity is used to maintain the remote control and instant-on features and to keep the filaments in the picture tube warm.

You can reduce phantom load at your home by:

- ▶ Unplugging electronic equipment and chargers that are not being used.
- ▶ Switching off the power strip for your computer and entertainment center equipment when not in use.
- ▶ Avoid leaving devices with small transformers plugged in while not in use.
- ▶ Consider purchasing all-in-one appliances, such as a telephone with built-in answering machine and caller ID display, in order to reduce the number of small transformers in your home. ☀

Co-op offers scholarship to MU students

Applications are being accepted for a \$1,000 scholarship that is available for the 2007-2008 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 are available online at www.tri-countyrec.com. Those without internet access may contact the member services department at 1-800-343-2559 for an application.

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

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

SAFETYzone

Cord care

It's often necessary to use extension cords around the home and garden. Like other electrical equipment, specific jobs call for specific kinds of cords. Use heavy, three-wire grounded cords for tools, and moisture-resistant cords for outdoor chores.

Always inspect cords for damage before use and avoid using them in permanent situations. Instead, have a new outlet installed where needed and eliminate the extension cord.

Always pull on the plug, not the cord, when disconnecting from the wall socket.

