



# United Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives  
serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

## United Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Post Office Box 688

DuBois, PA 15801-0688

Customer Service: 888-581-8969

www.unitedpa.com

Outage: 800-262-8959

Office Hours: M - F 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

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## From the President & CEO



# Summer's the time for fun – and maybe a few home improvements

By Brenda Swartzlander

LIKE most of us who choose to call Pennsylvania home, I love the seasonal changes. I have to admit, though, I do most look forward to summer. Enjoying the outdoors, taking long walks or bike rides, going swimming, attending ball games, and having picnics with family and friends all come to mind when I think of summer.

Summer is also the time when we do those household projects we have been thinking about all winter. We may be planning on a construction project or turning our attention to sprucing up the landscaping around our house. This may involve simply planting some new shrubs or perhaps building that new deck we have been wanting so we have a place to hold those picnics. If your summer projects require digging with any type of power equipment or backhoe — such as planting trees or shrubs, or setting posts — remember to dial 811 first.

Underground utilities, such as buried electric, gas, or water lines, may be right where you intend to dig, and hitting one of them can turn your summer project into a disaster.

Always be sure it is safe to dig by dialing 811 to find out where utility lines run on your property. When you call 811, your call will be routed to a local “one call” center. Tell the operator where you’re planning to dig and what type of work you will be doing. The one-call operator will contact all of the local utilities to make them aware of your plans.

In a few days, a locator will arrive to designate the approximate location of any underground lines, pipes and

cables. These areas will be marked with flags or paint so you’ll know what’s below. Then the safe digging can begin.

Many homeowners tackling do-it-yourself digging projects are unaware of the “Call Before You Dig” services, and unfortunately, many do not make the call. A recent national survey showed only 50 percent of homeowners called to have their lines marked before starting digging projects, according to the Common Ground Alliance (CGA), a federally mandated group of underground utility and damage prevention industry professionals. CGA data also shows an underground utility line is damaged every 6 minutes in the U.S. because someone decided to dig without first dialing 811.

Even simple tasks like installing a new mailbox post can damage utility lines, which can disrupt service to an entire neighborhood, harm the person doing the digging, and potentially result in fines and unnecessary repair costs.

Never assume you know the location or depth of underground utility lines. A simple call to the free 811 service will prevent the inconvenience of having utilities interrupted and can help you avoid serious injury. When you are preparing to start your summer project, add a call to 811 to your list of things to do. You may be glad you did.

Enjoy your summer and, above all, stay safe.

Until next month,  
Brenda

*Rustic Views*

# Promises

By Glenn Schuckers

**PROMISES.** We get promises from everywhere. Advertisers promise that if we use their brand of toothpaste or mouthwash, we will have more friends. We should buy this make of truck because it is tougher than the others or because it hauls more or pulls more or lasts longer. Can't sleep? Take this pill, and you will sleep better. Have a headache or muscle ache? Take that pill and feel no pain for a day.

Politicians have been making promises for as long as any of us can remember. Anyone recall, "Read my lips, no new taxes?" Or the one about our president not being a crook? A long time ago, I think there was one about

"A chicken in every pot and a car in every garage." That came from Herbert Hoover in 1928. Then in October 1929, the Great Depression began after the stock market crash. That lasted for about 10 years, and there were temporary towns nicknamed "Hoovervilles" to house people displaced by the Depression. So much for that promise.

Couples make promises to love and obey as long as they live. Parents make promises to care for and raise the children they have brought into the world.

Forecasters promise nice weather for that weekend picnic, rain for crops that need it, snow for the ski trip to Vermont.

In short, a lot of things in this world depend on our ability to function based on promises we have either heard or made.

This is the month when a lot of us put seeds and plants in the ground. If

we had trees, they most likely should already be in the ground and ready to grow. My garden, which is usually one of the last ones around to get planted, is still in the promise stage.

I don't get too excited about planting things early. I live under that biblical verse, "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens." To me, that means not planting seeds and plants until the ground is ready for them.

I vividly remember one year, many years ago, when I was determined to have the first corn, the earliest tomatoes and peppers anywhere around. We had a fruit and vegetable store at the farm, and having ripe tomatoes while all the others were still green seemed to be a good idea.

So I was in the garden about the middle of May planting tomato plants. Of course, a week after I planted them, the



weather turned cool and the nights were going to be frosty. I knew the tomatoes and especially the peppers would be killed if they were out in the frosty night air. The only answer? Get “hotcaps” and cover them. Then after the sun came up and the air warmed, the covers had to come off. With frost coming the next night, they went back on.

That went on for about a week, an hour every evening to put them on, another hour or so in the morning to take them off.

To get the earliest corn, I planted about an acre around the same time the tomatoes went in. Nothing. About one seed in 10 even sprouted, except for one variety that was advertised to germinate in cold soil.

Other jobs needed to be done, and it was almost two weeks later, around the first week or so of June, when I could get back to planting. The tomatoes and peppers I had planted were still there, having been saved by hours of work covering and uncovering them, but they were barely an inch bigger than when I had planted them.

The end result of all that time and work? That early corn I planted in

June was ready to pick about three days later than the corn I planted in May (same variety). The tomatoes and peppers? The ones I planted in May were ready to pick on the same day as those I had planted in June, and each plant had two or three more pounds per plant than the early plants.

The lesson? Even though catalogs always say the “days to ripe” are counted from the day the plants are transplanted into a garden, the truth is that what they promise and the actual performance are two different things.

So June is the month of promise. Seeds will have sprouted by now. Plants will have recovered from

transplanting shock and their roots should be established. They will be showing some signs of growth, and the really early ones in pots on the deck may have some blossoms.

Fruit that is now on the trees will most likely stay put. What we used to call “June drop,” which is a result of poor pollination, has happened, so the apples, pears, plums, and cherries that you see now will probably be there a month or two from now.

And to make the promise grow into production, June is the month to “thin” things like apples and pears. Now that the June drop is over, it’s wise to remember that those fruits will grow through the summer. They should be at least 3 or 4 inches from each other now and each cluster of fruit should have only one left in place. If they don’t get thinned, the result will be hundreds or even thousands of tiny fruits that neither you nor your neighbors will like very much.

So this month may be a month of promises made.

But a promise has two sides, the “promiser” and the “promisee.” If I vow to do something, I then have the

duty to carry out on it. If my promise is to grow potatoes (something I have never done before this year), I have the responsibility to find out what I need to know to do it — and then do it.

But there is no responsibility on the part of June, or any month or of nature, to treat me as I think I should be treated. Nature is not partial in the promises that are made. Goldenrod grows as well as gladiolus, crabgrass as well as chrysanthemum. Rains fall on each without partiality.

The only promise nature makes is to be nature. The sun will rise each day whether it is hidden by clouds or clear. The challenge we have is to fulfill our end of the promise, to work with nature, as a partner doing our part to make a better lawn, grow a good garden, or make the planet a more hospitable home for all. ☀



**Glenn Schuckers**, a longtime member of United Electric, operated Schuckers’ Orchard in Luthersburg until the mid-1990s. He is a retired high school teacher and a contributing writer for *The Courier Express*.

We are pleased to have Glenn provide our *Penn Lines* readers with his take on rural life.

## Don't TOY with your SAFETY

When you are playing outdoors, keep a safe distance from power lines, substations and other equipment your electric co-op uses to send electricity to your home.



**F**lying remote-controlled toys is a great way to have fun, but accidentally making contact with a power line or other electrical equipment can be dangerous, and, in some cases, even deadly.

- ▶ Never fly kites or remote-controlled toys near power lines.
- ▶ Stay away from power lines, meters, transformers and electrical boxes.
- ▶ Never climb trees near power lines.
- ▶ If you get something stuck in a power line, call your electric cooperative.
- ▶ Never touch or go near a downed power line.

## When summer heats up, it's time to do the 'Electric Shift'

THE SUMMER heat drives the cost our members pay for electricity throughout the next year. United's wholesale power bill — and ultimately, your electric bill — is determined for the year based on the five highest use periods throughout the summer. The amount of electricity being used by our members during these five peak periods will set the generation capacity we are required to purchase for the next 12 months. Simply put, we have to buy the generation capacity needed during these peak periods for the entire year, even though it is only needed during several unusually hot days in the summer. That is why United Electric is again asking that you do the "Electric Shift" to help us hold down the cost of electricity.

Peaks will occur on weekdays be-

tween the hours of noon and 7 p.m., and they will occur on the hottest days of summer between June through September.

It is crucial for United Electric and our members that we lower demand levels during the five peak periods. Since it is impossible to predict exactly when these peaks will occur, we may need to ask you to reduce or "shift" electric consumption several days each month, quite possibly several days in a row when we get a hot period.

There is not an energy shortage. Our request is specifically to reduce demand cost, which would otherwise result in higher electric bills to you. By reducing consumption during peak periods, United Electric hopes to maintain stable electric rates, both now

and into the future. This can only be accomplished with the voluntary help from you, our members. You can help control our power costs by shifting your use of nonessential appliances to the evening hours on the days when you hear an Electric Shift announcement on local radio stations. We are asking you to shift the use of such items as stoves/ovens, pool pumps, dehumidifiers, extra lighting, clothes dryers, air conditioners and any other non-essential appliances during these periods.

We urge you to please help in any way you can. Feel free to call the United Electric office at 1-888-581-8969 for answers to any questions you may have, and thank you in advance for doing the Electric Shift to help us hold down your electric costs. ☀

# SALE! SALE! SALE! SALE!

## Numerous items to be sold AS IS to the highest bidder

United Electric is selling a number of computers, both desktop and laptop, servers, desk and furniture, fax machines, truck tow hooks, tool boxes, steel step bumper, steel steps, 4-drawer steel box, and much more.

Sealed bids must be received at United Electric's office no later than 4 p.m. Friday, July 14, 2017.

Items can be viewed online at [www.unitedpa.com](http://www.unitedpa.com) (go to the "2017 Items for Sale" link on homepage), or photos can be seen at United Electric's office Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Items can be seen upon request **July 6 and 7 ONLY.**

Bid must be on bid form and specify item number and price bid.

### All items must and will go to the highest bidder!



**2007 Ford Ranger 4x4**  
230,039 miles. Needs spring shackles and right tie rod end. Rocker panels and right rear lower bed side are rusted.



**2007 Ford F-150**  
116,000 miles. Bed cross member rotted off. Needs exhaust manifold and studs. Emergency brake cams need to be replaced.



**2005 Ford F-250 3/4-ton 4x4**  
98,089 miles. Bed rusted, needs new exhaust manifold.



**2008 Ford Ranger 4x4**  
152,488 miles. Right side bed mount and side rusted. Needs tuneup.