



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.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairman

Stephen A. Marshall, District 5
1030 Donahue Rd.
Luthersburg, Pa. 15848
814-583-7320

Vice Chairman

Timothy D. Burkett, District 6
5059 Hamilton Markton Rd.
Punxsutawney, Pa. 15767
814-938-7991

Secretary/Treasurer

Eileen Pisaneschi, District 2
1964 River Hill Rd.
Frenchville, Pa. 16836
814-263-4491

DIRECTORS

Shanelle Hawk, District 1
502 Pine Run Rd.
Mayport, Pa. 16240
814-365-5646

Arden E. Owens, District 7
505 Trout Run Rd.
Shawville, Pa. 16873
814-765-6458

Richard Petrosky, District 3
P.O. Box 612
DuBois, Pa. 15801
814-371-8672

David W. Walker, District 4
631 Olanta Rd.
Olanta, Pa. 16863
814-236-3321

President & CEO
Brenda Swartzlander

Consumer Advocate
Paula Pascuzzo, ext. 8501
Richard Heverley, Editor

From the President & CEO



Know what to do during a brownout situation

By Brenda Swartzlander

WE HAVE all been inconvenienced on occasion by an outage, and they always seem to happen at the most inconvenient times. In some cases, the power suddenly goes out. At other times, the power might blink on and off a couple of times, then go out. Either way, we know something is wrong. Our first instinct is to look around the neighborhood to see if our neighbors are also out of power. If they aren't, we check to be sure we didn't simply trip a breaker. If that's not the case, we call United Electric to report an outage in order to get someone out to restore the power as soon as possible.

Although experiencing an outage is inconvenient, we know what to do. But what do we do when we experience a brownout (or a low-voltage) situation in our home? During an outage, our appliances are off just as if we turned them off, and they are not going to be damaged. The same is not true if there is a brownout. During a brownout, if appliances are allowed to run for an extended period with significantly lower-than-normal voltage, it may damage the appliance. Just to be clear, I am not talking about the momentary dips in voltage you may notice when a large load in your home, such as your air conditioner or well pump, starts up. I am talking about a significant drop in voltage lasting for an extended period.

If you notice your lights dim significantly and appliances are not running the way they normally run (you may hear they don't sound the way they

usually do when they are running), go to your service panel and shut off your main breaker. Then call United Electric and report what you are experiencing. Allowing appliances to run during a brownout situation may damage the appliance, motors and electronics in particular.

Although they are much less common than outages, brownouts do occur occasionally. There can be a number of causes for brownouts. Overloads on the electrical system can trigger a brownout. This sometimes occurs if a tree falls into the electric line and does not break the line, but instead creates a pathway to ground for large amounts of energy. This causes a large drain of power from the system, which in turn lowers the voltage. Brownouts can also occur when events such as storms or an auto accident damage the distribution system or when one of the three phases into our substation is interrupted for some reason. When power to one of the three phases is lost, the voltage on the other two phases will usually drop, causing a low-voltage situation. This can last a few minutes or a few hours, depending on the cause and how quickly United Electric can find and correct the problem.

During a brownout, members should not run appliances like motors, computers or other electronics, as the irregular power supply can damage them. Newer, high-efficiency equipment is particularly sensitive to brownout conditions because of the advanced electronics. United Electric recommends you turn off the main

(continues on page 14d)

Rustic Views

We know by the calendar when spring arrives ... trees aren't so lucky

By Glenn Schuckers

IN 1922, T.S. Eliot wrote, “April is the cruellest month, breeding / Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing / Memory and desire, stirring / Dull roots with spring rain.”

He may have been right, but then again, he may have been a better poet than a farmer, or he may have been living where March is truly a winter month.

So far as I am concerned, it is this month, March, that is the cruellest month of all.

We have just come out of January and February, which are, at least on my calendar, the worst of winter. Back in November, the landscape turned from green and gold to brown; grass lost its green glow after a few killing frosts, and all of nature took on a gray shade. It was, after all, the time when plants, shrubs, and trees went dormant and started to rest.

Now comes March, and a lot of us start to think about spring. And therein lies the danger. We start to think about spring before it actually gets here. March typically has a few warm days; days when the temperatures not only get above the 40s into the 50s, but sometimes get into the 60s. That is the problem. We tend to think days like those are wonderful; we can walk out in shirtsleeves and leave the heavy, winter coats in the closets.

But trees and shrubs and flowers do the same thing. Little do they know that March will also probably have some nights that drop back into the low 20s, maybe even the teens. When that happens, the bark and buds that have started to swell and grow will freeze and more than likely burst.

That happened to our lilac bushes last spring, and as a result, the flower blossoms that are usually 6 or even 8 inches long were only about half that size. I could see it coming in March

when green edges began to show on the buds and even a few tiny leaves started to show.

It was not the time or season for that, but there was nothing I could do about it. March, even if it looks like spring, even if it feels like spring, is not yet spring. No matter how good it feels to walk out without that heavy coat, I have to remember that spring is still about a month away.

Aren't a lot of things like that? I mean, why is it so many things that look good, feel good and taste good are so bad for us? A man I know had a sign in his office that stated the plain truth, “Everything I like is immoral, illegal or fattening.”

I won't make any excuses; I like apple pie, peach pie or just about any kind of pie Ann makes. Same for cookies, fudge and jelly. I mean, a slice of dry toast is about as inviting as sleeping on a bed of nails. Butter is a little better, and peanut butter is getting close, but a slice of homemade bread (all the better if it's three-quarters of an inch thick) with butter, peanut butter, and topped with peach jelly is nearly heaven.

The trouble is that same snack is just another step toward diet hell. I find it hard to put a snack like that away just because it is another nail in my diet coffin. Who can think about the scales when toast topped with peanut butter and jelly is on the counter?

If what I ate was the only instance of instant gratification versus long-term gain, things would be a lot easier.

I suppose a lot of us have the same problem. We might know caffeine might not be good for our bodies, that lots of sugar doesn't do us much good and that more exercise would be good for us. The trouble is skipping that two-mile walk is easy, but not having that second cup of coffee or eating healthy cereal without a spoonful of



FALSE START: Lilacs like these only bloom if the buds don't get injured in March. Opening too soon brings frost damage and smaller blooms.

sugar just isn't so easy.

I have often wondered why doing what is NOT good for us is so much easier than doing what IS good for us.

Seems like it should be the other way around.

It should be easier to think for ourselves than to let others do our thinking for us, but we don't. It is so much easier to let someone else tell us what is right than to reason it out for ourselves.

It is so much easier to let an advertiser convince us one model of car is better than another, one brand of soup is better than another, one brand of soft drink tastes better than another, or one brand of beer will make us more popular than another, than to reason out that none of that is so.

A number of years ago, a student in one of my public speaking classes had to give a demonstration speech. The student brought in about a dozen paper cups filled with soft drinks identified only with a number on the bottom of the cup. Then students in the class were allowed to sample each one and write down the brand they were “sure” was in each cup.

They were correct less than 10 percent of the time. The point of the demonstration? Very few people can

actually identify their “favorite brand” if they don’t see the label.

As a culture, we have been sold a bill of goods. I know people who would never think of buying a make of car other than the one they have always bought. They are sure their brand of this or that is better than any other.

I have to confess I am a lot that way, too. Or at least I used to be. I have made a real effort to break the “brand” habits of a lifetime. But it’s hard.

Just like getting up to watch a sunrise, taking the dog for a walk, skipping that evening snack, or thinking logically and reasonably, the effort is now, the reward sometimes a long way off.

March really can be cruel, but unlike trees and shrubs, we can remember to wait for the season and not be lulled by the siren song of a few warm days. That, after all, is why God gave us a brain and dominion over the plants and animals of the field. ☀



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.

LIHEAP funds available

THE federal government has released \$3.01 billion in Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) funding for winter heating help to states, territories and tribes authorized under a continuing resolution passed by Congress.

2016-17 Income Level	
Household Size	Household Income
1	\$17,820
2	\$24,030
3	\$30,240
4	\$36,450
5	\$42,660
6	\$48,870
7	\$55,095
8	\$61,335
9	\$67,575

Of the \$3.01 billion, Pennsylvania received approximately \$166 million for the LIHEAP application period that began Nov. 2, 2016, and runs through April 1, 2017.

LIHEAP helps low-income families throughout the country, but that funding is especially critical to many

families in Pennsylvania, where winters can be brutally cold.

LIHEAP provides funds for home heating bills for low-income residents; it is available to both renters and homeowners. Income eligibility for the 2016-17 LIHEAP season is set at 150 percent of the federal poverty income guidelines in Pennsylvania.

Maximum income for eligibility in Pennsylvania ranges from \$17,820 for a one-person household to \$73,815 for 10 people. Each additional person in the household adds to the maximum income allowed for eligibility.

In addition to the LIHEAP assistance available to those experiencing problems paying their energy bills, help is also available from other programs, such as the Members United program, which is available only to United Electric members. The list of numbers below will put you in touch with program administrators in your area. ☀

CLEARFIELD COUNTY:

LIHEAP - 800-862-8941
 FAX - 814-765-0802
 Members United (Community Action)
 Clearfield - 814-765-1551
 FAX - 814-765-4306
 Houtzdale - 814-378-5120
 FAX - 814-378-4713
 Philipsburg - 814-342-0404
 FAX - 814-342-0354
 Salvation Army – Clearfield - 814-765-4981
 Salvation Army – DuBois - 814-371-5320
 Good Samaritan Center - 814-765-6880

JEFFERSON COUNTY:

LIHEAP - 800-242-8214
 FAX - 814-938-3842
 Members United (Salvation Army)
 814-938-5530
 Community Action - 814-938-3302

ELK COUNTY:

LIHEAP - 800-847-0257
 FAX - 814-771-1529
 CAPSEA - 814-772-3838

CLARION COUNTY:

LIHEAP - 800-253-3488
 Salvation Army - 814-221-0796

FORREST, WARREN COUNTIES:

LIHEAP - 814-723-6330

CAMBRIA COUNTY:

LIHEAP - 814-553-2253
 FAX - 814-226-1755
 Catholic Social Services - 814-535-6538
 St. Vincent De Paul - 814-535-8521

Any county without a Members United number listed should call Jefferson County Salvation Army at 814-938-5530.

‘Shine the Light’ Scholarship program

Two well-established cooperative principles include “Concern for communities” and “Education and training for our members.” In keeping with these traditions, the board of directors of United Electric has decided to reinvest returned, unclaimed capital credits back to the community by providing educational scholarships to our members.

Several years ago, as a result of lobbying efforts in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania electric cooperatives are now able to use money that would have previously been escheated to the state within their local communities. This money is capital credits from former members that have been unclaimed and the members have not been able to be located for three years. Legislators have agreed to allow the cooperatives to use those funds locally for specific causes.

United Electric Cooperative is now offering scholarships to members and dependents of members who have been members for at least one year prior to Dec. 31, 2016. Scholarships are for students pursuing advanced education at an accredited university or technical school working toward a minimum of a certificate through a master’s degree or higher, and include adult learners.

Please contact Kristy Smith for applications and/or details.

1-888-581-8969, extension 8507

*Directors and employees of United Electric Cooperative, Inc. are not eligible.

From the President & CEO

(continued from page 14a)

breaker and not run anything until the power has been restored to normal.

You may also want to check with the neighbors to see if you are the only one experiencing the problem. If your house is the only one with a brown-out, there may be a problem with the power supply in your residence, and you should take a look at your circuit panel and breakers. You may have inadvertently caused a brownout within your home by overloading your home's capacity to carry power. This is most likely to happen on extremely hot days if you are running air conditioning equipment or a lot of refrigeration in your home.

United Electric is continually working to minimize outages and to provide you with consistent power quality, but from time to time, disruptions will occur. We are here to answer your call whatever the situation may be.

Until next month,

Brenda
Brenda

2017 Rural Electric Youth Tour

ATTENTION - HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS

It's time to start planning for the 2017 Youth Tour. This is an all-expenses-paid excursion that draws over 1,700 rural high school juniors from across the country to Washington, D.C., for sightseeing, education and fun in our nation's capital. The 2017 Youth Tour will be held the week of June 11-16.

Any junior who may be interested is encouraged to contact Kristy Smith at United Electric Cooperative at 1-888-581-8969, extension 8507, for an application. All applications must be received at United Electric by March 17, 2017.



Energy Efficient Water Heater Only \$100

As a participant in United Electric's Load Management Program, you can replace your water heater for only \$100.

It's as simple as calling United Electric at 1-888-581-8969 to take advantage of this special offer.



Water Heaters can be picked up at three convenient locations:

**H&H Supply
Punxsutawney**

**H&H Supply
DuBois**

**True Value Hardware
Curwensville**

Not only do you receive a high efficiency water heater for \$100, as part of the load management program you will also receive \$3.00 off your electric bill each month.

Call United Electric the next time your water heater needs replacing.

**Mark Your Calendar
United Electric
Annual Meeting
At the Brady Township
Community Center
Luthersburg, Pa
May 17, 2017, 7:00 PM**

