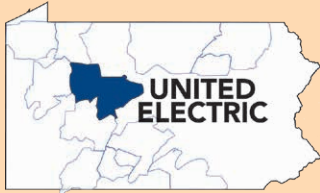




# United Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

## UNITED ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

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## Wired for Growth: Balancing Data Center Demand and Reliability



**LEN HAWKINS**

**DATA CENTERS MAY FEEL LIKE A NEW**, big-city phenomenon, but they have been around for many years, housing computer systems and networking equipment. What's different about them now is the demand for hyperscale facilities. Also, more and more of them are showing up in rural communities like ours.

Rural areas offer what data centers need most: affordable land, room to grow and access to transmission lines that can move substantial amounts of power.

What makes data centers different from other large businesses is their appetite for electricity. These facilities run 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Servers and other computing equipment must stay online constantly, which means power has to be reliable every minute of every day.

For electric cooperatives like United Electric Cooperative, powering just one data center creates both opportunities and challenges.

On the plus side, data centers have the potential to bring steady, long-term load growth that helps support investments in the local grid. With proper planning and policy support, those upgrades — including new substations, stronger lines, and smarter technology — could benefit all United Electric members and help keep rates steady.

But providing power to data centers presents challenges, too. These large facilities can be constructed and in operation in as little as one year; however, ensuring the necessary infrastructure, equipment, and electricity requires longer lead times and significant financial investment. Strategic planning and partnerships, as well as long-term power supply strategies, are essential to the process.

While United Electric does not currently serve any data centers, co-ops nationwide are fielding requests and inquiries from tech companies. As a member-owned cooperative, our responsibility is twofold: to listen to the communities we serve and provide reliable, affordable electric service to all United members.

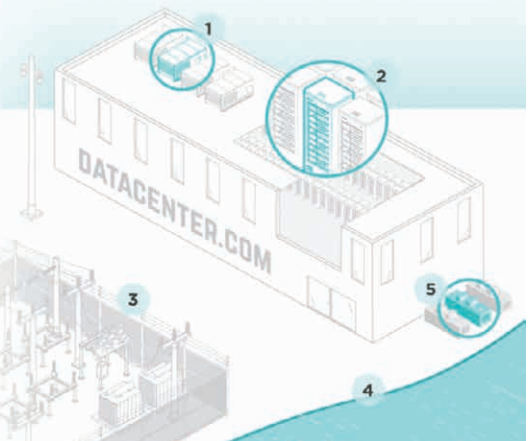
Balancing those responsibilities is not always simple, especially as new types of

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## Big Data, Bigger Demands

Many companies are choosing rural areas for their data centers because of cheaper land, available power and potential tax breaks. Data centers require huge amounts of electricity to operate, which presents new opportunities and challenges for electric co-ops.

- 1 HVAC:** Constant cooling is needed to ensure the servers function properly.
- 2 Servers:** Servers run applications and process data 24/7. One server rack can consume enough electricity to power a small home. A large data center can house thousands of server racks.
- 3 Infrastructure:** Data centers often require new electrical infrastructure to meet their power needs.
- 4 Water Source:** Many large data centers are deploying evaporative cooling, which is more efficient than compressor-based systems.
- 5 Backup Power:** On-site generators keep data centers running during power outages and can also be used to help lower demand when electricity use spikes.



## Rustic Views

# Time and Tools

**GLENN SCHUCKERS**

**THIS IS THE MONTH** I have been waiting for: June. It's the month when all the flowers bloom, but it's also the time when I get to start working outdoors in earnest. There have been jobs to do in April and even a few more in May, but June is the time when the real fun starts in the garden.

The tomato and pepper plants have been in the ground for a couple weeks, so this month, I'll get to shake hands with nature and work outside every day that rain is not falling. I may get some sore muscles and other aches and pains, but that's just nature's way of telling me that I am alive.

Before I go anywhere near the garden, though, I have an important job that must be done: I need to check the tools and make sure they are ready for the season. But before I can check them, I need to FIND them. Every gardener knows just what I mean.

### Where is that place?

Last fall, I put all the gardening tools in a place where they would be ready to go in the spring. Now, where is that place?

Well, it could have been a shelf in the shop, but that made too much sense — and anyway, the gardening tools would have been in the way of the other non-gardening tools I'd need all fall and winter. They could have also been with the leftover potting soil in the garage, but that would have been the last place I'd find them.

An hour or so later, I found them in the gardening tool tray under a cabinet right where I left them. I remembered thinking they would be safe there because the wall cabinet would prevent them from being run over by anything else that might come into the garage.

Once I had them in hand, I remembered I had planned to clean them and coat them with a bit of oil. The key word here is that I had PLANNED to do that, not that I had actually done it. Other jobs got in the way. Oiling the tools would have been good to do on a rainy day, and even though we had a lot of rainy, cold and snowy days in the past eight months, the tools were never oiled. In fact, they needed to be cleaned and oiled now.

I like to have good tools no matter what I am doing.

GLENN SCHUCKERS



**TIME TO GET TO WORK:** Just like any other trade, gardening takes some tools. I've had these for years, but they still do the job.

There are bypass trimmers and anvil trimmers, and each has a specific job. The same goes for a garden trowel; I like a one-piece aluminum trowel, and the one I have is possibly 15 years old. The shovel part is thick enough to have a sharp blade, but not so sharp that the edge will get dented if it hits a stone, which, based on where we live, is bound to happen. There is also a garden knife wide enough to make a furrow and sharp enough to cut the root of a weed that cannot be pulled. Also, there are garden hoes, stiff rakes and a short, pointed shovel.

I usually keep a tape measure in the garden tray, which I built out of some scrap boards many years ago. It is long enough to hold most of the tools, except the hoe, rake and shovel. There is also a roll of twine that I used to use to mark rows, but now, with the square-foot gardens, I probably won't need that. It will stay in the tray, however, just in case it eventually comes in handy. I also have a couple of augers for my cordless drill in case I get to plant some bulbs or tubers.

So now with the tools in hand, the time has come to get to work.

## The dirty work

I planted seeds about a week ago, so the first thing to do is make sure there are no weeds sprouting up in the rows of beans. The beans were the first to sprout, and the plants are now about an inch high. That is tall enough to tell which are bean plants and which are weeds.

I have always wondered where the weeds come from — they are sort of like fruit flies in the fall when we can tomatoes. One day there are none, and the next day, anything that was uncovered is full of them. Same goes for weeds. Two days ago, there were none, but today, there are bound to be a lot.

I planted the bean seeds about 2 inches apart and, allowing for some not to germinate, it should be pretty easy to have rows of plants 3 or 4 inches apart. That has always been about right for bush green beans, but if they all sprout, I'll have to thin some out.

I hate to pull a plant that has sprouted and is growing, but experience has taught me that it is better to pull a plant now than to wait until it's 6 inches high and run the risk of disturbing the plants on each side of it.

These square-foot gardens help a lot. When there were five or six 30-foot-long rows, it was hard to just work an hour or so. Now I can weed two rows, finish one garden and either quit for the day or move on to another garden. It wouldn't work if I had a full-acre garden, but not needing as much produce as I used to means that each one will be better cared for — or so the theory goes.

Eight round tomato plants will hopefully give us enough for some sauce and even leave a few for slicing. The same goes for cucumbers. Instead of 20 or 30 pints of pickles, which was a two- or three-year supply, this year's batch will likely provide enough cucumbers for a year.

## A matter of fate

About 15 years ago, we were forced to downsize our home due to a fire. Moving from a four-bedroom, two-story farmhouse to a smaller ranch-style house was not easy, but looking back, if we still had that big farmhouse, it would be more of a burden than a blessing. Despite still missing that house and its 1-acre garden, fate had a way of forcing us to adapt to who and what we are.

Just as nature has forced the evolution of plants and trees, so have we evolved into the people we now are. In our 80s, we cannot do what we did 30 years ago — none of us can — but as creatures of nature, we find ways to adapt and carry on. That is a law of nature: Whether we like it or not, we adapt or get left in the dust. 🍷

### FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO

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large-scale energy users, like data centers, become part of the local landscape. No matter what the future holds, our priority will be supporting safe, reliable, affordable growth with fairness, which means **ensuring large-scale energy users pay their share, including construction costs and rates so current members' bills don't increase and our communities feel invested.**

The energy landscape is changing, and with it comes opportunities and challenges. Our commitment is to keep listening, communicating, and collaborating with our members and community partners to ensure all decisions reflect the best interests of the people we serve.

If you have questions or concerns about data centers, your energy bills or any other co-op matters, we encourage you to stay engaged and reach to us at 888-581-8969.

Your voice matters at United Electric Cooperative. 🍷

**LEN HAWKINS**  
PRESIDENT & CEO



In keeping with United Electric Cooperative's 90th anniversary theme, please enjoy a few more pieces of nostalgia dug up by our member services team.



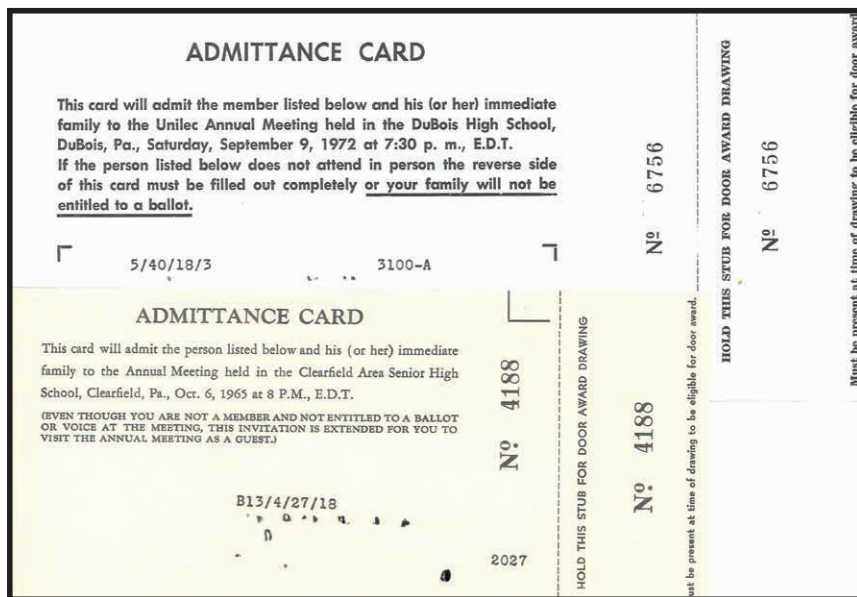
Frank Roberts, a Jefferson County area businessman and director for Jefferson County Electric Cooperative, in 1953.



H.B. Truitt, a Jefferson County area farmer and director for Jefferson County Electric Cooperative, in 1953.



The Musical Wades provided entertainment at the 1965 annual meeting.



Annual meeting admittance cards like these from 1965 and 1972 were mailed to members.



General Manager J.E. Nicholson addresses the membership in Jeffco News.