


New Enterprise Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Harry Johnson, Vice President
John R. Dively, Secretary
Robert Guyer, Asst. Secretary
Dean Brant, Treasurer
David Bequeath
Timothy Newman
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OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday
7 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

EMERGENCY OUTAGE NUMBER

814/766-3221
1-800-270-3177

FROM THE MANAGER/CEO

Rate changes to cover increased local costs at cooperative



Rick L. Eichelberger
General Manager & CEO

THE ELECTRIC bills received in October 2008 reflect a rate change approved by your board of directors at the August board meeting. There are several parts to the rate change, but the bottom line is that a fixed amount of increase will occur for all accounts and it is minimal. The kilowatt-hour (kWh) cost does not change, making it very simple to

know how much your bill is affected as we go into the winter season.

Customer charges:

Regular rate — Increases from \$13/month to \$17/month.

Three-phase rate — Increases from \$15/month to \$20/month.

Yard light rate:

A 25-cent increase to \$7.75/month. (This includes all the kWhs used and maintenance when necessary.)

Seasonal rate:

This rate (read and billed twice a year by New Enterprise Rural Electric Cooperative) is eliminated and replaced with the regular rate (read and billed each month.) All former *seasonal accounts* have an automatic meter reading device installed within the meter that transmits the reading to the office monthly.

A letter of explanation will be sent to all seasonal accounts.

Residential accounts:

Increase \$4/month — no more or no less. The *customer charge* is a flat amount that each account is billed and it is used to cover the local operating costs. Increased material costs for poles, wire, transformers, fuel for vehicles and almost everything used daily has increased. The customer charge on the

bill is used to pay for these items; 100 percent of these dollars stay at New Enterprise REC for our local operation. The *customer charge* increases \$4/month (\$48/year) for residential accounts and \$5/month (\$60/year) for three-phase accounts. The yard light monthly rate increases 25 cents, making it \$7.75/month. So regardless of the amount of electricity you use each month, each consumer-member knows exactly how much the bill will increase from the prior year if the same amount of electricity is used. A residential bill increases \$4/month — no more or no less.

Yard lights are still a bargain!

Yard lights are very popular and have increased 25 cents/month to \$7.75/month. The important thing to remember is these are maintained by the cooperative and they include the kWhs used by the light. The kWhs do not go through your meter.

These lights are not a money maker for the cooperative. The intent is to break even with this cost. The 25 cents additional per month is used to offset increases for the trip charge, repair parts and to buy the kWhs to operate the light.

Yard lights make life a lot easier for us when leaving or returning home at night and are still quite a bargain.

New technology eliminates seasonal rate

New technology has enabled New Enterprise REC to eliminate the more costly seasonal rate structure and roll these accounts into the *regular rate* class. A new generation of meters with automatic meter reading capabilities has been installed on the former *seasonal accounts*. These meters send readings to the office monthly through the power line rather than the telephone line.

The cooperative no longer drives to each meter twice each year for the read-
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FROM THE MANAGER/CEO

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ings. Consumer-members no longer pre-pay six months of *customer charges*. The exact use monthly is known and consumer-members pay for exactly what is used each month.

For those with internet access, don't forget the E-bill capability where you can sign up to view and/or pay your bill and receive an email bill. By checking a box, you can choose to stop receiving a paper bill. For someone who heads to Florida over the winter months, your electricity will remain on, your readings will automatically be retrieved and you can arrange to have your payment made automatically. Check with one of our customer service reps or log onto our website, www.newentpriserec.com, for instructions.

Where are New Enterprise rates headed from here?

The October 2008 increase to the *customer charge* is expected to cover the local operating costs of New Enterprise Rural Electric. The last change was nearly seven years earlier.

The *generation and transmission* cost for the kWhs from Allegheny Electric Cooperative is expected to increase the overall monthly bill to consumer-members approximately 15 percent beginning in 2011. This is nowhere near the 40 to 60 percent increases the investor-owned utilities are putting into place.

Beyond 2011, new generating plants and transmission lines will be built and these costs will be reflected in future rates to everyone in the country.

New automatic meter reading capabilities

A new program using the latest technology is under way at your cooperative. For some of you, the effects are immediate while for others it will be more gradual. The latest technology of meters that transmit readings, use levels and outage information over the power lines is being installed on every account during the next five to six years. When the work is complete, all meters on the system will be read automatically.

For those paying \$2/month for the original, phone-based, automatic meter-reading device in the meter, nothing changes until early 2009. Your meter will be replaced and the connection to your phone line will be eliminated along with the \$2/month fee! **You will be notified when these changes actually occur. It does not start the day your meter gets replaced.**

During some random checks, we found that consumer-members have not always been honest when reporting their monthly meter readings. They eventually pay because the readings are cumulative, but all consumer-members pay as some delay their payment. Once the meter changeout is complete, the exact amount of kWhs used at each account will be known. New Enterprise REC pays for every kWh that enters the substations and we must bill consumer-members for all the kWhs used within the system.

Safety issues prohibit meters from being removed by consumer-members. When a meter seal has been broken, we can only assume the meter was tampered

with and the law has been broken. Only authorized New Enterprise REC employees may remove a meter. Now the meter notifies the cooperative and documents the exact time a meter is tampered with.

If you currently read your meter, do not stop until the cooperative notifies you. The testing process may continue for several months and some meters will not have the transmitting capability activated immediately. Notification will be made to every account when the meter becomes operational and you can stop submitting meter readings. For the time being, continue to read if you currently do this. We estimate a five- to six-year period of time to change out every meter on the system. As always, when you're unsure about what to do, give the office a call and talk to a customer service rep. ☀

Farm safety

Every farmer knows that farming is a hazardous occupation. Many people may not think of electricity as a danger on their farm but electric shock can cause injuries and death on the farm. When moving or installing equipment, a person can inadvertently come into contact with overhead or underground electric lines. Electricity is a very important part of farming and should be used with caution.

Electric tools should not be used in the rain, on wet grass or in wet conditions. Inspect power tools before each use for frayed power cords, broken plugs and cracked or broken housings. If it is damaged, stop using it immediately. Repair it or replace it. Always use an extension cord marked for outdoor use and rated for the power needs of your tools. Remember to unplug all portable power tools when not in use. Since metal ladders conduct electricity, watch out for overhead wires and power lines.

When moving equipment, use the "10-foot rule." The 10-foot rule refers to the distance extending 10 feet in every direction from any power line. It's the distance you should observe when you're working outdoors with equipment or machinery such as a crane, forklift, backhoe, dump truck, television antenna, drilling rig or skid loader. It's an important rule to remember.

Co-op notes

- ▶ Not sure what to do with your compact fluorescent lamps when they burn out? New Enterprise REC is now recycling CFLs. Just bring them to our office and we will take care of the rest.
- ▶ Would you like to help someone in need? Why not sign up for our Family in Need Fund? Your monthly electric bill is rounded up to the nearest dollar. The extra cents goes into a fund to help New Enterprise REC consumer-members who are experiencing a hardship. Call for details.
- ▶ The next due date for meter readings and payments is Oct. 28. Accounts will be disconnected for non-payment on Oct. 28.

What's your energy IQ?

Let's take a little quiz. This one will test your energy IQ. What do you spend more on – energy for your cars or for your home? Sounds like a simple question perhaps to you, but you might be surprised by how few people know the right answer. Before going any further, take out a pencil and commit your guess to paper.

What do you think your household spends on gasoline for your vehicles? Write that number down. \$_____

Now, take a guess at what you pay to keep your home comfortably heated and cooled, lighted, your food cooked, your clothes washed and dried, and your appliances energized, etc. \$_____

Making a guess helps engage you in the learning process. Making the answer easy to get completes the learning loop. That's where New Enterprise REC's website comes in.

GAS PRICES DRIVE UP ENERGY INTEREST

We believe the gasoline price shock makes this an ideal time to help customers put energy costs in perspective and focus attention on meaningful ways of reducing their bills.

A garage is part of the new website design. This can be found by clicking on the HomeEnergySuite. Once you are into the suite, click the InteractiveEnergyHome™ tab. Click on the garage and a garage window will appear. This tool will help you see what you pay for gasoline compared to what you pay for the convenience of electricity.



In the garage of the InteractiveEnergyHome are two vehicles and a simple gas-cost calculator. You can enter your annual miles and miles/gallon (mpg) for each vehicle along with the current gas price and with one click, see how much you spend annually for gas.

Shocking isn't it?

In the scenario of a family with one 20 mpg car and a 17 mpg SUV, at the going rate of about \$4/gallon, they spend over \$6,000 each year.



ENERGY CALCULATORS SHED NEEDED LIGHT

Now, let's click over to the HomeEnergyCalculator™ and with just a few entries see that the same family spends about \$3,000 to power its 3,400-square-foot home: **half as much** as they spend driving their vehicles.

This helpful tool is just one way to learn more about your energy costs. Penn Lines will be featuring tips from our website periodically.



Auto Pay Program Provides Convenience

WITH New Enterprise Rural Electric Cooperative's Auto Pay program, you can eliminate writing a check each month. You no longer have to remember to buy stamps to mail your payment to the office. No more forgetting to drop your payment off at the office.

Our Auto Pay program automatically withdraws your electric payment from your checking or savings account on the 20th of each month. All you need is a good credit rating with New Enterprise REC to join. It's easy to sign up and it is FREE. Applications are available on our website at www.newenterpriserec.com or at our office. Though you may download and print the application from our website, you need to return it in person or by mail with your signature and a voided check. If you have more than one account number, be sure to write all your account numbers on the application. Joint name accounts must have both signatures on the application.

You will still receive a billing statement each month. Statements show your electric use and the amount to be withdrawn. Even though your electric bill is being deducted automatically, you still need to provide your meter reading to us. You may continue to mail your meter reading to us with your statement as before, except you won't need to include a payment. To save postage, you may consider submitting your reading by phone at 814/766-3221, or 800/270-3177, press option 1 to be directed to our meter reading mailbox, by fax at 814/766-3319, or through the website.

Auto Pay can be cancelled by your request. To cancel, just provide us with a letter stating you would like to cancel the Auto Pay. Joint name accounts need to have both signatures on this letter. The letter must be in our office by the first of the month.

Should you have two insufficient funds while on Auto Pay, the cooperative will cancel your Auto Pay.

This is a great program to make your life a little easier. Should you have any questions, give Brawna a call at extension 224 or email her at bsell@newenterpriserec.com.

KIDZCORNER

Annual Kidz Korner Contest

For the past couple of years, we have had a Christmas drawing contest. This year, we are still having a contest but it's not a drawing one. We are encouraging children 18 and under to enter a writing contest. We are leaving the topic open. We want to hear about your favorite topics. There will be three age groups: Ages 7 and under; Ages 8 - 13; and Ages 14 - 18. All entries need to be in our office by Nov. 17, 2008. Entries from the first- and second-place winners in each age group will be published in *Penn Lines* over the next few months beginning in January 2009. Prizes will be awarded to the first- and second-place winners in each age group.

DETAILS OF THE CONTEST:

- ➡ Entries can be either a story or poem. They will be judged on creativity and readability.
- ➡ Your story or poem can be handwritten or typed.
- ➡ You can mail your entry, drop it off at our office or email it to bsell@newenterpriserec.com.
- ➡ Be sure to include your first name, age, parents' names, address and phone number.
- ➡ One entry per person.....choose your best work and send it.
- ➡ Please limit your story or poem to 700 words or less.
- ➡ Winners will be notified by mail sometime in December.

True or false!

Figure out if each statement is true or false! Circle your answer and find out.

1. An American president was so worried that rural American farmers would be left behind if they did not have access to electricity that he helped them organize electricity cooperatives.
True False
2. Early cooperatives in England formed because shopkeepers were dishonest.
True False
3. School children in Roman times used to form soda pop cooperatives.
True False
4. In 1920, there were more than 2,500 cooperative general stores in the United States.
True False
5. Natural food co-ops became popular in the early 1800s.
True False

ANSWERS:

1. True! President Franklin D. Roosevelt created the Rural Electrification Administration in 1935, providing electricity to rural areas. Before that, farmers had to milk cows by lantern light and people had to wash clothes – even those covered in manure – by hand!
2. True! Shopkeepers who faced little competition from other stores charged too much. Also, some workers got paid their wages in credits. These credits could only be used at a company store, where prices were high. People finally pooled their money and bought things in large quantities, then split the supplies.
3. False! Soda pop wasn't around in Roman times. But who knows? Maybe kids formed cooperatives to trade carved rocks or something.
4. True! About 80 percent of these stores were in small towns. Rapid growth toppled the cooperative buying system that decade. Merchants couldn't keep shelves stocked with low-cost goods.
5. False! Natural food became popular much later, in the 1960s and 1970s.