

# Northwestern Rural Electric Cooperative Association, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives  
serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

## Northwestern REC

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## Main Access Number

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1-800-352-0014

## FAX

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## Office Hours

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7 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

**Amy Wellington, Editor**

**Linda King, Managing Editor**

## From the President & CEO



## We're here to help you save

By Bill Buchanan

NORTHWESTERN REC is always here for you, and given the challenging times we've all experienced the last few months, I'd like to share some information and ideas to help you save energy and money.

Summer is a great time to conduct an energy audit of your home and identify ways to boost energy efficiency. Understanding how your home uses energy can help you determine the best ways to modify energy use and keep more money in your wallet.

Did you know the average electric bill is \$130? If that number seems low to you, an audit can help identify areas for potential savings. Your electric cooperative offers free home energy audits. Just call our energy solutions department at 1-800-352-0014.

If you'd prefer to do an energy audit yourself, try our online audit. Visit [adventure.touchstoneenergy.com](http://adventure.touchstoneenergy.com), then press "let's go" to get started. But keep in mind, an online audit won't be as thorough as an in-home audit.

## Shifting to off-peak periods

Northwestern REC offers a load management program for electric water heating and residential electric heating. Electric rates based on time of use offer co-op members the ability to lower their electricity costs without reducing the amount of electricity used.

By performing some of your daily chores, such as running the dishwasher, doing laundry, or charging your

electric vehicle during off-peak hours (when people are using less electricity), all members save by helping to keep power costs low. Use your programmable thermostat to adjust the settings so that your heating and air conditioning systems sync with the off-peak hours. Use automatic timers to run hot tubs, pool pumps, water heaters and other appliances in the same way. Be sure to program the timers to coincide with the less-expensive, off-peak times.

## Putting power in your hands

Prepaid metering is intended to aid in budgeting your monthly energy costs. Northwestern REC members can pay for electricity before it is used, then use the electricity until the credit expires. During the time period you've paid for, you will receive regular feedback on your balance. Industry studies show that consumers who participate in prepaid metering plans use up to 10% less electricity.

Lastly, if you have recently purchased a new Energy Star®-rated appliance or product, make sure you are taking advantage of special rebates that are available.

As your trusted energy adviser, we're here to help. If you have questions about your bill or additional ways to save energy, please let us know. We're only one click or phone call away.

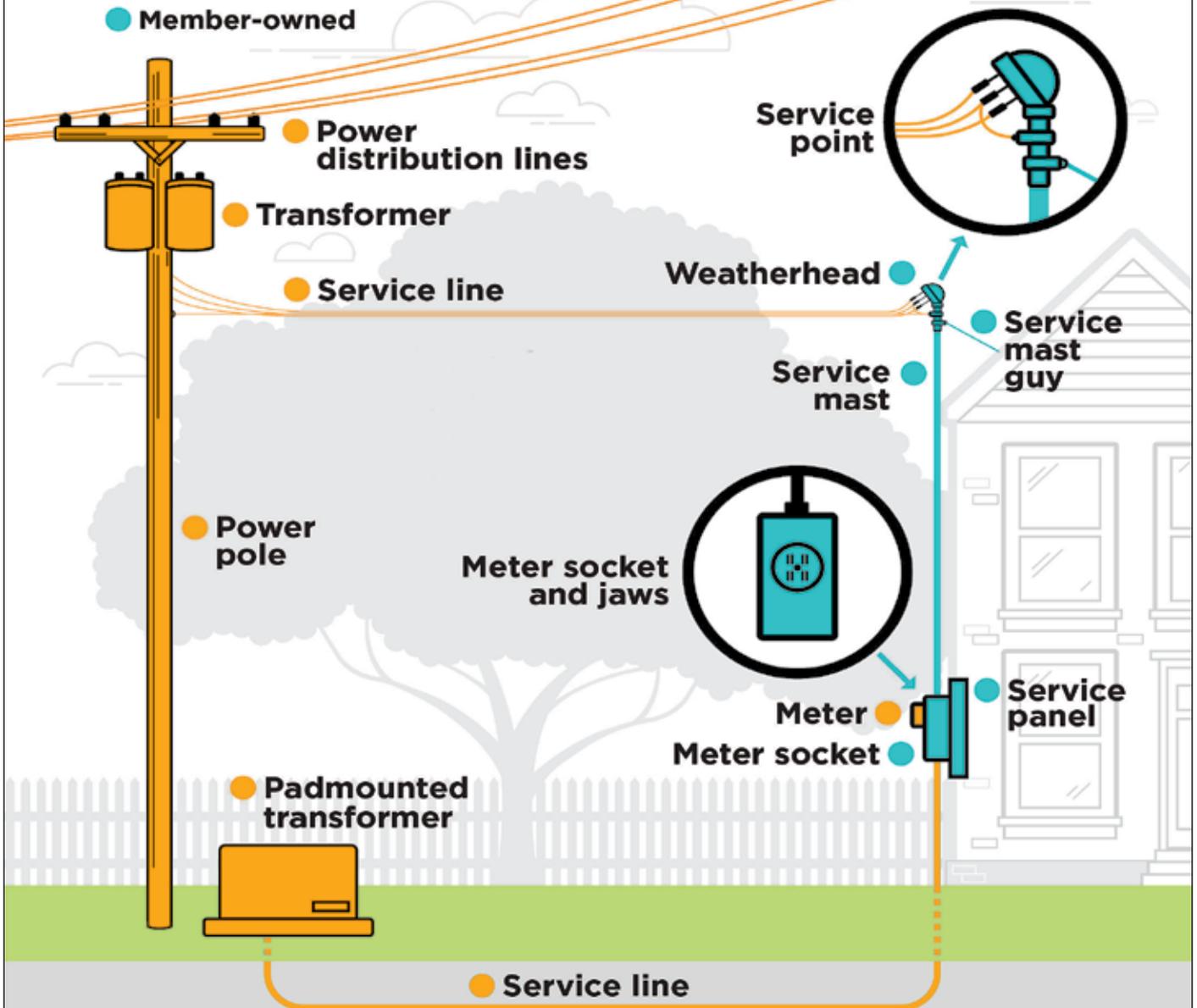
Cooperatively yours,  
Bill Buchanan  
President & CEO

# Who Owns What?

## Electric Co-op Owned Equipment vs Member-Owned Equipment

This graphic depicts equipment owned by the co-op (in gold) and the member (in blue). If a storm damages any equipment owned by the co-op, we are responsible for repairs. If a storm damages any member-owned equipment, the member is responsible for repairs. Members should hire a licensed electrician when making any repairs to member-owned equipment.

- Co-op owned
- Member-owned



*Note: This graphic depicts overhead and underground service. Please be aware of which type of service you receive at your home or business.*

## Getting a new roof? Here's an important safety message for you

LOOK OUT for the weatherhead. What's a weatherhead? A weatherhead is a weatherproof service drop entry point where overhead electric wires or service drop from a power pole enter a building, usually via a hollow metal pole called a service mast. (You may also hear it called a weather cap, service head or service entrance cap).

The weatherhead is shaped like a hood, with one side sloping down so moisture will flow off and away from the connection. The electric wires enter the mast through the underside of this hood, typically through watertight rubberized gaskets.

While weatherheads are designed to stand up to wind, rain, and snow, they are vulnerable to impact from solid objects like tools or ladders. Also, especially if the fittings are older, there may be fine cracks in a gasket so it will still keep out moisture from above or to one side, but may let in water under



pressure from below — as from a hose or sprayer. And, if you slip and fall against the service mast, pulling wires loose, you risk being severely shocked or electrocuted by exposed wires.

If you're going to be working on or around a roof, locate the weatherhead and the power lines that feed into it and plan your job so you can keep all

workers, tools, and equipment at least 10 feet away. If that's not possible — say, you're re-roofing the entire house or replacing the gutters in that area — contact Northwestern REC at least five working days before you start. We will de-energize the service wires or make other arrangements to help you work safely. ⚡

**EVERY CO-OP MEMBER HAS A VOICE.**

Director Elections are open until midnight on Aug. 19, 2020.



## **Business downtime: Steps to saving energy and money**

TEMPORARILY CLOSED or reducing operations? Take some time to save energy and money.

Is your business shutting down, implementing a work-from-home policy or reducing operating hours? It's a difficult time, but you can make the most of it by finding ways to save energy and money and improve your facility. Here are some actions you can take:

### **Adjust temperatures**

Don't waste energy keeping your empty building comfortable. Raise or lower thermostat settings (depending on outdoor conditions) to minimize HVAC energy use. Consider installing smart programmable thermostats, which come with advanced features, such as remote control.

### **Get in the zone**

In cases of partial vacancy or limited operations, zone the building so that only occupied spaces are conditioned to comfortable levels. Adjust temperatures in unoccupied areas to save energy, but keep them at reasonable levels to reduce the impact on occupied zones.

### **Limit lighting**

Turn off all lights in unoccupied spaces, except necessary security lighting. Install timers on security lights, and light sensors on outdoor lighting, so they operate only when needed. Turn off selected parking lot lighting while maintaining security.

### **Pull the plug**

Unplug all unnecessary or unused appliances and electronic equipment; many of these devices continue to draw power even when they are turned off. Advanced power strips are a smart, low-cost upgrade. They automatically switch off power to plugged-in devices based on use, a set schedule or other parameters.

### **Focus on maintenance**

Take the opportunity to perform some routine maintenance that will save energy and improve equipment performance. Fix water leaks. Inspect, clean, and repair motors, compressed air units, and any other facility or operating systems and equipment to ensure efficient operation.

### **Clean and sanitize**

Soiled carpets and dirt buildup in corners and under furniture and equipment can reduce indoor air quality, which can aggravate allergies and respiratory conditions. Cleaning and sanitizing your facility can help improve comfort and ensure health for employees, visitors, and customers. Also, brighten your indoor environment by cleaning windows and removing dust buildup on lamps and light fixtures.

By following these measures, you'll save money now and be ready to operate at peak efficiency once you're fully back in business. ⚡

# ANNUAL MEETING

## **Annual meeting to be held August 22, 2020, but will not be open to the public**

- ▶ Due to COVID-19, the 84th annual meeting will be closed to the public, but will be broadcast live online. To view the meeting live on a computer, visit [NorthwesternREC.coop](http://NorthwesternREC.coop) for details. The meeting will be broadcast on our YouTube channel and Facebook page beginning at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Aug. 22, 2020.
- ▶ As we did last year, we had planned to provide all annual meeting attendees free gate passes and food/ride vouchers to the 2020 Crawford County Fair. The Fair Board has canceled the fair due to the coronavirus pandemic, so this is no longer an option. There will be no meal or entertainment provided for the 84th annual meeting.
- ▶ Members can pick up their annual meeting gifts at the New Beginnings Church of God on Leslie Road in Meadville from 9 a.m. until noon on Aug. 22. When you pick up your gift, you can also drop off a non-perishable food item that we will donate to our local food pantries.
- ▶ Director elections opened on June 23 and will conclude at midnight on Aug. 19. There is still time to cast your vote for the four district seats up for election this year. Ballots were emailed and mailed in June. If you did not receive either item, you can vote through SmartHub or call us at 1-800-352-0014 to receive a new ballot. Biographies for each nominee were included with the ballot and can be found in the Annual Report (found in last month's issue of *Penn Lines*) or on our website, [NorthwesternREC.coop](http://NorthwesternREC.coop).

**SAVE THE DATE: The 85th annual meeting will be held on Saturday, Aug. 21, 2021.**