



MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

# Committed to a **co-op culture** for all

Over the years, you've heard me expound on why and how Guernsey-Muskingum Electric Cooperative is different — because we're a cooperative. Our business model sets us apart from other utilities because we adhere to seven guiding cooperative principles that reflect core values of honesty, transparency, equity, inclusiveness, and service to the greater good of the community.

Electric cooperatives, including Guernsey-Muskingum, have a unique and storied place in our country's history. We democratized the American dream by bringing electricity to rural areas when for-profit electric companies determined the effort was too costly. Back then, cities were electrified, and rural areas were not, creating the original rural-urban divide. Newly established electric lines helped power economic opportunity in rural areas. Today, that spirit of equity and inclusion is a vital part of our co-op DNA.

### Equal access for all

When our electric co-op was founded, each member contributed an equal share in order to gain access to electricity that benefited individual families as well as the larger local community. Each member had an equal vote in co-op matters. That sense of equity and inclusion is still how we operate today. Guernsey-Muskingum Electric Cooperative was built by and belongs to the diverse communities and members we serve. Membership is open to everyone in our service territory, regardless of race, religion, age, disability, gender identity, language, political perspective, or socioeconomic status.

By virtue of paying your electric bill each month, you're a member of the co-op, and every member has an equal voice and vote when it comes to co-op governance. This ties back to our guiding principles of equitable economic

participation and democratic control of the co-op.

We encourage all members to vote in Guernsey-Muskingum's director elections every April, and we invite all members to participate in co-op meetings to weigh in on discussions that set co-op policies and priorities, such as high-speed internet, community solar, and electric vehicle programs.

We know members of our community have different needs and perspectives, and we welcome diverse views on all issues under consideration by the co-op. The more viewpoints we hear, the better we are able to reflect the needs of all corners of our community.

### Inclusion

While our top priority is providing safe, reliable, and affordable energy, we also want to be a catalyst for good in our community. Because we are your local electric cooperative, co-op revenues stay right here in our community. In turn, we invest in our diverse community base through scholarship programs, charitable giving, educational programs, and more. We strive to make long-term decisions that improve and enrich the communities we serve.

While today's world is radically different than it was when Guernsey-Muskingum was founded, our cooperative values have stood the test of time and remain just as relevant today. We recognize that today's co-op members expect more, and my pledge to you — the members we proudly serve — is to promote a cooperative culture of inclusion, diversity, and equity for all.



Brian Hill  
GENERAL MANAGER/CEO

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Ray Crock

# Avoid solar energy scams

Solar energy is booming, and the future is brighter than ever. Through the use of rooftop solar panels, many homeowners can now harness the sun's natural rays to produce their own electricity that's environmentally friendly and cost effective.

But with the increasing popularity of solar, unfortunately, some businesses are taking advantage of consumers who are interested in generating their own energy through rooftop panels.

While many solar companies are genuine and truly want to help consumers with a successful solar installation, there are the occasional bad apples.

You've likely heard a story or two about solar vendors that promised rooftop panels that would generate enough electricity to power the entire home. Then, after the homeowner has paid thousands of dollars for the installation, the solar panels aren't working, and the vendor is nowhere to be found. Sadly, this story has been the reality for many consumers.

If you're interested in solar panels for your home, consider these tips before installation:

- Talk to an energy advisor at your local electric co-op first. We want you to feel confident about any decisions you

make about your home energy use, especially decisions about generating energy at home.

- Collect at least three quotes from different solar companies to ensure you're getting a competitive deal. As with any major purchase, research is key, so thoroughly read customer reviews for each of the three solar vendors.
- If you speak to a solar vendor and they use high-pressure tactics, like an offer that's only good for 24 hours, run! Any reputable solar company will recognize that you need time to review a proposal and thoroughly weigh your decision.
- You know if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. If a solar company is making promises that sound unachievable and outlandish, they probably are. Remember, if you have any questions, you can always count on your electric co-op for advice.
- Finally, when it's time to review and sign a solar contract, make sure the language is clear and easy to understand. Ensure any prior verbal (or emailed) promises are also included in the contract.

Going solar is a major decision, so you'll want to conduct a good bit of research first. If you're looking for a general starting point, check out the Department of Energy's Homeowner's Guide to Going Solar.

## TIPS FOR AVOIDING SOLAR SCAMS

As the popularity of rooftop solar panels increases, so do solar scams. Here are a few tips to consider before you install a solar PV system for your home.

- Talk to your electric co-op first. They can offer guidance and recommendations.
- Get at least three quotes from solar companies, and thoroughly read their reviews.
- Avoid solar companies that use high-pressure tactics.
- Don't believe unrealistic promises.
- Only sign clear, easy-to-understand contracts.



# What is Operation Helping Others?

There are over 6,000 GMEC members signed up to participate in Operation Helping Others (OHO). If you are one of those members, thank you! If you are not familiar with OHO, here is an overview of the program.

OHO is a voluntary program that rounds up your electric bill to the next dollar and uses the change as a donation. OHO is not a program to pay Guernsey-Muskingum electric bills. Funding comes entirely from members who voluntarily participate. The small change donated by members makes a big difference in our communities.

WILLIE WIREDHAND'S ELECTRIC BILL	\$73.44
WILLIE ROUNDS UP HIS BILL AND PAYS	\$74.00
DONATION	\$0.56

For example, the OHO committee would put Willie Wiredhand's 56 cents in with all of the spare change donated by other members and decide how best to use those funds in our communities. Every penny raised by your donations to OHO goes toward funding needs in our community. The OHO committee consists of one appointed volunteer from each district.

In 2020, your OHO committee granted \$35,696.79 to be distributed to needy causes in our community. Below is a list of OHO recipients for 2020.



OHO grant amount	OHO meeting date	Location of recipient	Need of recipient
\$5,000	Feb. 24	Muskingum County	Operating expenses
\$5,000	Feb. 24	Cumberland, Ohio	Donation
\$2,500	Feb. 24	Westland Township, Guernsey County	Medical expenses
\$2,000	May 18	Jackson Township, Guernsey County	Home repairs
\$2,000	May 18	Wills Township, Guernsey County	Medical expenses
\$1,800	May 18	Madison Township, Guernsey County	Medical expenses
\$1,000	Dec. 1	Tuscarawas County, Ohio	Christmas donation
\$1,000	Dec. 1	Guernsey County, Ohio	Christmas donation
\$1,000	Dec. 1	Guernsey County, Ohio	Christmas donation
\$1,000	Dec. 1	Zanesville, Ohio	Christmas donation
\$1,000	Dec. 1	Guernsey County, Ohio	Christmas donation
\$1,000	Dec. 1	Guernsey/Muskingum County, Ohio	Christmas donation
\$1,000	Dec. 1	Noble County, Ohio	Christmas donation
\$1,000	Dec. 1	Zanesville, Ohio	Christmas donation
\$1,000	Dec. 1	Muskingum County, Ohio	Christmas donation
\$1,000	Dec. 1	Guernsey/Muskingum County, Ohio	Christmas donation
\$1,000	Dec. 1	Guernsey County, Ohio	Christmas donation
\$2,400	Dec. 1	Tuscarawas County, Ohio	Operating expenses
\$1,100	Dec. 1	Highland Township, Muskingum County	Operating expenses
\$1,000	Dec. 1	Wills Township, Guernsey County	Medical expenses
\$796.79	Dec. 1	Madison Township, Guernsey County	Living expenses
\$1,100	Dec. 1	Adams Township, Guernsey County	Medical expenses

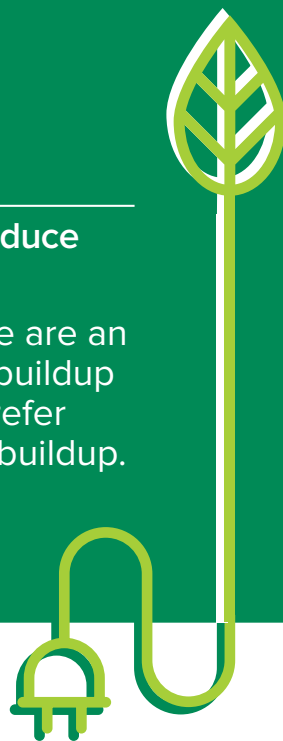


# Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Use wool or rubber dryer balls in the clothes dryer to reduce drying time and static.

Wool dryer balls can also absorb extra moisture. These are an efficient alternative to dryer sheets, which can create buildup on the dryer's filter and reduce air circulation. If you prefer dryer sheets, scrub the filter once a month to remove buildup.

Source: [www.energy.gov](http://www.energy.gov)



## Is your name and account number here?

If it is, call the cooperative's office and receive a FREE home change-out to LED lightbulbs (limit six bulbs). Thanks for reading the local pages of *Ohio Cooperative Living* magazine.

#16-0677-08-00 .....Rodney Guthrie  
#28-0086-13-03.....Robert W Orr Jr  
#32-0083-42-03.....Steven J Clapper  
#49-0061-14-03 .....Susan N Davis

#53-0455-18-02 ..... Laura L Frakes  
#57-0161-18-03..... Kevin A Beach

### GUERNSEY-MUSKINGUM ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

#### CONTACT

800-521-9879 | [www.gmenergy.com](http://www.gmenergy.com)

#### OFFICE

17 S. Liberty St.  
New Concord, OH 43762

#### OFFICE HOURS

Monday–Friday, 7:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

#### ELECTRIC RATES

Farm and Home Service rate schedule R-1\*  
Service Availability Charge — \$24/mo.  
First 500 kWh/month — 12.669¢/kWh  
Over 500 kWh/month — 11.345¢/kWh

Net Metering Residential R-1 NM\*  
Service Availability Charge — \$42/mo.  
First 2,000 kWh/mo. — 11.145¢/kWh  
Over 2,000 kWh/mo. — 11.345¢/kWh

Seasonal Residential Service rate schedule S-1\*  
Service Availability Charge — \$384/yr.  
First 800 kWh/yr. — 20.269¢/kWh  
800 to 6,000 kWh/yr. — 11.145¢/kWh  
Over 6,000 kWh/yr. — 11.345¢/kWh  
(Minimum annual charge — \$384/yr. for service between March 1, 2021, and Feb. 28, 2022)

Commercial Service rate schedule C-1\*  
Service Availability Charge — \$26/mo.  
First 1,500 kWh/mo. — 13.069¢/kWh  
Over 1,500 kWh/mo. — 11.345¢/kWh

\*Rider T — Kilowatt-Hour Tax applies to all rate schedules and must be added to the rates shown.

First 2,000 kWh/mo. — 0.465¢/kWh  
Next 13,000 kWh/mo. — 0.419¢/kWh  
Over 15,000 kWh/mo. — 0.363¢/kWh

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jay Gray                      John Enos  
Chairman                      Duane Parks  
Shirley Stutz                Matt Carpenter  
Vice Chairman                Maureen Riley  
Ed Bay                            Directors  
Secy.-Treasurer

Brian Hill  
General Manager/CEO  
Joseph P. Boeckman  
Counsel

