Currently Speaking

Guernsey-Muskingum Electric Cooperative, Inc.
17 S. Liberty St.
New Concord, Ohio 43762
740-826-7661 — 800-521-9879
www.gmenergy.com

Board of Directors

Jim Rex.....Chairman
Jay Gray.....Vice Chairman
Shirley Stutz.....Secy.-Treasurer
Ed Bay.....Director
John Enos.....Director
Brian Hill.....Director
Duane Parks.....Director
Daniel J. Gunsett.....Counsel
Jerry Kackley..General Manager/CEO

Electric Rates

Farm and Home Service rate schedule R-1*

Service Availability Charge $18/month
First 500 kWh/month @ 12.769¢/kWh
Over 500 kWh/month @ 10.645¢/kWh

Seasonal Residential Service annual rate schedule S-1*

Service Availability Charge $216/year
First 800 kWh/year @ 20.769¢/kWh
Over 800 to 6,000 kWh/year @ 11.645¢/kWh
Over 6,000 kWh/year @10.645¢/kWh

(Your minimum annual charge will be $216 per year for service between March 1, 2014, and Feb. 28, 2015.)

Commercial Service rate schedule C-1*

Service Availability Charge $18/month
First 1,500 kWh/month @ 12.769¢/kWh
Over 1,500 kWh/month @ 10.645¢/kWh

***Rider T —**
Kilowatt-Hour Tax applies to all rate schedules and must be added to the rates shown.
First 2,000 kWh/month .465¢/kWh
Next 13,000 kWh/month .419¢/kWh
Over 15,000 kWh/month .363¢/kWh

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

Effort leads to happiness

Jerry Kackley, General Manager/CEO

I HAVE BEEN BLESSED to have two lovely daughters who are the lights of my life. I feel privileged that God has given me the opportunity to watch them grow and guide their lives. What joy they bring me each day and what an adventure they have made my life! I am proud of each of them and the extraordinary and unique young women they have become. I have always said, "You don't know how much you can love someone until you have a child." Perhaps that is because, as a parent, you must commit yourself to sacrificing your needs or desires and focusing on your children, not realizing that every sacrifice that you make for them only rewards you a thousand times more than you could imagine.

Many aspects of life are like this. The accomplishments that give us the most satisfaction and joy tend to result from completing the very tasks that we find to be the most challenging. In other words, I believe that there is a direct cause-and-effect relationship between effort and happiness. Now don't get me wrong — I'll take the easy road whenever I get the chance. But the potholes and speed bumps on the difficult route can add a lot of adventure to the ride. Once that path has been conquered, I find a certain pleasure in looking back and marveling at my ability to have overcome the obstacles that stood in my way.

Effort, my friends, builds character and confidence, and it is a direct reflection of your faith. Happiness does not always come easily and neither does faith. Never be so discouraged by the path that lays before you that you give up hope. No road is too rough. No trail is too treacherous. No cliff is too steep. Have faith in yourself, faith in those around you, and faith in God who blesses us each day. When life overwhelms you, lean on others. When you see others lose hope, reach out to them and let your strength renew their spirit. All it takes is a little "effort," and you will find satisfaction and peace. God Bless.

Visit GMEC at Cambridge home show

The Swing Into Spring Home Show is Friday, March 13, through Sunday, March 15, at the Pritchard Laughlin Civic Center in Cambridge. Make sure to stop by the Guernsey-Muskingum Electric Cooperative booth to pick up some ideas on improving your home's energy efficiency. We hope to see you there.

Energy efficiency upgrades that make sense

When it comes to energy efficiency, there are two ways to measure improvements. The first is the payback period, or the amount of time that the improvement will pay for itself. The second is comfort. Improvements can often increase the comfort level of a home, which is not easy to measure, but it is one of the driving forces behind home weatherization efforts.

There are several areas of the home that can be improved easily, without breaking your budget.

Lighting

In recent months, the price of LED (light-emitting diode) bulbs for residential consumers has steadily declined. 60-watt LEDs can be purchased at many big-box retailers for $10 or less. These bulbs can save 60 percent or more when compared to traditional incandescent bulbs and last for much longer. But take care when selecting a bulb for a fixture that uses a dimmer, as not all dimmers will work with LED bulbs. There are also quality issues with poorly made LEDs, so look for the Energy Star logo when you buy — that means the bulb has met higher efficiency and quality standards as set by the federal government.

Heating and air conditioning

The U.S. Energy Information Administration estimates that heating and air conditioning account for 22 percent of a typical home's annual electric bill. Options such as an air-source heat pump or a ground-source heat pump can be 20 to 45 percent more efficient than the existing heating or cooling system in the average home. However, the up-front cost is often a barrier to adoption.

Simple solutions like changing air filters at least every three months will increase airflow to rooms, increase the life of the unit's motor and improve the air quality of the home. Sealing and insulating ductwork can be completed in a weekend and result in energy savings of up to 20 percent. If you can see the ducts, you can do it yourself. Otherwise, you'll have to call an HVAC professional.

By locating and correcting air leaks, you can lessen the amount of work that heating and cooling systems need to do. To locate leaks, walk through your home on a cold day and feel for drafts around exterior doors and windows, electrical outlets, and entrance points for TV and telephone cables. In basements, target dryer vents, gas lines or any place with an opening in the wall. To fix leaks, apply caulk, spray foam or weather stripping to these areas.

Simple acts, such as cooking outdoors on a hot summer day and keeping curtains closed to keep out summer sun, will keep the interior of the home cooler and reduce the amount of time air-conditioning units need to operate.

Ray Crock, Energy Advisor

Appliances and electronics

The appliances and gadgets that make life easier are also the largest users of electricity in our homes. When buying a new appliance, again look for the ENERGY STAR label, which can result in 10 to 15 percent more in energy consumption savings. Some states have adopted ENERGY STAR holidays where the sales tax is waived on the purchase of qualifying ENERGY STAR-rated appliances.

More simple household tips to boost energy efficiency:

- Cleaning lint traps on dryers and not over-drying clothes will save energy and extend the life of your clothes.
- Replacing worn refrigerator gasket doors will stop cool air from leaking from the refrigerator.
- Clean refrigerator coils and keep refrigerators away from heat-generating appliances, such as an oven.

Home electronics, such as computers, TVs and DVD players, consume power even when turned off. This phenomenon is called parasitic load, and sometimes these devices are referred to by the more playful term "energy vampire." According to a study conducted by Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, the average home loses 8 percent of its monthly energy consumption to these energy vampires. A full 75 percent of the power used to run home electronics is consumed when those appliances are turned off, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. Cutting off power by using a power strip or a smart strip — which cuts power to some devices completely but leaves it flowing to others — is the best way to stop this senseless loss of energy.

The best energy efficiency improvements are often the easiest. Turning lights off when leaving a room, sealing windows and doors, and cleaning refrigerator coils isn't as much fun as buying a shiny new appliance. But these simple jobs are proven ways to save energy and increase comfort.

Congratulations, Barb!

Longtime GMEC employee retires

Barb Lloyd recently retired from Guernsey-Muskingum Electric Cooperative recently after 22 years of service.

She began her employment in 1992 as a part-time dispatcher and became full time in 1994.

We wish Barb a very long and happy retirement.

GMEC welcomes new employees

Matt Weaver

Dave Costic

Guernsey-Muskingum Electric Cooperative has two new employees on the staff roster.

Matt Weaver started in December as an apprentice lineman. He is a graduate of Tri-Valley High School and completed the power lineman program at the Mid-East Career Center in Zanesville.

Matt brings work experience from American Electric Power to his new position.

Dave Costic joined the staff in January as the projects superintendent. He brings work experience from Vermont Electric Cooperative and First Energy in Toledo.

Please join us in welcoming Matt and Dave to the cooperative crew.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Source: EnergySavers.gov

Consider giving your home an energy checkup. Call your electric co-op for an audit to diagnose where your house could be losing energy and where you can start saving money. Auditors check for air leaks, inspect insulation, survey heating and cooling equipment and more. After making efficiency upgrades, you could save 5-30 percent on your energy bills.

Is your name and location/ account number here?

If it is, call your cooperative's office and receive a **FREE** home change-out to compact fluorescent lightbulbs. (Limit 12 bulbs.) Thanks for reading the GMEC "local pages" of *Country Living* magazine.

#58-0088-21-02 ..... Ralph E Smith
#23-0132-05-00 ..... Robert J Babcock
#16-0001-21-03 .....Veronica I Plants-Fox
#11-0206-03-08.....Peter G Jones
#15-0067-03-08 ..... Robert I Orwig
#35-0004-02-02 ..... Carl H Mathers

New water heater standards go into effect in April

What the new standards mean for consumers

BY BRET CURRY

This spring, a major change in energy efficiency standards goes into effect that will eventually affect all Americans. Beginning April 16, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) will require higher Energy Factor (EF) ratings on most residential electric, natural gas, oil and tankless water heaters.

EF ratings for water heaters are based on how efficiently heat is transferred into the water. Another consideration is standby heat loss, or the amount of heat lost from the storage tank while it's sitting idle. Generally you can find the EF of your water heater on the yellow energy guide tag located on the side of the unit. A rule of thumb when considering energy-efficient water heaters is that a higher EF rating equates to a more efficient unit.

Nearly two-thirds of the dollars spent by residential consumers on energy goes to space heating and cooling and water heating. Furthermore, DOE has determined its new water heater standards will save about 3.3 quads of energy and save Americans nearly $63 billion in water heating expenses over the next 30 years. To put one energy quad into perspective, it's equivalent to about 8 billion gallons of gasoline or about 293 billion kilowatt-hours. The average home uses about 1,200 kilowatt-hours in a month.

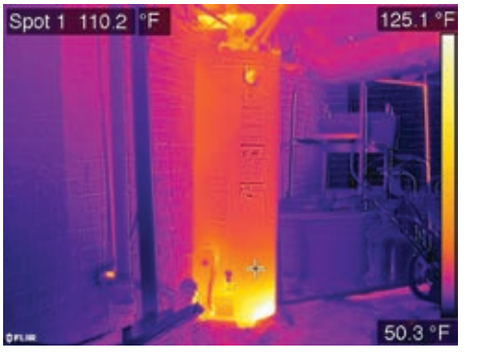
Conventional water heaters require a lot of energy to do their job. Furthermore, a law of nature on earth comes into play during and after the water is heated. Heat from the fuel source moves to the colder water, and the water is heated to the desired temperature. But, when the unit shuts off, the heated water will begin to cool. The rate of cooling is affected by the location of the water heater and the material used to insulate the storage tank. Additional energy dollars are required during colder months when water heaters are installed in garages, outside porches or any unconditioned environment.

The infrared thermal images pictured at right are from water heaters located in two different homes and reveal the heat loss being targeted by DOE. Both units are 40-gallon models. Both units reside in an unheated location with an ambient air temperature of about 50 degrees. The unit on top is a 1983 natural gas model with an EF rating of .57, or 57 percent efficiency, and its storage tank is insulated with fiberglass. The unit on the bottom is a 2006 electric model with an EF rating of .92, or 92 percent efficiency, and its storage tank is insulated with foam. Both units were set with a water temperature output of 120 degrees. As you observe the images and their corresponding temperature ranges, remember that heat moves to cool. While both are experiencing heat loss, the older natural gas unit is losing more heat than the electric model.

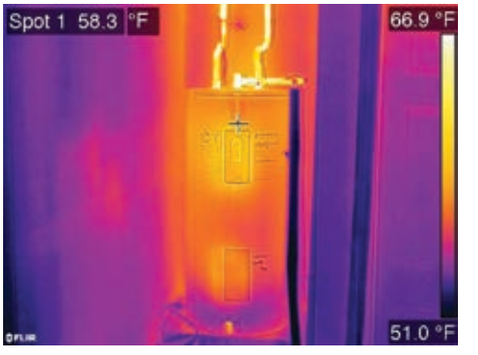
As EF rating requirements increase, so will the physical and technological characteristics of most storage-type water heaters. Many will be wider and taller to accommodate improved insulation required for heat retention and to incorporate efficiency technologies. Gas units larger than 55 gallons will require an electrical connection, different venting and condensation disposal. Electric units larger than 55 gallons will also require condensation disposal because of heat-pump technology. As existing retail inventory is depleted, builders, plumbers and homeowners will have to adapt to change — change that could result in a small remodel job when it comes time to replace your existing unit. To learn more details about the new water heater regulations, visit www1.eere.energy.gov/buildings/appliance_ standards/product.aspx/productid/27.

I also encourage you to contact GMEC with any energy efficiency-related questions, or visit www.gmenergy.com.

BRET CURRY *is the residential energy manager for Arkansas Electric Cooperative Corporation, a generation-and-transmission cooperative in Little Rock, Ark.*



A natural gas-fueled water heater in standby mode has heat loss reaching 125 degrees.



An electric water heater in standby mode has heat loss of 66 degrees.