



## GUERNSEY-MUSKINGUM ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CURRENTLY SPEAKING

### MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

# Your cooperative is here for you

It is often said that “timing is everything,” but some circumstances make timing more difficult. Writing this article is one of those difficult times. For those of you reading your *Ohio Cooperative Living* magazine, it is probably late April or early May, but to fulfill print deadlines, I am writing this at the end of March.

We are all being affected by the coronavirus, and our lives are changing. Here at Guernsey-Muskingum Electric Cooperative, we have already made changes to how we operate our business. We have taken steps to protect our employees so that we can continue to serve our members. We closed our lobby to walk-in traffic and encouraged members to use our website, the telephone, or mail to make their payments. We divided the staff into teams to help reduce exposure by having fewer employees interacting at the same time. We initiated employees working remotely and employees reporting directly from their homes.

Ohioans were directed to stay home, per an order from our governor, beginning March 24. But Guernsey-Muskingum is an essential business. Our job is to keep the power on for our members, so our employees will always be working for you.

By the time this reaches your mailbox, I don't know what will be happening. I do know that our thoughts and prayers are with those impacted by this terrible virus and

that we will continue to serve our members the best we can.

In these difficult times, members of our community who might have once seemed ordinary are now cast in a different light. We see the health care professionals and first responders as heroes on the front lines of this crisis. And we see those who are vital to our daily lives — grocery store workers, truck drivers, postal workers, utility workers, farmers, janitors, and so many more — with a new appreciation.

It remains to be seen what the result of this virus will be. What we know is that our commitment to our community and our resolve to overcome the present circumstances won't change.

In closing, I want to remind you that May is Military Appreciation Month. I hope you will join me in pausing to reflect on the sacrifices of our country's veterans and their families. I am especially thankful for those who gave the ultimate sacrifice so that we can enjoy the freedoms their service affords us in this great country of ours. Please join us in taking a moment to show your appreciation to veterans and active duty members of the military — not just this month, but every month.



**Brian Hill**  
GENERAL MANAGER/CEO



## MEMORIAL DAY

IN HONOR OF OUR HEROES

Guernsey-Muskingum  
Electric will be closed  
Monday, May 25 in  
observance of  
Memorial Day.



## ASK YOUR ENERGY ADVISOR



Ray Crock

# Readings, readings, readings!

**A**s I write this article (March 24), we are all trying to deal with the total upheaval of our lives due to the coronavirus pandemic. As we at your cooperative work to deal with these events, many of us are rotating days in the office with

days working at or from home. That is where I am as I write this. Even though I can not come into members' homes, I am trying to solve many electric use concerns by phone and some home troubleshooting visits from outside of the home with social distancing. My hope and prayer is that by the time you read this around the beginning of May, we have gotten past the peak of this pandemic and can all work together to move life back to normal.

One thing I have seen recently is the number of electric use concern calls that I have had that, after researching the member's consumption history, arose from issues with the member reading the meter and reporting it. Your electric bill is only as accurate as the reading you take and your timely reporting of it to us. I will describe a few of the problems I have seen arise and then ways to avoid them.



First, understand that you are always billed a month behind. For those of us who have been with Guernsey-Muskingum for a long time, we are asked to read our meter on the 15th of every month. So the reading you take on March 15 and mail in with your payment by March 25 would be billed to you on your April bill. It is for electricity used between Feb. 15 and March 15. The most important

thing to remember is to read the meter about the same day every month and get us the reading before we run the bills for the next month. The prevalent problem is members who rarely turn in readings, if at all. If we don't receive a reading, the computer estimates by averaging the previous three months. These estimates are usually too high or low, resulting in an extremely high or low catch-up bill. Some people have gotten computer estimates even though they turned in a reading. I found that they mailed their payment/reading too late for it to arrive at the office before the next bill was sent.

Another issue is when members don't take the meter reading at the same time every month. Reading ten days late one month and back to normal the next results in a 40-day and a 20-day reading. A member's bill would double from one month to the next, even with similar electricity use.

My recommendation as your energy advisor is to pick a day each month to always read the meter and then get us the reading, separate from your payment if necessary. If you send it with your payment in the mail or in person, we need to receive it before bills are run for the next month. We need the April reading before May 8 for it to be entered for the May bill. Here are some other options to get us your reading:

- Phone in your reading 24 hours a day at 800-521-9879.
- Call 844-206-7873 anytime and follow the menu to enter your meter reading.
- Visit [gmenergy.com](http://gmenergy.com) and look for the meter reading link in upper right corner.
- Set up an account on our SmartHub website. The link is on our website.

All these methods work well. SmartHub and the 844-206-7873 phone-payment system eliminates a person needing to key in the reading, thus avoiding human error on our part. Just remember that getting us accurate readings on time, taken on the same day every month, keeps your bill more accurate and can help pinpoint a problem if something malfunctions or changes at your home. Also, know that when we have not received a reading for two months, an employee will come and get a reading, which results in a charge of \$15 that can be avoided by the member sending their reading. As always, call me, your energy advisor, with any questions about your use, and hopefully by the time you receive this issue, I am able to come back out to do home energy audits and troubleshooting.

# CHILDREN OF MEMBERS scholarships *Congratulations!*

Each year since 1954, Guernsey-Muskingum Electric Cooperative Inc. has sponsored scholarship awards to high school seniors. The cooperative awards six scholarships ranging from \$600 to \$1,100.

This year, 30 students from 10 high schools competed for the awards. The seniors participating were:

## Bishop Rosecrans

Caroline Caldwell

## Indian Valley

Jaylin Stewart

## Newcomerstown

Madison Fish

## Shenandoah

Trysten Smith

## Buckeye Trail

Emma Rome  
Ross Robinson

## John Glenn

Molly Eubanks  
Megan Knicely  
Score Perkins  
Megan Sherry

## Philo

Catelyn Cox  
Lyndsay Deal  
Robert Lytton IV  
Hayley Malenda  
Kaleea Myers  
Alexis Salsbury  
Carter Wickham  
Logan Wickham  
Trey Wilson

## Tri-Valley

Owen Campbell  
Mariah Clark  
Jaydn Cooper  
Braden Harney  
Caroline Holmes  
Cameron McCullough  
Brielle Vernon

## Cambridge

Kiersten Bichard  
Isaac Stanberry

## Maysville

Donna Hampp  
Joshua Zinn

On Feb. 22, judges Kari Burke, Dr. Barb Hansen, and Jack Taylor interviewed the applicants.

The judges awarded points for scholastic record, personal achievement, school and community activities, and the personal interview.

The first-place winner, receiving a \$1,100 scholarship, was **Megan Knicely**, the daughter of Monte and Barb Knicely of Adamsville. Megan attends John Glenn High School.

The second-place winner, receiving a \$1,000 scholarship, was **Caroline Holmes**, the daughter of Adam and Christina Holmes of Nashport. Caroline attends Tri-Valley High School.

The third-place winner, receiving a \$900 scholarship, was **Megan Sherry**, the daughter of Paul and Ann Sherry of Cambridge. Megan attends John Glenn High School.

The fourth-place winner, receiving an \$800 scholarship, was **Isaac Stanberry**, the son of Andrew and Cleo Stanberry of Cambridge. Isaac attends Cambridge High School.

The fifth-place winner, receiving an \$700 scholarship, was **Alexis Salsbury**, the daughter of Nancy Salsbury and the late Mark Salsbury. Alexis attends Philo High School.

The sixth-place winner, receiving an \$600 scholarship, was **Donna Hampp**, the daughter of Donald and Christine Hampp. Donna attends Maysville High School.



Megan Knicely



Caroline Holmes



Megan Sherry



Isaac Stanberry



Alexis Salsbury



Donna Hampp





## GUERNSEY-MUSKINGUM ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CURRENTLY SPEAKING

### TOUCHSTONE ENERGY ACHIEVEMENT scholarship

*Congratulations!*

We are proud to announce that **Amber Allen** and **Alexis Salsbury** have each been awarded the Touchstone Energy Achievement Scholarship for 2020. The Touchstone Energy Achievement Scholarship was created to reward those students who have committed themselves to the pursuance of a college education despite unique personal challenges.

Amber, a senior at Zanesville High School, is the daughter of Christopher and Staci Allen of Zanesville. Alexis, a senior at Philo High School, is the daughter of Nancy Salsbury and the late Mark Salsbury.

PHOTO NOT  
AVAILABLE



Amber Allen

Alexis Salsbury

### GUERNSEY-MUSKINGUM ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE SCHOLARSHIP IN HONOR OF JERRY KACKLEY scholarship

*Congratulations!*



Donna Hampp

New this year, in addition to the already established Children of Members Scholarship and the Touchstone Energy Achievement Scholarship, is the GMEC Scholarship in Honor of Jerry Kackley. Jerry Kackley was general manager/CEO of Guernsey-Muskingum Electric Cooperative before his retirement in 2019 due to a cancer diagnosis. Shortly before Jerry passed away at the end of last summer, he and his wife, Debbie, decided to give back to the Guernsey-Muskingum members who supported him and his family through the years. The family, with the help of the Muskingum County Community Foundation, created the Guernsey-Muskingum Electric Cooperative Scholarship in Honor of Jerry Kackley.

We are proud to announce that **Donna Hampp** has been awarded the first GMEC Scholarship in Honor of Jerry Kackley. Donna, a senior at Maysville High School, is the daughter of Donald and Christine Hampp of Zanesville.



## 4 COMMON CULPRITS OF ELECTRICAL FIRES

Outdated wiring and overloaded circuits are the most common causes of electrical fires.

Check the following areas of your home to ensure your home's electrical safety is up to par.



**Electrical outlets:** Faulty electrical outlets are a leading cause in home fires. As outlets age, so do the wires behind them that you can't see. Any loose, damaged, or warm-to-the-touch outlets should be repaired or replaced.



**Electrical wiring:** Outdated wiring is another common cause of electrical fires. Frequently tripped breakers, flickering lights, and burning smells are clear warning signs. If your home is more than 20 years old, it may not be able to handle today's increased power load. If you suspect your home's wiring is outdated, leave it to the pros and contact a qualified electrician.



**Overloaded cords and outlets:** Extension cords are not permanent solutions. If your TV, home theater system, and other electronics are plugged into one extension cord, it's time to call an electrician and install additional outlets.



**Old appliances:** Older appliances are more likely to have loose or damaged wiring, which means they're more likely to catch fire. Check older appliances for damage and determine if it's time to upgrade or replace. Also check to ensure you're using appliance-grade outlets. A qualified electrician can help with installation.



# GUERNSEY-MUSKINGUM ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CURRENTLY SPEAKING

## CO-OP NEWS

### Geothermal heating and cooling system — \$300 rebate

We have a \$300 rebate to help pay for the most efficient underground heating, cooling, and hot water system available today. To be eligible, the geothermal unit must be ENERGY STAR-rated and have a radio-controlled switch installed on the unit and on the electric water heater of at least 40-gallon capacity. Over 280 of our members are using geothermal.

### Dual Fuel — \$300 rebate

If you install a new add-on electric heat pump with a fossil-fuel backup and have an electric water heater of at least 40-gallon capacity, you are eligible for a \$300 rebate. Radio-controlled switches must be installed on both the heat pump and water heater. Please call your cooperative for details. Over 890 members are using Dual Fuel.



### Cool Returns — \$100 rebate

Are you having central air conditioning installed or a new electric heat pump with electric resistance heat backup? Allow your cooperative to install a radio-controlled switch and receive a \$100 rebate check. Over 170 members are using Cool Returns.

### ENERGY STAR refrigerator/freezer rebate

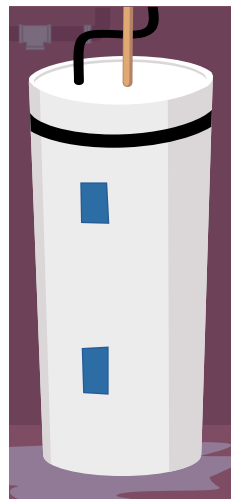
Did you buy a new ENERGY STAR refrigerator or freezer? We may have a \$100 rebate for you. Call member services for details.

### Water heater with a hole

The 4-inch hole in the side of our tank is great for cleaning out sediment. This rebated tank is available for free delivery. We also have \$50 or \$100 checks to send you if you purchase a tank somewhere else. Give us a call for details.

### Water heater installation available

If you purchase your water heater from GMEC, our member services technician, Tim Fisher, may be able to install your water heater for an additional charge. Give us a call for details.

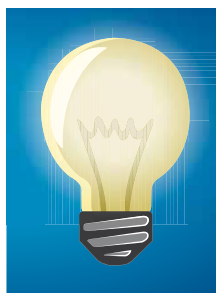


### Radio-controlled switch

What a deal! If you don't already have a radio-controlled switch (RCS) for your electric water heater of at least 40-gallon capacity, please call, and Tim Fisher will install one at no charge. Over 5,600 GMEC members have an RCS on their water heaters. The switch entitles you to a discount and free maintenance (except cleaning), including parts and labor, on your electric water heater. Some exclusions apply; call us for details.

### GenerLink

We want you to use your portable generator safely. Call the member services department at GMEC and ask about GenerLink. GenerLink eliminates the use of extension cords and other connections that can be dangerous to members and linemen. Over 200 members currently have a GenerLink installed at their homes.



### Meter reading

You can enter your meter readings online at our website, [www.gmenergy.com](http://www.gmenergy.com). You can also mail your readings or call us 24 hours a day with meter readings.

### Co-op Connections card

The Co-op Connections card is free to all GMEC members, and one card can be used by the entire family. The card can be used to receive discounts nationwide on lodging, entertainment, dining, and more. Visit [www.gmenergy.com](http://www.gmenergy.com) and click on the link to explore the possible discounts available to you.

***Congratulations!***

## Campbell accepts new position

Congratulations to Bob Campbell on his new position of projects superintendent. Previously the engineering supervisor, Bob has been with the cooperative for 26 years and began his new duties in March. Our best wishes to Bob as he takes on this new role!



***Congratulations!***

## Thea Caron retires

Congratulations to Thea Caron on her recent retirement! Thea was hired by Guernsey-Muskingum Electric Cooperative Inc. as a part-time billing representative in September 2011. In January 2015, she moved to the position of executive administrative assistant. We appreciate Thea's nine years of dedicated service to the cooperative and our consumer-members.







## GUERNSEY-MUSKINGUM ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CURRENTLY SPEAKING

### Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

When the weather is nice, put your grill to use! During summer months, cooking outdoors is a great way to save energy and eliminate unwanted heat from cooking indoors.



**Sunday, May 10**  
Happy Mother's Day  
from Guernsey-  
Muskingum Electric  
Cooperative

### 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.

#72-0186-21-02.....James E Gay

#27-0375-21-02.....Debbie K Tratnik

#18-0697-11-03.....Trevor L Murphy

#31-0545-11-02.....Charles Riley

#52-0410-20-04.....David A Folkert

#46-0222-72-09 .....James Pulley



#### 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 — \$22/mo.  
First 500 kWh/month — 12.369¢/kWh  
Over 500 kWh/month — 11.045¢/kWh

Seasonal Residential Service  
rate schedule S-1\*

Service Availability Charge — \$360/yr.  
First 800 kWh/yr. — 19.969¢/kWh  
800 to 6,000 kWh/yr. — \$10.845¢/kWh  
Over 6,000 kWh/yr. — 11.045¢/kWh  
(Minimum annual charge — \$360/yr.  
for service between March 1, 2020,  
and Feb. 28, 2021)

Commercial Service rate schedule C-1\*  
Service Availability Charge — \$24/mo.  
First 1,500 kWh/mo. — 12.769¢/kWh  
Over 1,500 kWh/mo. — 11.045¢/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

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