



MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

# Let's talk

**T**he energy industry is undergoing rapid change, and technology is paving the way for innovation in the way energy is used, produced, stored, and shared. Consumers are interested in more green energy alternatives while smart homes and apps make managing energy use and paying your electric bill more convenient than ever.

While the changing energy market has created more options for consumers, it has also resulted in more utility scams and misleading information surrounding solar installations in particular. That's because of two factors.

Utility scams are common because of the vast number of utilities that exist, and consumers are understandably anxious with the threat of disruption to their electric, heating, or water service. Second, new products and services in the energy industry provide an opening for scammers and pop-up companies to provide misleading information or shoddy products and services.

## Avoid phone scams

A common phone scam typically begins with a phone number that appears to be from a valid utility company. The scammer will claim you owe a past due amount and threaten to disconnect service or take legal action. The scammer will typically demand that you use a prepaid debit card or money order, often within a very short, urgent time frame, to pay the "past due" balance.

You can combat this scam by being aware of the status of your account. Never give your banking or personal information over the phone to someone you did not call. If you have a question or concern about your energy bill, call us directly at 800-521-9879. Do not use the phone number given by the scammer.

## Avoid solar scams

Another scam we see from time to time is connected to rooftop solar. Homeowners with rooftop solar may receive a sales call offering an accessory, upgrade, or

extended warranty to their solar array. The calls could be from crooks claiming to represent a solar company, promising to replace faulty or broken parts or improve efficiency. Again, if you are not expecting the call, don't be fooled. Call Guernsey-Muskingum Electric Cooperative or the company that installed the solar array if you think there may be a problem. Other than occasional cleaning, rooftop solar (if installed correctly) is virtually maintenance-free.

## Use trusted sources

If you're considering solar for your home, make sure you are working with a reputable company. Because this is still an emerging industry with evolving technology, there have been a proliferation of pop-up companies in the market looking to make a quick buck. Representatives of rooftop solar companies may have more sales experience than knowledge of the energy industry, and their primary goal could be making a sale and moving on to the next prospect.

GMEC can offer a candid assessment to determine whether rooftop solar is right for you. After all, we have a different "bottom line" that is not directly tied to the sale of a product or service. We take a more holistic, objective view of how to achieve energy and cost savings for our members and that may or may not include rooftop solar.

In this ever-changing environment, it's important to remember you have a trusted energy advisor — your local electric cooperative. We are a community-focused organization that works to efficiently deliver affordable, reliable, and safe energy to our members.

Remember, we're just one call or click away, so please reach out with any questions about your electric service or bills — we're here to help.



Brian Hill  
GENERAL MANAGER/CEO





Ray Crock

# Smart thermostat options

A comparison of the smartest and most popular choices

Heating and cooling costs account for around half of a user's energy bill, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. The right thermostat settings could yield energy savings of 8 to 15%, and

new technology is making it easier than ever to achieve those settings.

The Nest 3rd Generation Learning Thermostat and Ecobee4 are the most popular and sophisticated devices in this category. Both devices are usually priced around \$250, but consumers can easily recoup their money in energy cost savings.

Both thermostats can interact with other smart devices and both utilize geofencing — using your phone's GPS to determine if you're home, then automatically adjusting



the temperature.

Nest's geofencing works with multiple phones, while Ecobee supports just one phone but has more sophisticated sensors.

For both the Nest and Ecobee, you can purchase remote sensors that allow the thermostat to take readings from any room throughout your home and adjust the temperature accordingly. This can be an advantage if your thermostat is located near a draft or in direct sunlight.

While many of the features are similar, there are a few that are notably different and can help you determine which is right for you.

Nest, powered by a rechargeable battery, is a learning thermostat that automatically learns your schedule.

When you begin using Nest, it makes a few assumptions and creates a baseline for its schedule. As you adjust the temperature up or down, Nest records it, and after a week, learns your schedule and the temperature settings you prefer. From then, it continues to learn and respond to your adjustments. Nest also records 10 days of energy use data that shows you a visual of the times your system turned on and off during those 10 days.

Ecobee must be hardwire installed, uses a touchscreen, and can analyze HVAC data for 18 months. All temperature and motion data from the thermostat and sensors is recorded and can be accessed online by the owner to help you monitor total energy use, how the weather influences your use, and how your home efficiency compares to other users in your area.

The two thermostats also can connect with various energy devices in your home. Ecobee recognizes dehumidifiers and ventilators, and Next recognizes heat pumps and auxiliary heat.

For those looking for a smart thermostat with fewer bells and whistles, the Honeywell Lyric T5+ is one of the market's most popular, priced around \$135. While it can't sense your presence or learn your schedule, it does have the

The Nest thermostat, powered by a rechargeable battery, is a learning thermostat that automatically learns your schedule.

geofencing feature and can interact with other smart-home devices, such as turning on lights when you arrive or leave home.

Whichever fits your lifestyle and preferences, a smart thermostat is a good investment that can help you save energy and money.

### 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

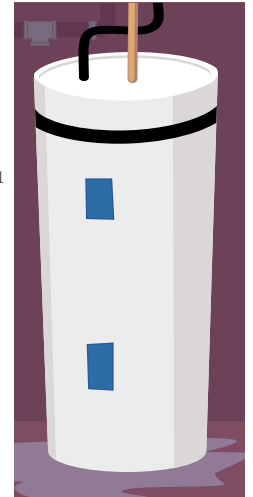
Did you buy a new ENERGY STAR refrigerator or freezer? We may have a \$100 rebate for you. Call member services for details.

### 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.



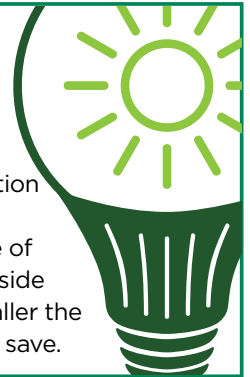
# GUERNSEY-MUSKINGUM ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CURRENTLY SPEAKING



Happy Father's Day from  
Guernsey-Muskingum  
Electric Cooperative!  
Sunday, June 21

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Home cooling makes up a large portion of your energy bills. Try to keep the difference between the temperature of your thermostat setting and the outside temperature to a minimum. The smaller the difference, the more energy you will save.



## West promoted

Congratulations to Blake West on his recent promotion to engineering supervisor. Previously a crew leader, Blake has been with the cooperative for 13 years. His new duties began in April, and we're excited to have him in this new position.

*Congratulations!*



## 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.

#24-0124-45-04 ..... Michael D Smith  
#17-0030-19-01..... Carol A Arena  
#37-0641-45-00 ..... Paulette V Winland  
#46-0586-72-01 ..... Thomas W Warner

#45-0522-11-00 ..... Paul D Miller  
#25-0067-16-03 ..... Vic Myers



### 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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Vice Chairman

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General Manager/CEO  
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Counsel

