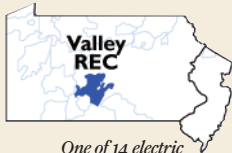


Valley Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

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CORPORATE OFFICE HOURS

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7 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

HUNTINGDON/MARTINSBURG/SHADE GAP OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Thursday
7 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO

The power of membership

The following is the first of three editorials that will focus on the cooperative difference.



by Wayne Miller
President & CEO

NOW, as always, it's a good time to be a member of an electric cooperative.

Not only are co-ops locally owned and controlled by you, our members, but they are also locally run to serve your needs.

While many Pennsylvania electricity consumers pay power bills to companies that answer to far-

away stockholders who demand a healthy profit every quarter, local members call the shots at electric co-ops like ours. Co-ops aren't under pressure to keep rates high enough to generate big profits. Instead, co-ops try to keep your bill as low as possible while providing high-quality service. Co-ops invest revenue in excess of operating costs back into the business and, if financially able, return the excess (known as margins) to you in the form of capital credits.

And unlike the boards of directors of investor-owned utilities who keep an eye on generating profits for people living far away, your co-op's directors (fellow members, by the way) have only one thing in mind: keeping power on safely and reliably, and keeping costs affordable in our local communities. That's why you elected them. And that's what's so great about co-ops. If you don't like the direction your co-op is taking, you have the power to change the leadership through a democratic election process.

You may know the history of the electric cooperative movement ... how seven decades ago rural residents banded together to bring the conveniences of electricity to their communities

when investor-owned utilities would not extend service. The associations they formed, on the same democratic principles as this great nation, are as strong and relevant today as they were back then.

But co-ops are not just products of a proud past. These days, Americans from all walks of life have come to recognize the co-op approach (members working together to achieve price and service benefits) can work for other needs such as food, clothing and financial services just as effectively as it delivered affordable power to rural Americans.

The principles upon which electric co-ops were founded — voluntary and open membership, democratic member control, and member economic participation, among others — are as meaningful today as they were when electric co-ops formed in the 1930s.

The leadership at Valley Rural Electric shares the same concerns as you, our members. We are accessible. You can give us a call or send us an email and know someone here is listening. Or, you can stop by one of our local offices. And at our district nominating meetings and annual meeting, you can visit with us in person and share insights on how you want your business operated.

In these days of economic turmoil, folks who receive electricity from co-ops are fortunate. As locally owned and operated businesses, we understand the people we serve. Directors and employees at your co-op share the same values and have the same pride of place as you do because it's our community, too. We act like neighbors because we *are* neighbors.

That's the cooperative difference. 

How to Clean Up a Broken Compact Fluorescent Lightbulb (CFL)



1 Ventilate the room.



2 Scoop up powder and glass fragments using stiff paper or cardboard. Seal in a plastic bag.



3 Use duct tape to pick up any fragments or powder.

4 Immediately place all materials used to clean up and the plastic bag in an outdoor trash container. Remember to wash your hands.



5 Discard any clothing or bedding that comes in direct contact with broken glass or powder from inside the bulb. Washing tainted items may cause mercury fragments in clothing to contaminate the machine and/or pollute sewage.

To learn more about CFLs and why you should be careful when cleaning up a broken bulb, visit www.epa.gov.



SOURCE: ELECTRICAL SAFETY FOUNDATION INSTITUTE, VASLY

Trading one field for another

District supervisor retires after nearly 39 years of service

BY SUSAN R. PENNING
Director of Member Services

"I'M BUSIER NOW than I was when I was working," chuckles Harry O'Donnell, a recent retiree from Valley Rural Electric Cooperative. Harry served as the district supervisor at Valley's Shade Gap district before he bid farewell at the end of March, opening a new chapter in his life after nearly 39 years with the co-op.

Harry began working at Valley one week out of high school. He says he thinks he got the job because he had developed a reputation in the community as being a hard worker, delivering furniture and driving milk truck with his dad.

Harry started his long career as part of a right-of-way spraying crew in the Hustontown area. From there, he learned to operate a digger truck and soon advanced to "ground man" (an assistant who sends materials up the pole to the line personnel). Then he became a lineman, installing, removing, maintaining, and repairing electric overhead and underground equipment.

In 1990, Harry moved up the ladder to district supervisor at the Shade Gap district, the position from which he eventually retired.

As a district supervisor, Harry took care of warehouse material inventory. He also inspected the line work and oversaw aerial right-of-way spraying (when it was used). In addition, he handled work orders and performed aerial line patrol, troubleshooting problems on poles and equipment throughout the district. And he supervised line crews of typically six to eight workers.

Harry decided to hang up his lineman's hooks so that he could spend more time farming, volunteering and working on his golf swing.

When he's not at one of the nearby golf courses, you'll find him harvesting hay,



HARVEST READY: Recent co-op retiree Harry O'Donnell spends a lot of his new-found free time making hay, raising cows and tending to his large garden.

raising beef cows and gardening. Or you might see him flipping burgers at the Shade Gap picnic. Harry volunteers quite often at the Shade Gap Area Fire Company and its Ladies Auxiliary. He's also a member of the Masonic Lodge in Cromwell Township, Huntingdon County.

"I also like going to arts and crafts shows with my wife, Trudy," Harry points out.

Trudy works as a township secretary and tax collector. She also prepares taxes and is a licensed massage therapist.

Harry has two daughters, Amy and Kim. He also has five grandchildren: Sage, Sarah, Meredith, Wade and Maxwell.

Harry says he loves his new-found free time.

"I don't miss the storm work or waking up in the middle of the night to take a trouble call, but I do miss all the great folks I worked with and for," he says.

"I particularly miss making the ladies out front laugh," he says, referring to the district secretary, Ivy Lee Yohn, and her assistant, Tricia Long.

Harry's big smile and hard-working spirit will be missed throughout the co-op. For his decades of dedicated service, the staff and board at Valley wish him good health and happiness in retirement. ☀

Purple panel traps help track ash borer

BY SUSAN R. PENNING
Director of Member Services

THIS SUMMER, CO-OP CONSUMERS

throughout Valley's territory may have noticed three-sided, bright purple boxes resembling box kites, hanging from trees along various roads in the region.

Known by Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture officials as purple panel traps, these boxes are designed to collect emerald ash borers. As part of a nationwide study, state ag department survey crews began hanging nearly 6,000 of these purple panel traps in May in 21 Pennsylvania counties. The traps will most likely be taken down at the end of the summer.

What is the emerald ash borer?

The emerald ash borer is an invasive, tree-killing beetle native to China and eastern Asia. This beetle attacks and destroys all species of ash trees, typically within three years of infestation.

The beetle was first found in the U.S. in Michigan in 2002. It was likely transported to North America in wooden shipping crates.

Since then, the emerald ash borer has killed more than 40 million ash trees in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Missouri, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Kentucky, New York and Iowa, according to information from Penn State University's Entomology Department.

The emerald ash borer poses a serious threat to the Commonwealth's nation-leading hardwoods industry, which contributes nearly \$25 billion to its economy, according to Pennsylvania Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding.

Tracking the beetles

Emerald ash borer adult beetles are dark green, about one-half inch long and one-eighth inch wide and fly only from early May until September. Larvae spend the rest of the year under the bark of ash trees. When they emerge as adults, they leave D-shaped holes in the bark about one-eighth inch wide.

The federal government, state agencies



PHOTO BY SUSAN PENNING

ATTRACTION: This purple panel trap was placed along Blacklog Mountain Road, Huntingdon County, to check for the presence of emerald ash borers. A study showed the beetles are drawn to the color purple.

and cooperative extension offices are collaborating in the trapping and study of the borer.

The unique purple panel traps were designed after a study performed in Michigan determined that the beetles were attracted to the color purple.

The traps were hung in the crowns (leafy parts) of trees to increase the chances that emerald ash borers would go to the traps.

There is no killing agent in or on the traps. Any beetles that are trapped remain permanently stuck in a sticky substance covering the entire trap.

Teams have been visiting and monitoring the traps throughout the summer and have been reporting whether or not areas have been affected.

Responding to the spread

To date, the emerald ash borer has been found in 17 counties in Pennsylvania: Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Bedford, Butler, Centre, Cumberland, Fulton, Indiana, Juniata, Lawrence, Mercer, Mifflin, Somerset, Union, Washington and Westmoreland.

Those counties and 43 others which are in close proximity to affected counties, are now under a state-imposed

quarantine that is intended to prevent the spread of the beetle. All counties served by Valley are under quarantine.

The quarantine restricts the movement of ash nursery, green lumber and other ash materials, including logs, stumps, roots and branches, from quarantined areas.

Because it is difficult to distinguish between species of hardwood, all hardwood, firewood and wood chips — including ash, oak, maple and hickory — are considered quarantined.

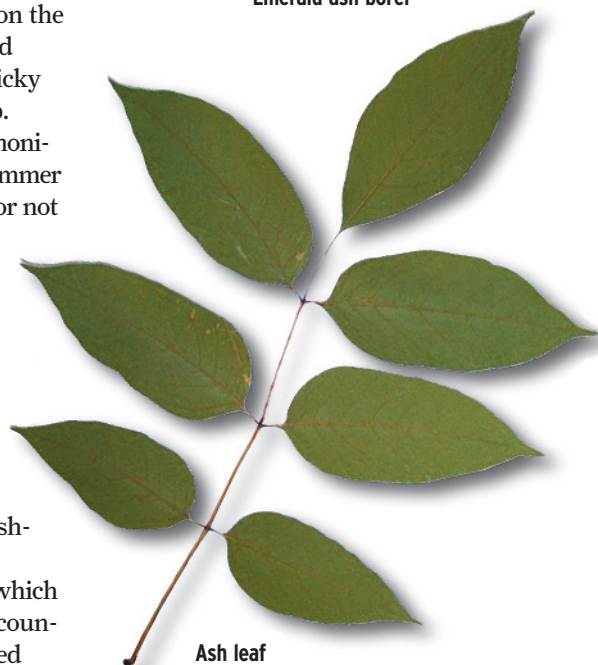
Travelers are reminded not to haul firewood between counties. And if firewood has already been moved, people are urged to burn it right away.

Residents who suspect they have found emerald ash borer beetles should call the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture's toll-free pest hotline at 866/253-7189 or email badbug@state.pa.us. For more information, visit www.emeraldashborer.info.



USDA PHOTO

Emerald ash borer



Ash leaf

Home safety checklist for older adults

LAST YEAR, more than 1 million people 65 years and older were treated in hospital emergency rooms for injuries associated with accidents at home. Most of these episodes resulted from a lack of maintenance. Please consider walking through your home and using the following checklist to spot possible safety hazards. If you notice a potential problem, arrange for it to be fixed immediately to prevent accident or injury.

- ✓ **Kitchen:** Make sure all of your appliances carry an Underwriters Laboratories, Inc. (UL) seal, which means the item was tested and found to be safe to use. Check electrical cords for fraying or cracking, step stools for splitting or cracking, and throw rugs for tripping hazards like bumps and turned-up corners.
- ✓ **Living room:** Repeat the same procedures for rugs and runners, electrical cords, lamps and other lighting in this room. Be sure to inspect the fireplace and chimney for fire hazards, such as obstructions and creosote buildup, and have the flue cleaned on a regular basis (typically annually). To learn how to properly inspect your chimney, call the co-op at 814/643-2650 or email memberservices@valleyrec.com.
- ✓ **Bathroom:** Make sure small appliances are marked with a UL seal. Check the bathtub, shower, rugs and mats for slipping hazards and inspect cabinets for safe storage of medications. Be sure to discard medications with past expiration dates.
- ✓ **Bedroom:** Examine rugs, runners, electrical and telephone cords, and make sure the area around the bed is clear of items that could cause you to trip.
- ✓ **Basement/garage/workshop:** Make sure all power tools bear the UL mark. Check fuse and breaker boxes for possible malfunction and shock and fire hazards. Inspect extension cords and cords on tools and lawn and garden equipment. Check for proper ventilation and make sure flammable liquids are stored properly.
- ✓ **Stairs:** Make sure there is proper lighting on and around stairways. Examine handrails and steps for possible defects or weaknesses, and keep objects and debris off of stairs and landings. ☀

Source: Underwriters Laboratories, Inc.

Average Prices for Residential Electricity (2008 figures, in cents per kWh)

