

Valley Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Valley News

November | December 2011

Volume 68 | Issue 6

TIPS FOR A MERRY, BRIGHT AND SAFE HOLIDAY SEASON

Pages 4-5



www.valleyrec.com

Leave the pole alone

Placing signs on utility poles could endanger lives

WHAT DO yard sale signs, basketball hoops, deer stands, satellite dishes and birdhouses have in common?

They're often found illegally attached to utility poles. But this isn't only a crime of inconvenience. Safety issues caused by unapproved pole attachments place the lives of our line workers and the public in peril.

It may seem innocent, but a small nail partially driven into a pole can have deadly results around high-voltage electricity.

Valley Rural Electric Cooperative line crews climb utility poles at all hours of the day and night in the worst of conditions. Anything attached to utility poles can create serious hazards for our line personnel. Sharp objects like nails, tacks, staples or barbed wire can puncture rubber gloves and other safety equipment, making our linemen vulnerable to electrocution and susceptible to other injuries, too.

Line workers with electric co-ops have reported poles being used as community bulletin boards, satellite mounts and even support legs for deer stands, lights and carports. Not only do these attachments put line crews at risk; anyone illegally placing these items on poles comes dangerously close to energized power lines with thousands of volts of electricity pulsing overhead.

It's always wise to keep any structure at least 10 feet away from utility poles.

Unauthorized pole attachments violate the National Electrical Safety Code, the accepted manual containing guidelines for safe electrical engineering. Utilities strictly follow this code that includes a section that reads, "Signs, posters, notices and other at-



Wayne F. Miller
President & Chief Executive Officer

tachments shall not be placed on supporting structures without concurrence of the owner (the utility is the owner of the pole). Supporting structures should be kept free from other climbing hazards, such as tacks, nails, vines and through bolts not properly trimmed."

Please help us keep our line personnel -- and our community -- safe. Don't attach any of these unauthorized and dangerous items to utility poles.

Fixtures not belonging to the cooperative or another utility will be removed by co-op line personnel. The co-op is not responsible for any losses if an item is damaged or destroyed during removal.

Cooperatively yours,

Wayne F. Miller
President & CEO

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Mark your calendars

Nominating meeting dinners to be held in early 2012

AS YOU BEGIN to think about your plans for the upcoming year, please be sure to keep some important co-op events in mind -- specifically our district nominating meetings and annual meeting.

The district nominating meetings are held each year in three of the cooperative's nine director territories. These dinner meetings give you a chance to gather together with your co-op neighbors and friends and enjoy a delicious meal. They also provide the opportunity for you to choose candidates for a position on the Valley REC board of directors. And they offer you the latest information on co-op programs and policies and what's happening in the energy industry.

This year, co-op districts 2, 4 and 6 have posts in the election rotation.

Members living in the following areas will be eligible to participate in the nomination process:

District 2 - Mifflin County: Wayne, Oliver and Granville townships; **Huntingdon County:** Brady, Henderson, Juniata, Union and Smithfield townships;

District 4 - Huntingdon County: Shirley, Cromwell, Clay, Springfield and Cass townships;

District 6 - Blair County: Juniata, Freedom and Greenfield townships; **Bedford County:** Pavia Township.

District nominating meeting dinners will be held in these regions the second week of February. Invitations and postage-paid reservation cards containing additional details will be mailed in the coming weeks.

You will be presented your meal ticket(s) at the door on the night of the meeting.

Of course, attendance at a district nominating meeting is just one of the many benefits of membership in the co-op. Unlike private power companies, rural electric cooperatives like Valley are owned and governed by the people they serve. That means consumers like you have a voice in how the business operates and a vote in who will represent your interests.



So if you're a member residing in districts 2, 4 or 6, plan to exercise your rights in the year ahead and come to your district nominating meeting.

After you receive your reservation card in the mail, simply return it to us, circle the date on your calendar and start looking forward to enjoying a great dinner as well as an interesting, informative co-op business session.

And don't forget the Valley REC Annual Meeting, scheduled for 7 p.m. April 13 at Huntingdon Area High School. It's another occasion in which you can participate and learn more about the electric utility that delivers reliable power to your door all year long.



PHOTO BY SUSAN PENNING

A day in the life of a line worker

Curt White (left), crew chief at Valley Rural Electric's Huntingdon district, shows Huntingdon Area High School ninth graders Brady Klaus (center) and Lane Baker some tools and equipment used on the job. The students spent most of Nov. 2 shadowing a power line crew, learning more about the trade that they may pursue following graduation.

Keep your days merry & bright

Make safety a top priority this season

BY SUSAN R. PENNING
Director of Member Services

THE HECTIC PACE of holiday entertaining will soon reach its peak. There are cookies to bake, cards to send, decorations to hang and presents to wrap.

It's easy to get caught up in the magic -- and mayhem -- of the season. But the folks at Valley Rural Electric Cooperative want to urge you to not overlook safety during the rush. After all, the winter holiday period marks a peak time of the year for home fires and preventable injuries.

Following the tips on these pages will help ensure that your traditions result in a safe, bright and happy time for your family.

▶ First and foremost, take time out from your party preparations to test your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms should be installed on every level of the home and outside each



PHOTO COURTESY OF SAFERBYCHOICE.COM

ON OVERLOAD: Never connect more than three strands of incandescent lights.

sleeping area. Smoke alarms should also be located inside each bedroom.

SAFE OUTDOOR DECORATING

▶ Indoors or outside, use only lights that have been tested for safety. Identify these by the label from an independent testing laboratory (such as UL).

▶ When decorating outside, make sure outdoor outlets are equipped with ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). Check that all items and extension cords are marked for outdoor use.

▶ Do not pinch cords in windows or doors, or under heavy furniture. And do not damage cords by attaching them with staples or nails.

▶ Exercise extreme caution when decorating in high places. Check for overhead power lines and steer clear. Use a wooden or fiberglass ladder instead of metal and keep yourself and all equipment far away from wires.

▶ Fasten outdoor lights securely to trees, the house, walls or other firm support to protect them from wind damage.

▶ Never use electric lights on a metallic tree. The tree can become charged with electricity from faulty lights, and any person touching a branch could be electrocuted. To avoid this danger, use colored spotlights above or beside the tree.

SAFE INDOOR DECORATING

▶ Carefully inspect all electrical decorations and extension cords before use and discard any damaged items. Cracked sockets, bare or frayed wires and loose connections may cause a serious shock or fire.

▶ Avoid overloading outlets, which can overheat and cause a fire. The Electrical Safety Foundation International recommends never connecting more than three strands of incandescent lights.

▶ Keep electrical cords out of doorways and high traffic areas where they pose a tripping hazard.

▶ Turn off all lights on trees and other decorations when you go to bed or leave the house. Lights could short and start a fire.

TREE SAFETY

▶ Christmas trees require special care. If purchasing a live tree, freshness is key. A fresh tree will stay green longer and be less of a fire hazard than a dry tree. To check for freshness, remember that a fresh tree is



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHRISTMASCENTRAL.COM

CAREFULLY CONSIDER THE BUBBLY: "Bubbling" Christmas lights may pose a hazard to curious children.

green; fresh needles are hard to pull from branches; when bent between your fingers, fresh needles do not break; and the trunk butt of a fresh tree is sticky with resin.

When the trunk of a tree is bounced on the ground, a shower of falling needles shows that the tree is too dry.

▶ After bringing a tree home, cut off about two inches of the trunk to expose fresh wood for better water absorption. Trim away branches as necessary to set the trunk in the base of a sturdy, water-holding stand with wide-spread feet. Keep the stand filled with water while the tree is indoors.

▶ Heated rooms dry out live trees -- even the freshest ones -- rapidly. Place the tree at least three feet away from all heat sources, including fireplaces and space heaters.

▶ For artificial trees, look for the label, "fire resistant."

▶ Decorate your tree, live or artificial, with non-combustible or flame-resistant materials. Never use burning candles on or near it.

▶ Keep “bubbling” lights away from children. These lights with their bright colors and bubbling movement can tempt curious children to break the candle-shaped glass (and get cut) and attempt to drink the liquid, which contains a hazardous chemical.

KITCHEN SAFETY

- ▶ Never leave the kitchen when something is cooking.
- ▶ Make sure children are supervised at all times in the kitchen and anywhere space heaters, candles or fireplaces are being used.
- ▶ During large gatherings, consider the kitchen off-limits to anyone who is not preparing food. Fewer people mean fewer chances for spills and burns.
- ▶ Always cook with pot handles turned inward, and with appliance cords safely out of the way. Protruding handles and dangling cords are too easily pulled or jostled, which can result in scalding liquids being spilled on people and furniture.
- ▶ If you're dressing up for dinner, plan to run upstairs and change just before you

serve. Frilly blouses and drooping sleeves have no place in a working kitchen; they invite fires. Roll up your sleeves and don an apron for added safety.

- ▶ Take extra care to use potholders when carrying hot vessels. Never run across the kitchen with hot items.
- ▶ Never use the oven for storage or as a heat source for your home.

GUEST SAFETY

- ▶ Be sure to share your family fire escape plan with any overnight guests. And let them know where you keep fire extinguishers and first-aid kits.
- ▶ Keep young visitors safe by preparing your home before they arrive. If your home is not already “childproof,” install tamper-resistant receptacles or use safety covers on all unused electrical outlets.
- ▶ Store breakables, candles, matches and other potentially dangerous items in inaccessible or locked areas.
- ▶ Don't forget to put away small items that are choking hazards, such as buttons, coins and jewelry. Use safety gates at the top and

bottom of stairways to keep babies and toddlers safe.

- ▶ Bright outdoor lights not only make your guests feel welcome when they arrive, but they also reduce the risk of falls.
- ▶ The bath can be a hot spot for injuries. Put non-slip mats in the bathtub and consider installing grab bars in the shower to help prevent falls for visitors of every age. Store medicines and cleaners in a locked cabinet.
- ▶ Ask guests to help remind you to turn off all holiday decorations and blow out candles before going to sleep.
- ▶ Place nightlights in hallways and guest rooms to help guests navigate safely at night.
- ▶ Post emergency numbers near the phones. Make sure the list is visible and point it out to guests.

Remember that a safe and happy holiday remains the best gift you can give friends and family.

Sources: Electrical Safety Foundation International, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

Strive for energy-efficient holidays this year

BY BRIAN SLOBODA

Cooperative Research Network Program Manager

The hustle and bustle of the holiday season means lots of power gets used. So don't let a higher-than-normal January electric bill be the last gift of the season. With a few simple tricks, you can still celebrate and save money as well.

Start with energy-efficient lighting, namely light-emitting diodes (LEDs). While a string of traditional incandescent mini-lights uses 36 watts of power, LEDs only consume 5 watts and last up to 10 times longer. LEDs are typically made of plastic and will not break easily -- and many are brighter than traditional mini-lights.

However, a string of LEDs can cost two to three times more than traditional string lights, and many homeowners have reported mixed results with performance. Unlike traditional incandescent bulbs, LEDs use computer chips to create light. Depending on the quality of the manufacturing process, the brightness and life may not be what's expected.

A good rule of thumb: Cheaper is not always better. When looking for LEDs, view the lights plugged in at the store, or make sure you can return them if they do not meet your expectations.

All holiday lights, whether LED or incandescent, should be placed on a timer. Simple timers cost \$20 and can be set to turn on at sunset and off after a set number of hours. It's usually best to leave lights on from sunset until bedtime.

Many electronic gifts are “energy vampires” -- sucking electricity 24 hours a day, even when switched off. Cell phone chargers, computers, video game consoles and any devices that come with a large square plug are likely energy vampires.

When possible, unplug electronics that are not being used, or plug them into a smart power strip, which controls the flow of electricity to specific devices plugged into it. Smart strips are available at all Valley Rural Electric offices for \$39 plus tax.

To keep your home entertainment center running lean, look for Energy Star-

rated televisions and ask satellite or cable providers for energy-efficient boxes.

Prevent post-holiday electric bill shock by thinking creatively and shopping carefully this year.

The money you save can be used for the most dreaded January bills of all: credit cards.

TOP TIPS FOR AN ENERGY-SAVING SEASON

1. Shop for Energy Star-rated appliances and compact fluorescent lightbulbs.
2. Skip the electronics and get kids board games instead.
3. Lower thermostats and replace HVAC filters every 30 days.
4. Check windows and doors for leaks and seal them.
5. Install timers on outdoor lighting displays.
6. Decorate with LEDs.
7. Adjust power settings on video game consoles to the power-saving feature.
8. Vanquish energy vampires with a smart power strip.



THE
**Trading
Post**

Classified Advertising



Co-op members may submit ads via e-mail at valleynewsads@valleyrec.com; by phone at 800/432-0680; by fax at 814/643-1678; or by mail at Valley REC, PO Box 477, Huntingdon, PA 16652-0477. There is no charge for this service. If consumers wish to continue running particular ads, they are required to resubmit the information on a bimonthly basis. The deadline for submission is the 25th day of the month prior to the issue months. Submissions are viewable on the co-op's website at www.valleyrec.com. Items published are printed at the request of our members. The co-op does not endorse, recommend or assume any responsibility for the products or services advertised. The co-op also reserves the right to edit material for content and/or space as necessary.

Real Estate

Blair County - 117 acres, secluded. All wooded bordering 6,500 acres of state game lands. All rights to house, 2 trailers, etc., \$450,000. 814/696-3740.

McVeytown - Riverside Acres near Lewis-town. Building lot, 3 acres. Perk tested for sand mound. Financing avail., \$29,500. 717/734-3275.

Well-kept mountain cabin sitting on 1.6 acres, mostly wooded. Totally furnished, move-in cond. Close to game lands & state forest, Cowan's Gap & Lake Raystown. Great for hunting, fishing or just relaxing on the porch. Lots of extras. Call 443/564-5915 for more info.

450 sq. ft. commercial unit in the Ardenheim Business Center avail. for rent. Property is along busy Route 22 just 500 yds. east of Huston Ford. Call Decker Electric, Inc. for details at 814/599-0835 or 643-3775.

8.44 acres, 4 miles from Lake Raystown Resort just off Rt. 994. All wooded, \$56,000. 814/658-2511.

Wanted

Carpool riders - Port Royal/Thompson-town/Millerstown/Newport to Harrisburg Capitol complex. Hours 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Have parking. Call work 717/783-2551, home 527-0217 or email jbachman@pa.gov

Lightweight boat or square-stern canoe that can be hauled in a pick-up truck. Please call Al at 814/667-3571.

Looking for information on Vera M. Settle, born 1910. Lived in North Woodbury & Henrietta townships in Blair County in 1920.

Her mother was Emma Fisher of Huntingdon. She married David M. Settle in 1917 in Blair County. Please call 814/710-7222.

Autos/Trucks

1986 Buick Regal. Low miles, no rust. Classic car. For more information, call 814/643-7362.

1979 MGB (Roadster). Very good cond., new top, new carpet, wire spoke wheels. 47,558 miles, asking \$7,500. 814/667-2597.

1950 Chevy Coupe Street Rod. 390 engine, AC, power-steering & auto. transmission. If interested, call 814/695-0546 & leave message.

1949 Lincoln Cosmopolitan. Show cond., 4-dr. 814/695-0546 & leave message.

1976 Dodge 1/2-ton 4x2 pickup truck. 318 V8 auto. 109,225 miles, one owner, \$1,800 OBO. Call 717/436-8655.

2000 VW Passat wagon GLS. V6, dark blue, auto. All-wheel-drive; power seats, doors & windows; AM/FM cassette player; heated seats & side mirrors. 2,000-lb. hitch & more. Inspected to August 2012, very good cond. Snow tires w/ wheels & front-end cover included, \$4,900. 814/448-3442 or e-mail r.w.cox@ieee.org for pictures.

Recreational

1999 Johnson 9.9 outboard motor, \$500. Call 814/635-3808.

Vacation Rentals

South Myrtle Beach year-round vacation rental - 2 BR, 2 BA condo at an oceanfront resort. Fully furnished including linens, tow-

els, cable w/ HBO, wireless internet, AC, 6 pools including a lazy river, lighted tennis courts, saunas, jacuzzis & more. \$400-\$950 weekly. Monthly rates avail. Phone 717/263-2717.

Spacious house rental at Lake Raystown. Cozy for 2, but sleeps 11. Large great room w/ fireplace, 4 BR, dining table for 12, 2 dish TVs, 2 full BAs, 2 half BAs, linens provided, large recreation room, fully equipped kitchen & laundry rooms, screened-in porch. 1/2 mile from lake, boat parking. Think family vacation. \$230/night, minimum 2 nights. See www.laurelwoodsretreat.com. Call 814/931-6562.

Blue Knob Resort condo - 2 BR, 2 BA, full kitchen w/ pots, plates, utensils, etc. Includes dishwasher, fireplace & sleeper sofa. The resort has hot tubs, sauna, indoor & outdoor pools, bike trails, golfing, tennis courts & the longest skiable slopes in Pa. Call 814/943-1284 or visit blueknoblodging.com

Free

Older camper/trailer, single axle. No title. Could make trailer from axle base. Near Weaver Falls Boat Launch, Saxton. 717/597-0078.

Pine logs for burning. 814/643-4172, leave message.

Tools/Equipment

8N Ford tractor. Runs & works well. Good cond. 814/643-3281.

Extra heavy-duty tilt-bed utility trailer. 4'6" x 10' long. Single axle, metal fenders, pin-tle hook-up, no title, great for running equipment onto trailer or hauling logs, etc., \$400. 814/643-0513.

Craftsman 24-ton vertical/horizontal log splitter w/ Tecumseh engine. Call 814/514-3009 for details.

3-pt. hitch, 2-14" trip-back plow, \$450. 3-pt. hitch cut-off saw, belt-driven, \$40. Cut-off saw blade, \$50. Call after 6 p.m. 717/987-3619.

New Holland silo blower. 814/447-3735.

Forney welder, cement mixer. 814/447-3735.

Miscellaneous

Pick-up load of old barn boards. Different lengths. Call Jeff at 814/386-2446.

Large Nascar collection. Plaques, posters, cars, clocks, etc. Richard Petty, Davey Allison, Alan Kulwicki & more. For more information, call 814/643-7362.

Vermont Downdrafter wood stove. 24" logs. Holds overnight. Needs several fire-bricks, \$400. Duncansville area. 814/696-3210.

Gas barrel, \$50. Rolls of wire for electric fence. 814/447-3735.

Propane fireplace insert. 18" frost logs. New, still in box w/ video installation instructions. Could be used in a wood stove, \$100. 814/944-5814.

Stereo, floor model for vinyl records. 33-1/3 rpm. Make an offer. 814/695-9556.

Amerikooler walk-in cooler. 12' x 8' central AC unit & condenser w/ all electrical components, \$1,800 OBO. 814/669-9159.

2 stainless steel milk tanks. 1 400-gal., 1 440-gal. Make offer. 717/566-7574.

Bruno Stairlift. Exc. cond., \$1,000. 814/599-5001.

Books - The Complete Collie/Collie Club of America; Grandma Moses; Life - The First 50 years 1936-1986. 2 lard cans. Wooden berry baskets. Lightning glider sleds, exc. cond., 1 is 3'6", \$65; 1 is 4'6", \$75. White & red granite pieces, evaluated. Old planers w/ wooden handles. Francisca china, 4 cups & saucers, 4 salad plates. For more information, call 814/667-2039 after 8 p.m.

Two each old wood beams. Dry hardwood species, undetermined. 7 1/2" between opposing hewn flat sides x 12" between

opposing uncut outer radius shape sides x 96" long. All dimensions nominal, surfaces clean, no mortises or tenons. Sold as a pair at \$100 total, cash only. You handle & haul on a first-to-pick-up basis. 814/643-1743.

Need help with daily living? Want to save money, time & our environment? Try using Ultra Microfiber cloths & see the difference. Be amazed at what you can accomplish w/out the use of harsh chemicals. These cloths make great gifts as well. For more information, call 814/643-9488.

Power Miser 40-gal. propane water heater, \$50. You pick up. 814/658-3527.

Approx. 600 board feet of air-dried walnut & approx. 50 board feet of red cedar. 814/542-4241.

Zurn PEX plastic potable waterline. PD3NFX ASTM975/F877. Hot 100 psi at 100 degrees F, cold 160 psi at 73 degrees F. 93' - 3/4" diameter (id.), 7/8" diameter (od.) Plastic gas tubing. Oil Creek Plastics. ASTM D2613 8/25/98. 40.7', 1.125" diameter by .028" wall thickness. 814/695-4632.

1 pair of new van roof racks, \$30. 2 new Anderson Terratone Trapezoids, 3'x5', \$200. 3 sections of 5' scaffolding w/ wheels, like new, \$300. Exhaust fan & light for above stove, bisque color, \$25. Call 814/259-3083.

White cookstove, \$425. 4-8" I-beam columns, \$40 ea. Used tin, 3'x15". 10 sheets, \$75. Call after 6 p.m. 717/987-3619.

Service

Everhart Painting - Interior/exterior painting & staining, power-washing. Log/cedar home, deck restoration. Call Jeff at 814/386-2446.

Gene's Variety & Auctions - We have auctions the first & third Fri. of each month starting at 6 p.m. We sell consignments for the public. You never know what will show up to be sold. If you would like to sell items, call 814/643-2734 or stop by our store. Located on Fairgrounds Road, Huntingdon. Hours are Mon.-Fri. 10:30 a.m.-5 p.m., Sat. 10:30 a.m.- 4 p.m. Check auctionzip.com #2942 for upcoming sales & photos.

Moore Hair - Where looking good is still affordable. 814/667-2221 for appt.

Classified Ads

Antiques & more - Cookstoves, dressers, wash stands, wooden ringer washer, butter churns, crocks, granite-ware, glassware & much, much more. Some pieces restored. We do refinishing & restoring of furniture. Cornsheller Antiques, 2051 Henrietta Road, Martinsburg. 814/793-3926.

Buck Hollow Taxidermy, Orbisonia area. Full-time professional since 1990. We also sell jackalopes, fawn mounts, fake bear rugs, etc. Call Mike at 814/447-3744 or visit www.buckhollowtaxidermy.com

Tiny Tots Childcare & Learning centers are located in Shade Gap & Mount Union. Providing a quality childcare/pre-school experience that helps children develop physically, socially, intellectually & emotionally in a safe, nurturing environment. Open 24 hrs., 7 days per week. Now offering night care & mom's day out care. Visit www.tinytotschildcarelearningcenter.com or call 814/259-3125 or 542-3211.

Pampered Chef - Danielle Taylor, Independent Consultant #661580. Call 814/599-6268 or shop any time online at www.pamperedchef.biz/dtaylor.

Kenneth W. Reigh Carpentry & Masonry - Kitchens & baths, laminate, hardwood, ceramic tile flooring. Fully insured, 35 yrs. exp. For estimates, call 814/658-9998.

TLC Powerwash - Residential, commercial, auto detailing. Free est. 814/644-1173 or 643-4367.

BEE Unique Hair Boutique - \$5 off perms, colors, & highlights through December. Must bring this ad in for discount. Bee Unique uses the best products at a price you can afford. Get that new look for the holidays! Call 814/448-4914, leave message. Hours to fit your schedule. Open Tues. through Sat. w/ Wed. evening appts. & every other Fri. evening. Call to schedule. Located at 17759 Beavertown Road, Todd. Just 5 min. from Cassville.

Book Construction - Excavation, clearing, roads, snowplowing, anti-skid, ponds, septic systems, foundations, prep. sites for bldg. Check our prices. Fully insured, free estimates. 814/448-0186.

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PO Box 477, Huntingdon, PA 16652-0477

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