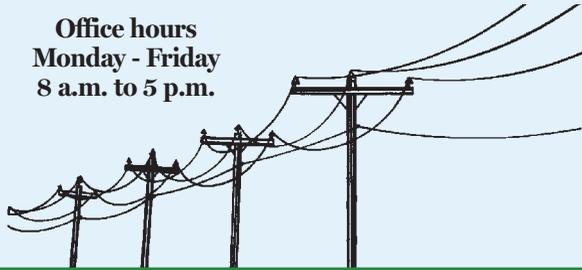


Office hours
Monday - Friday
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.



Tricounty Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

P.O. Box 100 Malinta, OH 43535
Office Calls: 419-256-7900
www.tricountyelectriccoop.coop



TRUSTEES

Steven Hoffman.....	President
Lawrence Weirich	Vice President
Bradley Haupricht Sr.....	Secretary/Treasurer
Kenneth Brubaker	Johne Ritz
Dustin Sonnenberg	Charles Weagley

EMPLOYEES

Brett Perkins, Manager	Craig Wilson
Doug Hall	Jason Warnimont
Sue Bockelman	Jeremy Warnimont
Chris Okuley	Tom Jones
Tyler Flory	Deb Stuller
Sandy Corey	

Celebrating co-op independence

To report a power outage: 888-256-9858

Your call will be answered by the Cooperative Response Center. Give them the name on your account, service address and a telephone number where you can be reached.

They will dispatch a line crew to restore service.

Be sure to check your fuse or breaker system before reporting a power outage.

Jackpot news!

Rosa Stout of Malinta reported spotting her hidden account number in the May issue of *Country Living* and won half the jackpot. She received a check for \$30. **Dustin Cass** of rural Delta would have won the same amount if he had reported finding his account number.

Your account number is on your bill statement. Disregard the zeros at the left in the number, but consider any zeros at the right in the number when converting your number to words.

The hidden account numbers always are in the local pages of the magazine. The jackpot now stands at \$70. So read *Country Living*, find your hidden account number, report it and win!

JULY IS THE TIME we celebrate our nation's independence. In the midst of apple pies and hot dogs, fireworks shows and parades, I can't help but think about the independent streak that inspired groups of farmers around America's countryside to band together and improve their quality of life.

Aside from President Franklin Roosevelt's promise of federal aid in the form of low-interest loans and engineering expertise, rural Americans didn't have much help in bringing electricity to their homes. They pulled themselves up by their proverbial bootstraps and did it themselves.

This independence not only tends to inspire cooperatives; it's a guiding principle. The Fourth Cooperative Principle, "Autonomy and Independence," means that no matter what contracts Tricounty might enter into, we will always remain an independent entity. One Three Two Eight Zero Zero One

Each year, Tricounty's annual meeting becomes an independence celebration. You vote for candidates on the board of trustees, and we discuss co-op business. We share a meal and have some fun.

Electric cooperatives form a vast network across the country, from coast to coast. Co-op lines are strung in 47 states, serving 42 million people — a different world from 1935, when much of rural America remained dark. This Fourth of July, as we recognize the hard-fought war that created the United States, I'll also tip my hat to Tricounty's founders, who beat incredible odds to make life better for themselves and their neighbors. ☺



Bret Perkins
General Manager

**Tricounty will be closed Thursday, July 4th,
to celebrate our nation's independence.**
Emergency service is always available, 24 hours a day, by calling 419-256-7900.

Telemarketers calling co-op members to offer discounted rates break the rules

TELEMARKETING EFFORTS, DIRECT MAIL solicitations and ad campaigns for competitive retail electric service (CRES) providers are only supposed to target the customers of investor-owned utilities (IOUs) like American Electric Power, Dayton Power & Light, Duke Energy and FirstEnergy.

A growing problem in Ohio is that electric cooperative members find themselves answering phone calls from CRES telemarketers, offering them short-term discounted rates and guaranteed savings if they switch. But co-op members can't switch their wholesale supplier of electricity. Neither can customers of municipal utilities. These groups were not included in retail choice legislation passed over a decade ago.

Some co-op members report repeated calls. Others have been told they can choose their wholesale supplier. This is a violation of Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) rules regulating CRES providers and the process by which they can solicit.

The rules clearly state that telemarketers must confirm the eligibility of the "customer of record" who they are calling. They also cannot resort to misleading and deceptive sales practices.

As not-for-profit, member-owned and locally governed utilities, the electric co-ops of Ohio own their generation through Buckeye Power, Inc., a generation-and-transmission cooperative with coal-fired power plants, natural gas-fired plants and renewable sources of electricity.

The wholesale rates Ohio electric co-op members pay are "cost-based," meaning they fairly represent investment in the power plants and the fuel, operations and maintenance expenses related to generation. There is no profit built into the energy and demand charges, no dividends for stockholders or hefty bonuses and stock options for executives based on power sales. This has resulted in wholesale electric rates well below average for many years.

PUCO does not regulate electric cooperatives, but the agency does set the rates and rules for IOUs and regulates the growing number of CRES providers in the state.

Telemarketers who contact electric cooperative

members and insist that they can switch could be in violation not only of PUCO rules, but Federal Communications Commission, Federal Trade Commission and truth-in-advertising laws.

Ohio Rural Electric Cooperatives (OREC), the statewide association, seeks the help of co-ops and their members in documenting cases of telemarketers breaking the rules.

"The law and regulations are clear. Electric co-op members in Ohio should not be targeted in these marketing efforts; they shouldn't be called at home or canvassed by door-to-door salespeople. And they certainly should not be subjected to deceptive and misleading sales practices," says Steve Oden, director of communications for OREC.

Oden asks co-op members contacted by CRES telemarketers to document the date and time, name of the person calling, their company, firm's address and telephone number and what was promised.

"Please get this information to your electric cooperative as soon as possible. Let them know if you've been contacted and what was said," Oden advises.

There is another, potentially malicious threat involved with telemarketing calls and door-to-door sales. Nine Six Two Zero Zero One

"Across the nation and in Ohio, we have seen scammers and identity thieves intentionally targeting electric cooperative members," warns Oden. "What they ask for is similar to what CRES telemarketers need to complete a sale: personal information. An electric bill, account number or confidential information your electric co-op has on file could be used in the wrong way if you share it in response to a telephone call."

Finally, one of the best ways to avoid aggravating telemarketing contacts is to enroll in the National Do Not Call Registry. Simply go to <https://telemarketing.donotcall.gov> and sign up. It is easy to register a phone number.

PUCO rules for CRES providers require them to obtain the list of Ohio telephone numbers, by area code, on the federal Do Not Call Registry and to scrub their call lists accordingly. ☎

Electric cooperatives and Retail Choice FAQs

Q. — I've heard about another utility offering lower rates to switch to them. What is this all about?

A. — Duke Energy, FirstEnergy, DP&L and AEP through their subsidiaries, along with several power-marketing firms, are offering short-term discounted wholesale rate packages aimed at their own and the customer bases of fellow investor-owned utilities (IOUs). This is the result of electric industry deregulation enacted in Ohio almost 10 years ago, combined with today's bargain-basement power market.

Q. — This deal sounds almost too good to be true. What's the catch?

A. — The offers target only specific customer groups currently served by other IOUs. The discounted rates also have special conditions. The offers are for wholesale power only. Customers will continue to pay distribution charges and other fees or tariffs associated with service from their current utility. In addition, utilities and consumer advocates are urging that IOU customers "read the fine print" on supply contracts and understand there may be hidden charges and early termination penalties that would negate possible savings.

Q. — As a co-op member, can I switch to another power supplier?

A. — No, it is not possible for you to change wholesale power suppliers. Only IOU customers may choose to accept a discounted wholesale rate, and then only if it is offered by a competitive retailer approved by the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO).

Q. — Why aren't you participating in "retail choice?"

A. — Electric cooperatives are not-for-profit, member-owned and locally governed utilities that for many years have benefited from the lowest cost of wholesale power generation in the state. Ohio's electric co-ops did not "opt in" to electric industry restructuring 10 years ago. Co-op leaders believed they were already offering affordable and reliable electricity. In addition, their non-profit status and patronage capital programs benefited owner-members in other ways.

Q. — Who supplies my wholesale power?

A. — Your electric cooperative and 24 other distribution co-ops serving Ohio own Buckeye Power, Inc., a generation-and-transmission cooperative (G&T) based in Columbus. Buckeye owns several power plants and controls other sources of generation. Wise business decisions and proper planning ensure a reliable supply of electricity at affordable rates for co-op members without depending on the power market, which can expose end-use consumers of electricity to price volatility.

Q. — How does the cost of my wholesale power stack up against the discount offers I've heard about?

A. — Buckeye Power's wholesale rates are generally competitive with the discounted offers — and without the attached strings and small print. In addition, Buckeye's rates are cost-based and don't include mark-ups for profit.

Q. — How much do I pay for the power component of my electric bill?

A. — Co-op members in Ohio will pay 7 to 7.5 cents per kilowatt-hour, on average, for generation and transmission in 2013-2014. Because Ohio electric co-ops receive wholesale energy and services exclusively from Buckeye Power, their members already are getting very competitive generation-and-transmission pricing.

Q. — Will Buckeye Power offer discounted rates to IOU customers to get them to switch?

A. — No. Power generated by Buckeye is for the use and benefit only of Ohio electric cooperatives and their members. There are no discounts, special offers, conditions or fine print associated with your service.

Q. — I hear that the cost of generating power is going up across the nation. Why is this and how will it affect me?

A. — In these tough economic times, the cost of fuel to generate electricity is higher, and other operating costs are on the rise. Utilities also face what is being called the "regulatory train wreck." The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is moving under authority of the Clean Air Act to require more aggressive emission controls at power plants. EPA is also preparing rules aimed at limiting the emission of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. Meeting these new standards will be incredibly expensive, plus there is a high degree of uncertainty about what will be required and when.

Q. — How is Buckeye Power prepared to deal with these higher costs?

A. — Buckeye foresaw the need to upgrade environmental controls 10 years ago and embarked on a construction program to install the latest equipment, including scrubbers for the removal of sulfur dioxide and mercury from power plant flue gas. This work is done and the \$1 billion cost has become a part of the rate base through a series of incremental wholesale increases. Buckeye also has purchased additional generation capacity to ensure a reliable supply of power past 2020. Your wholesale rates already reflect these power supply decisions. Co-op members in Ohio can look forward to continued rate stability in the future.

Q. — What can I do to lower my cost of electricity?

A. — Your electric cooperative is the source of advice for energy efficiency. Little things like turning off lights when rooms are not in use, replacing incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent lights (CFLs) or setting back the thermostat on your water heater can save money. Replacing older electric appliances with ENERGY STAR-rated models, providing adequate wall, ceiling and floor insulation and weather sealing windows and doors can make your home more comfortable and lower the monthly electric bill. Check with your co-op's energy advisor or go to Together We Save (www.togetherwesave.com) for more information.

Save your stamp

Quit worrying about due dates, remembering to write checks and being able to pay your bill while away from home. Entering information for online bill payment services each month takes time and often your payment arrives past the due date.

Try our Direct Payment plan.

It works for more than 900 of your cooperative neighbors.

With our Direct Payment plan, we simply draft the payment from your bank account on the due date of the bill. The service is free and easy to set up, just fill out the form below and return it to our office.

Direct Payment authorization form

Please complete and return this form. No need to complete this form if you have already enrolled.

Customer information

Customer name: _____

Address: _____

State: _____ ZIP code: _____ Phone: _____

Account number(s): _____

Bank information

Financial institution: _____

Type of account: Checking Savings Account number: _____

I authorize Tricounty REC to instruct my financial institution to make my payment from the account listed on or about the 25th of every month for the purpose of paying my electric bill. This authorization will remain in effect until I notify Tricounty REC, in writing, to cancel.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

Please note — you must include both signatures if the funds are to be drawn from a joint bank account. Include a voided check or deposit slip for the account you wish to have your bill paid from.

2013 Annual meeting will be at Delta High School

PLANS ARE UNDERWAY for Tricounty's 76th annual meeting of members which will be held Wednesday, Sept. 18, at Delta High School, located at 605 Taylor St., Delta.

Registration will open at 5:30 p.m. with a delicious dinner beginning at 6 pm. the business meeting will be called to order at 7 p.m. and conclude with a door prize drawing.

This is a great opportunity to visit with your neighbors and friends, elect two trustees to represent you on the board and hear reports on the operation of your cooperative. A gift will be provided for each membership represented in person We look forward to seeing you Sept. 18.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

September 2013

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					



Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Lighting accounts for about 13 percent of the average household's electric bill — cut costs by choosing new lightbulbs that have increased output and longevity. Some cost more up front, but prices are dropping as technology advances. Options include color, brightness, and even dimming and multi-way functions. Combining lights with automatic sensors can cut costs further.

Source: Cooperative Research Network