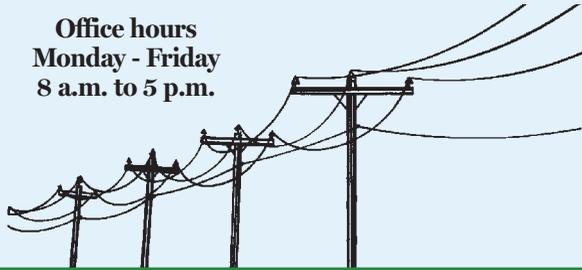


Office hours
Monday - Friday
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.



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	Johney 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	

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!

Neither **Chad Gratz** of rural Leipsic nor **Margaret Wagener** of rural Liberty Center reported spotting their hidden account number in the August issue of *Country Living*. Had either done so, they would have won half the jackpot and received a check for **\$40**

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 \$100. So read *Country Living*, find your hidden account number, report it and win!

Tricounty scores high in member satisfaction

AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX (ACSI) research was conducted with Tricounty members in April and May of 2013 through phone and internet surveys. The ACSI benchmark for the energy utility sector was a score of 77.4 — the highest figure since the measurement began in 1994. Four Zero Seven Eight Zero Zero Zero.

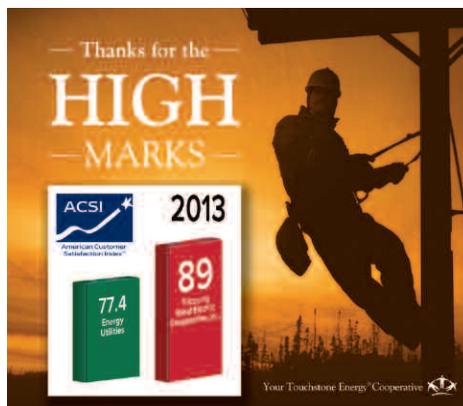
On a zero-to-100 scale, Tricounty scored an 89. This places Tricounty 12 points above the national average for investor-owned energy utilities, 13 points above the average for municipal utilities and ranks Tricounty among the highest energy utilities in the country for customer satisfaction scores in 2013.

Tricounty serves more than 4300 members in Fulton, Henry, Putnam, Lucas and Wood Counties. It was founded in 1936 to provide electricity to areas not served by municipal utilities and deemed too expensive to serve by investor-owned utilities. Tricounty operates as a not-for-profit entity, with annual margins allocated and eventually returned to members in the form of capital credits.

As always, we are committed to providing outstanding service to our members and this score is proof of the excellent work done on a daily

basis by our incredible staff. To our members, our goal is to be more than a utility as we provide reliable, affordable and safe electricity. We continually strive to create a positive, lasting impact on our service territory to benefit our friends and neighbors.

Brett Perkins — General Manager



Take the chill out of winter bills

BY AMBER BENTLEY

BETWEEN HOLIDAY HOUSEGUESTS and shorter, colder days, electric bills tend to climb in the winter. Read on for ways to save energy when the temperature drops.

Lower your thermostat to 68 degrees (or lower): If you decrease the temperature by just one degree, you can save up to 5 percent on heating costs. Consider a programmable thermostat that you can set to lower the temperature when away from home and increase before you come back.

Adjust blinds and curtains: Keep them open to let in sunlight during the day, and close at night to keep heat inside and protect from drafts.

Reduce hot water temperatures: Heating water accounts for 12 percent of the average home's energy use. Set your water heater's thermostat to 120 degrees or lower — that's usually sufficient for a household's hot-water needs. Also, if you've had your water heater for more than 12 years, you might want to consider replacing it with a more energy-efficient model.

doors and windows for the price you pay. ENERGY STAR-rated items meet special efficiency standards set by the federal government.

Free your vents: HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) systems will have to work twice as hard if vents are blocked by rugs, furniture or doors. Keep vents clear for proper air flow.

Keep food cool: Don't make your fridge work too hard. A temperature set between 34 and 37 degrees Fahrenheit is usually sufficient.

A special holiday tip: Use LED lights to decorate. They're up to 75 percent more energy efficient than traditional incandescent lights and last much longer — but check for an ENERGY-STAR rating before you buy. Cheaper LEDs tend not to last as long or be as durable.

Visit TogetherWeSave.com or (co-op website) for more ways to save. ☞

Sources:

<http://blog.togetherwesave.com/> "Five Action Steps to Winter Energy Usage"

<http://energy.gov/energysaver/articles/top-10-tips-save-energy-and-money-winter>

<http://energy.gov/energysaver/articles/tips-save-energy-during-holidays>

Amber Bentley writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. One Nine Five Eight One Zero One.



Sealing cracks and gaps around doors and windows is a great way to keep winter drafts at bay.

Source: Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives

Seal and insulate: This is the best way to keep heat in and air out. Areas that may need sealing include corners, cracks, door frames and windows.

Consider replacing old appliances, doors, and windows with ENERGY STAR-rated models: You can save about 15 percent of your normal energy use with these appliances and get better insulation on



Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Keep wintery drafts out of your home by sealing cracks and gaps. Weather stripping around doors and windows works well when you can see daylight between the frame and the wall or floor. Use caulk to seal around the frames where you see gaps. For more tips and tricks, visit TogetherWeSave.com.

Source: TogetherWeSave.com

Electricity theft: costly and dangerous



It is estimated that up to \$4 billion of electricity is stolen annually nationwide. And just like shoplifting, it's the honest people who end up paying for it. In Ohio, theft of electricity is a first-degree misdemeanor if the value of the stolen electricity, plus any equipment repair, is less than \$300. It's a fourth degree felony if more than \$300, or the offender was previously convicted of the charge. Tampering with an electric meter carries similar penalties.

The offender doesn't have to be caught in the act. The law states that reconnecting a meter disconnected by a utility or tampering with a meter is prima facie evidence that the user intended to defraud the utility. Conviction can mean from six months in jail and a \$1,000 fine, to five years in jail and a \$2,500 fine.

Since we are a not-for-profit cooperative, someone who steals electric power steals directly from your pocket. But revenue loss isn't the only risk. Theft of electric power requires the thief to take significant risks and endangers not only him or herself, but also our employees and anyone who happens to be nearby the tampered equipment or lines that the thief may have run and left exposed and unsafe.

Help us to minimize your losses and keep everyone as safe as possible. If you know of or suspect someone stealing, let us know anonymously by calling our office at 419-256-7900.

Power surging through a compromised meter can cause an electrical catastrophe. Only trained Tricounty Cooperative personnel wearing protective clothing should work on meters.

Cooperative principles guide co-ops to be stewards of their communities

EVERY OCTOBER SINCE 1930, not-for-profit cooperatives of all kinds have recognized National Cooperative Month as a way to educate the public about how co-ops work and to appreciate their many members.

Offering our members real value — and working to improve the quality of life in the communities we serve is one way we set ourselves apart. The seven cooperative principles lead electric cooperatives like Tricounty to do business in a better way every single day.

The Seven Cooperative Principles, Explained

1. Voluntary and Open Membership

— Cooperatives are voluntary organizations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

2. Democratic Member Control

— Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. The elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary cooperatives, members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote) and cooperatives at other levels are organized in a democratic manner.

3. Members' Economic Participation

— Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the cooperative. Members usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing the cooperative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible; benefitting members in proportion to their transactions with the cooperative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

4. Autonomy and Independence

— Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other

organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their cooperative autonomy.

5. Education, Training and Information

— Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperatives. They inform the general public, particularly young people and opinion leaders, about the nature and benefits of cooperation.

6. Cooperation Among Cooperatives

— Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

7. Concern for Community

— While focusing on member needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies accepted by their members.

Protect your home from electrical fires

EACH YEAR, ELECTRICAL FAILURES and malfunctions cause 43,900 home fires, resulting in 438 deaths, 1,430 injuries and \$1.47 billion in property damage. But many home electrical fires can be prevented simply by understanding basic electrical safety principles and following safe practices.

This year's Fire Prevention Week campaign — Oct. 6-12 — focuses on kitchen fires. The Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) have teamed up to offer safety tips to help protect your home and family:

- Safety should always be the top priority when working with electricity. ESFI recommends that a qualified, licensed electrician perform all home electrical work in compliance with local and national safety standards.

- Consider having your circuit breakers replaced with arc-fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs), which provide enhanced electrical fire protection by detecting dangerous arcing conditions.

- Make sure all electrical panel circuits are properly labeled. Always replace fuses or circuit breakers with the correct size and amperage.

- Keep the area around the electrical panel clear so you can easily shut off power in an emergency.

- Every month, use the TEST button to check that ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) at outlets and AFCIs are working properly.

- Be mindful of warning signs of an electrical problem, such as outlets and switches that are warm or make crackling, sizzling or buzzing noises.

- Regularly check cords, outlets, switches and ap-

pliances for signs of damage. Do not use damaged electrical devices.

- Do not use extension cords on a permanent basis, and never use them with space heaters or air conditioners.

- Avoid overloading outlets.

- Do not use lightbulbs that exceed the recommended wattage of the light fixture or lamp.

Despite your best efforts at prevention, a fire could still happen. Follow these tips to make sure your family is prepared to make a safe escape:

- Install smoke alarms inside each bedroom, outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home.

- Test smoke alarms every month by pushing the TEST button.

- Create a family fire escape plan that includes two ways out of each room.

- Pick an easy-to-find meeting place outside, a safe distance from your home.

- Practice your escape plan by having at least two fire drills a year. One fire drill should be at night while your family is sleeping.

- If anyone in your household is deaf, or if your own hearing is diminished, consider installing a smoke alarm that uses a flashing light or vibration to alert you to a fire emergency. ☎

Visit www.esfi.org for more home electrical safety information and for ESFI's Fire Prevention Week resources.

—Electrical Safety Foundation International

