

HOTLINE UPDATE

Wright-Hennepin members' power restored after severe storms cause outage

All of the almost 7,000 Wright-Hennepin members who lost power as a result of severe storms on July 1 had their power restored no later than the afternoon of July 3.

The lengthy duration of the outage was caused by extensive tree damage in western Wright County, resulting in significant line damage and time-consuming repairs.

WH kept restoration times as brief as possible, as all available line crews worked around the clock from July 1 through July 3 until restoral. WH also enlisted the help of other utilities' line crews and tree contractors to help keep restoration times to a minimum.


WH keeps its customers informed about outages through a real-time power outage map at whe.org, and by posting updates on its Facebook page at facebook.com/WrightHennepin, and its Twitter profile at twitter.com/Wright_Hennepin.

"I'd like to thank all of our members



Line crews worked around the clock from July 1-3 to restore power. A number of downed trees slowed their progress.

who were affected by this storm for their patience during our restoration efforts," said WH President and CEO Mark Vogt. "Limiting and keeping outage times

to a minimum is our highest priority, and we're constantly making improvements to our system to better serve our members." 

Bry and Pribyl families work to make energy conservation a habit

The Bry and Pribyl families agree that conserving energy isn't an extreme challenge, but it does require making some changes in their routines.

"It can be an inconvenience at times, but it's not hard," said Angie Pribyl.


The Pribyls and the Brys are participating in The Littlest User Contest, which runs from April 1 to July 31. This contest was developed by Wright-Hennepin (WH) and Lake Region Electric Cooperative to help raise member awareness about electricity usage and energy conservation.

Each cooperative's team consists of six member-households that are working to reduce their energy use as compared to the same time frame last year.

As a result of the contest, both families have made changes to their routines and have gained awareness about the amount of electricity they're using.

The Bry family has cut back on the amount of TV they watch by replacing that activity with playing board games.

"We always knew that we were big on

board games," said Shannon Bry. "Since the contest started, we've been playing them a lot more." 

The Pribyl family has been keeping their home a bit darker than they have in the past to cut down on their energy use.

"I like a lot of light," said Ted Pribyl. "Before the contest, we had 300-watt light bulbs in the garage. Those have now all been replaced with CFLs (compact fluorescent light bulbs)."

Littlest User cont. on Pg. 8



The Bry kids – (left to right) Riley, Payton, Caden and Maisie – have been watching less TV and playing more board games since the contest started.

Inside this ISSUE

- Page 2: A message from the CEO
- Page 3: Buffie attends youth tour
- Pages 4-5: Electric safety precautions
- Page 6: WH Security alerts family of CO leak
- Page 7: Summer energy-saving tips
- Page 8: Co-op Connections' prescription discounts

Find us on:





Trouble on the horizon?

Trouble is likely on the horizon for electric consumers due to the current state of U.S. energy policy – more accurately, the lack of a well-researched, balanced and congressionally approved energy policy. This became vividly apparent in June. The pages of electric industry publications – and even the commercial media – signaled that something big is afoot. I thought I'd try to thread together this emerging story for you, using words that were reported by the press in June to explain what is presently underway.

Sweeping new interpretations of existing laws by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are causing significant ramifications for the electric industry and its consumers. In a bluntly-worded lead editorial at mid-month titled "The EPA's War on Jobs," *The Wall Street Journal* framed the issue this way:

"The EPA is currently conducting a campaign against coal fired power plants... (with new rules) that mandate utilities to install 'maximum achievable control technology.' By the EPA's lowball estimates, it is the most expensive rule in the agency's history."

Coal-fired power plants produce most of the energy consumed in Minnesota.

The June Minnesota Rural Electric Association member newsletter gave dimension to this new interpretation of law, reporting what is happening just next door in North Dakota:

"Have you ever been to North Dakota? It's nothing but blue skies, except in the opinion of the EPA. Last month, EPA's Denver office announced it was taking enforcement for clear skies away from the state in violation of the (1977 Clean Air Act, which assigns authority to the states for such matters). For the first time ever, the EPA told North Dakota they (the EPA)... would impose (haze reduction) technology on Minkota Power Cooperative (MPC)."

MPC, a generation and transmission cooperative with power plants in North Dakota, produces power for electric cooperative members in northern Minnesota.

"EPA wants MPC to install a technology called 'Selective Catalytic Reduction' or SCR to reduce nitrous oxide, which is said to create haze. However, a pilot project using SCR to remove nitrous oxide from lignite coal doesn't work. No matter, EPA is insistent that MPC drop a minimum of \$500 million to install (this

speculative technology)... (Not only does the technology not work), according to North Dakota (officials), if every electric generator in (the state) was shut down, it would only decrease haze production by five percent."

The EPA has recently informed both of WH's power suppliers of a similar order. One of those suppliers suggested an alternative solution to meet the EPA's new standards, while using more proven technology. The price tag for this alternative solution would be approximately one-seventh of the cost. So far though, the EPA has rejected that alternative. WH's members will undoubtedly pay the cost of these new interpretations of law through higher electric rates.

The Bismarck Tribune was livid about the EPA inserting itself into

"The sudden increase in electricity rates and impacts on state economies will be significant... the rule will destroy... more jobs than if Boeing went bust."

NorthDakota's business. It's editorial page said:

"The EPA (is holding) lignite-fired power plants hostage to stringent 'haze' requirements. The EPA has done this despite legitimate disagreements over the environmental and economic consequences of its actions. It does this without there being a national energy policy in place to guide the agency's decisions. People who call the EPA arrogant and out of control are not far off the mark."

Early ramifications of what these new EPA interpretations will mean for electric consumers were reported last month in *The Chicago Tribune*:

"Consumers could see their electricity bills jump an estimated 40 to 60 percent in the next few years. The reason: Pending environmental regulations will make coal-fired generating plants, which produce about half the nation's electricity, more expensive to operate. Many are expected to be shuttered. The increases are expected to begin to appear in 2014, and... those costs will be passed through to consumers."

The shuttering of perfectly operating power plants has already been set in motion. A newsletter from one of the

electric industry's leading lenders reported this:

"Complying with proposed EPA regulations would cost American Electric Power (AEP) up to \$8 billion, according to the Columbus, Ohio-based investor owned utility. ...AEP estimates it would need to retire 6 GW (gigawatts) of coal fired generation, upgrade 10.1 GW, refuel 1.1 GW of coal capacity and almost 1 GW of natural gas capacity, and build an additional 1.2 GW of natural gas-fired generation."

To put this in perspective, the huge generating complex in Becker produces about two gigawatts of power. So in addition to the cost spikes that are anticipated with the EPA's new interpretation of existing laws, the premature closure of plants could also cause serious reliability issues. The North American Electric Reliability Council (NERC) just reported that the U.S. will need to build 135 gigawatts of new generation in the next five years to meet demand. But only 77 gigawatts is on the drawing board, leaving a big gap. Moreover, power producers and lenders are reluctant to start new projects with the reinterpretation of existing laws making things so uncertain. AEP alone estimates that the new interpretation of rules will immediately affect about 25 percent of its existing generation fleet.

"The sudden increase in electricity rates and impacts on state economies (from closing these plants sadly) will be significant at a time when people and states are still struggling," Michael Morris, AEP Chairman and CEO said in announcing the plan."

Bloomberg News quoted West Virginia's governor when it was reported his state would be one of the first to be affected by AEP's early closing of power plants:

"EPA's inflexible approach that is driving our nation's energy policy is wrong, and it will permanently damage industries, businesses, and cause significant negative impacts on consumers and workers."

The Wall Street Journal quantified the issue:

"The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers...says the rule (changes) will destroy 50,000 jobs and another 200,000 down the supply chain. That's more jobs lost than if Boeing went bust."

CEO Memo cont. on Pg. 3

June board meeting highlights:

The monthly meeting of the board of directors was conducted June 7, 2011. A quorum of directors was present. At the meeting, the board:

- Approved annual dues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.
- Approved renewal of insurance with Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange.
- Approved Brady Martz as WH and WH Holding businesses auditing firm for 2011, 2012 and 2013 audit years.
- Approved refinancing five notes to take advantage of low fixed interest rates, saving \$200,000.
- Approved rescheduling the August board meeting and WH Holding Long Range Planning Session.
- Approved the purchase of security accounts from a local dealer.
- Approved retiring a 2003 Chevrolet S10 extended cab and a 1995 Mitsubishi Fuso, as well as offering the vehicles to membership for bids.
- Reviewed and filed the monthly CEO, financial, legal and other operating reports.
- Directors provided updates on meetings attended on behalf of the cooperative.

June highlights cont. on Pg. 8

WH's board of directors

Chris Lantto, board chair..... District 5
Thomas Mach, vice chair..... District 6
Dale Jans, secretary/treasurer..... District 4
Timothy Young..... District 1
Butch Lindenfesler..... District 2
Burton Horsch..... District 3
Sarah Evenson..... District 7
Donald Lucas..... District 8
Erick Heinz..... District 9

The board of directors meets monthly at the cooperative's office in Rockford, Minn. Regular meetings are generally scheduled the second Tuesday of each month for 2011. Members with items of interest are encouraged to contact the President and CEO to confirm meeting date and time.

WH and WH Holding LLC's Management Team

Mark Vogt
President and CEO
763-477-3013 mvogt@whe.org

Angie Pribyl
Vice President, Finance and CFO
763-477-3104 apribyl@whe.org

Lance Hovland
Vice President, Energy Distribution
763-477-3105 lhovland@whe.org

Sonja Bogart
Vice President, Customer Service, Sales & Marketing
763-477-3061 sbogart@whe.org

Rod Nikula
Chief Operating Officer, Heartland Services, LLC Power Supply
763-477-3106 rnikula@whe.org

Steve Nisbet
Vice President, Technology Operations
763-477-3114 snisbet@whe.org

Wendy Makousky
Vice President, WH International Response Center
763-477-3144 wmakousky@whe.org

Buffie attends Electric Cooperative Youth Tour

Hannah Buffie, Rockford, Minn., was one of 1,500 students from across the nation selected to attend the annual Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. from June 11-16. This tour was established to help educate youth about political processes and give students the opportunity to interact with the U.S. government, while also showing the role electric cooperatives play in the nation's rural areas.

As a part of the tour, Buffie visited historical sites, met politicians and learned about American history. More than 40,000 students from rural areas and small towns across America have participated in this unique program since its inception in the late 1950s.

"There was just so much to take in," said Buffie. "I learned a lot."

The participants kept busy with a variety of activities, including a boat cruise on the Potomac River, visiting

the Smithsonian Museum and listening to speeches. However, according to Buffie, the participants still had time to relax and chat with each other in the evenings.

According to Buffie, this was one of her favorite aspects of the trip.


"I liked meeting people from across the country," said Buffie. "It's interesting that we can all be from the same country, but still have such different backgrounds."

Buffie, who has been to Washington, D.C. before, said that she saw far more of the city on the youth tour than she had ever seen before.



Hannah Buffie was selected to represent Wright-Hennepin at the annual Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in Washington, D.C.

"I would recommend applying for this trip to anyone," said Buffie. "It's an experience unlike any other. It was awesome."

Juniors interested in applying for the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour can fill out an application at www.whe.org/community-involvement/youth-tour.html. 

Trouble on the horizon?

CEO Memo cont. from Pg. 2

Sen. Barbara Boxer, Senate Environment and Public Works Committee chairwoman last month took issue with all of this. The publication *The Hill* quoted her:

"Anyone who says that environmental laws hurt jobs doesn't know that since we have passed them, we have had the best economic growth we have ever had."

EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson also disagreed, saying the anticipated results of these new interpretations far outweigh the costs. According to *The Hill*, Jackson said:

"The new standards for power plant emissions will prevent an estimated 17,000 premature deaths, 120,000 cases of childhood asthma and 850,000 days of missed work due to illness."

So that's where we are at right now.

As a result of these new interpretations, both of WH's power suppliers will have to consider the early retirement of some lignite-fired power plants currently serving you. The real possibility of a premature retirement of an existing power plant will undoubtedly increase the price of power sold to WH. That's because there will be a four-way collision of accelerated depreciation on the existing units, replacement capital costs for the new units, higher operating costs of the new generation and building new transmission lines to serve the new generating facilities.

There are other troubling aspects about the more aggressive interpretation of existing EPA regulations (along with a whole host

of new rules on the horizon). One is the hurried and abrupt way these rules and regulations are being implemented. *The Wall Street Journal* put it this way referring to one of the rule changes:

"The EPA issued the utility rule in March, with only 60 days of public comment. Basic administrative practice usually affords between 120 and 180 days, especially for complex or costly regulations of this scale. The proposal was obviously rushed (and filled) with numerous errors. The word in Washington is that the openly politicized process unsettled even the EPA's career staff."

The New York Times reported this in June:

"The (EPA)...has literally overloaded itself with rule makings... They need to take more time."

Reuters added:

"The EPA has taken on its heaviest load in years."

The danger with this kind of fast and forced implementation is that unintended consequences almost always occur and hit energy consumers in the pocketbook. A good, local example of rushing to implementation of energy policy is what occurred with CenterPoint Energy customers in Minnesota just last month. *The Star Tribune* reported:

"CenterPoint Energy is under fire from the Minnesota attorney general for an experimental pricing system that is supposed to encourage conservation by charging residential customers a higher rate as they use more natural gas. Attorney General Lori Swanson

said the program was launched last July with good intentions but has ended up 'picking winners and losers... for reasons that are unfair.' ...The company has indicated that as many as 140,000 households may expect higher bills because of the pricing program."

When consumers complained of sticker shock, the state ordered CenterPoint Energy's experimental pricing system to end. The result of this well-meaning, but in reality negative, energy initiative is miniscule compared to what I believe the ramifications will be of the new EPA interpretation of existing laws.

This is a mess! Our appointed and elected leaders could take a lesson from your board of directors whose carefully considered policy on this subject reads as follows:

"WH shall promote energy conservation methods and renewable energy sources that are reliable, technically feasible and cost effective for our member-owners... WH shall continue its long-standing environmental leadership (by) balancing our desire for more efficient methods of energy production and delivery with an obligation to safeguard the economy, affordable electric rates and high service reliability."

The balance called for in WH's policy is clearly not part of the EPA's rule making right now. As this will be a pocketbook issue for you, I wanted you to be aware of it. This is no longer a question of if this might happen. It is happening right now. Know that we will continue to give voice to your desire for energy policy that balances both environmental protection and economic affordability. *Mark Vogt*

Industry NEWS

Utility savings get bump by rebate, incentives

Minnesota utilities and their customers saved enough electricity to power about 120,000 homes for a year, according to the state Department of Commerce. The state's Conservation Improvement Program provides rebates and other incentives for businesses and homeowners who make energy-related improvements.

In 2008 – the last year for which figures are available – natural gas utilities saved enough gas to heat 34,000 homes. Together, the electric and gas savings add up to about 1.3 million tons of avoided carbon dioxide emissions. The Department of Commerce says the program also saves money because using less energy is cheaper than generating more.

In the Next Generation Energy Act of 2007, the state directed utilities to save 1.5 percent of their average retail sales, beginning in 2010. Some utilities have surpassed that goal.

Source: Minnesota Public Radio

Missouri River creates more power, same prices

The torrents of water pounding through the Missouri River's six dams are generating surplus electricity for utilities across the upper Great Plains.

Heavy spring rains in western states and a mammoth Rocky Mountain snowpack set up the Missouri River for a summer of flooding, causing water to be released from the Missouri's dams at unprecedented rates. At the Garrison Dam, the discharge approached 150,000 cubic feet of water per second in mid-June, the highest volume ever and more than nine times the rate of a year ago. Enough water is powering through the dam to meet Bismarck's normal summer water needs for nearly a week in a single minute.

The Western Area Power Administration, a federal agency that sells power to rural electric cooperatives, municipal utilities, Indian tribes and other customers, is not planning to change its electric rates until 2015, said Jennifer Neville, an agency spokeswoman in Lakewood, Colo. Western provides electricity to about 11 million homes in 15 states. It serves more than 30 North Dakota utilities, including Basin Electric Power Cooperative, a Bismarck-based company that provides wholesale electric power to nine state's rural utilities, including Wright-Hennepin, and several North Dakota municipal electric companies.

Since January 2008, Western's rates have included a surcharge to cover losses over most of the previous decade's drought. Less hydropower meant WAPA had to augment its power supplies by buying costlier electricity on the open market. The agency hopes to close the deficit and drop the surcharge by September 2017.

Source: Associated Press

Tips to keep kids safe this summer

- Never climb trees near power lines. Even if the power lines aren't touching the tree before you climb, they could touch when more weight is added to the branch.
- Keep kites and model airplanes away from trees and overhead power lines. If a kite gets tangled in a tree that's near a power line, don't climb up to get it. Please contact WH for assistance.
- Never go into an electric substation. Electric substations contain high-voltage equipment, which can cause fatal accidents. Don't retrieve a toy or rescue a pet that goes inside; call WH instead.
- Water and electricity never mix! Keep electronics like radios away from pools and hot tubs, and watch for overhead power lines when cleaning pools, boating or fishing.

WH educates youth about electric safety

In an effort to keep kids informed about electric safety, Wright-Hennepin (WH) gives hotline demonstrations to thousands of children each year. These demonstrations include a discussion regarding the importance of being safe near electrical equipment in and around the home.

Hotline demonstrations are given at a number of venues including schools, community events and science club meetings. Through the use of a demonstration panel, participants are shown a variety of common circumstances that could lead to electrocution – like flying a kite near power lines – and are taught how to stay safe around electricity.


The presentations keep the kids' attention by using "zapping" noises

and bright lights to emphasize dangerous situations. When the presentations are given at schools, the students often have the opportunity to "stump the teacher" by asking their teacher questions about the presentation.

Students who see the presentation receive take-home information that lists steps for a home-safety walk through, including checking to make sure electrical cords are in good condition (free of cracks and frays) and that all outlets have wall plates over them.


A list of safety tips to help their families to save energy is also provided, including using power strips, not leaving the refrigerator door open and shutting down the computer when it's not in use.

Dairy Queen has helped to make the presentations even more enjoyable by distributing free Blizzard coupons to participants as a part of its community education program, which was established to encourage students to continually strive for excellence.

If you're interested in having a hotline demonstration at an event, please contact WH at 763-477-3000. Fourth and fifth-graders are the best audiences for the presentation, as they usually have studied electricity as a part of their science curriculum. 

This group of fifth graders received WH hard hats and coupons for free Blizzards - provided by Dairy Queen - after they learned about electric safety through a WH hotline demonstration.






HELP THE ENVIRONMENT BY SAVING ENERGY ON CRITICAL DAYS

If you are interested in helping to do your part to conserve energy, you can sign-up to receive email or text message alerts when WH issues conservation alerts on high use days.

Do so by going to www.whe.org, clicking on "For My Home," then "Conservation Peak Alerts" and submit the form found on that page.



Wait Til Later Alligator!

CONSERVATION PEAK ALERT

WH issues these alerts during times of high energy use so that members can help reduce the demand on the area's electric grid.



Use caution when working near overhead power lines

When you think about your home or neighborhood, chances are you don't picture power lines. They're easy to overlook as they're usually out of your line of sight, strung high above your roof, along property lines and roadways, or hidden by trees. However, the old adage "out of sight, out of mind," may be dangerous; power lines pose serious electrical hazards if forgotten.

The general public should always stay well clear of dangerous overhead power lines, and take caution when using tools, ladders and vehicles around them.

Here are some basic safety tips to follow around overhead lines:

- Make sure to always look for nearby power lines before you cut down any tree or trim branches. If a tree falls into a power line, please contact WH at 763-477-3000. WH can also assist in trimming trees that are touching or near power lines.
- Treat all power lines as energized. Never climb or attempt to handle a tree that has a limb caught in a power line. You may not see any visible evidence that the tree is "electrified" or dangerous.
- Be especially careful when you - or general contractors who are working for you - are using ladders and scaffolding, taking precautions to avoid having these tools come in contact with power lines.
- Keep television antennae and satellite dishes away from overhead lines.
- If you live on a farm with an irrigation system, look up before raising the irrigation pipe.

Along with taking necessary steps to respond to an electrical emergency, you can help stop potential power line problems before they start by practicing these safety measures:

- If you notice anything such as trees or branches that might come into contact with power lines or may pose an immediate threat, notify WH at 763-477-3000.
- If you are planning to plant trees on your property, make sure not to plant them directly under or within at least 25 feet of power lines for short trees and at least 40 feet away for medium-sized trees.
- Shrubs, hedges and other plants should be kept clear of electric towers and poles.


Following these safety practices helps to prevent outages and –

most importantly – avoid injuries to WH members. Be aware of your surroundings this summer when working near overhead lines. Equipment operators need to be especially mindful of this.

Equipment operators can contact WH's Electric Dispatch Center at 763-477-3100 when working around overhead power lines. An electric dispatcher will transfer the call to Wright-Hennepin personnel who can answer questions regarding the project and address any concerns the caller may have. There are a number of ways WH crews can help enhance the electrical safety of the worksite, and in some cases can temporarily de-energize the line.

Additionally, equipment operators and other trades that must work close to overhead power lines should refer to Occupational

Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards, which provide information and guidelines regarding safe approach distances. Ultimately, it is the responsibility

of equipment operators to ensure they do not exceed the minimum approach distances as outlined by OSHA standards. 




The general public should always stay clear of dangerous overhead power lines, and take caution when using tools such as ladders and scaffolding around them.

One Nation...
One Number...

811

Know what's below.
Call before you dig.



U.S. Department of Transportation

Keep your trees healthy and your yard looking beautiful!

WH Services provides a variety of services including:

- tree trimming
- stump removal
- emerald ash borer treatments
- oak wilt and dutch elm treatments
- tree nutrition
- shrub trimming
- lot cleaning

90 day, no interest financing available

Contact 763-477-3000 for more information or to schedule an appointment.



WH Security alerts family of carbon monoxide leak

On an early May morning while most of the Ketchum family was still sleeping, Jena Ketchum was up taking care of her three-month old baby when she heard a beeping noise coming from her basement.

"We have a broken alarm clock in the basement that will randomly go off," said Jena Ketchum. "I was half awake, and I thought that was where the noise was coming from."

However, after a few minutes, Jena decided to go down to the basement to investigate. That's when she realized that the noise was coming from her WH Security gas sensor.

kids that I wouldn't be able to contact the fire department right away," said Jena. "It's nice to know that the monitoring center is there to help out with things like that."



A WH Security gas sensor alerted the Ketchum family of a carbon monoxide leak in their home.

"As soon as I realized what was going on, I woke up my husband, gathered up the kids and we got out of there," said Jena. "If we didn't have the security system, we probably would have just kept sleeping."

The sensor was alerting the family of a carbon monoxide leak, coming from their water heater in the basement.

"We knew that the water heater wasn't working right, but it had never set the gas sensor off before," said Jena.


The Ketchum family has had their WH Security system for about five years and is pleased with the monitoring services that the system provides. Jena is also a daycare provider and believes that having the system in place is a necessity for her work.

"If something were to happen – like a fire – I would be so busy gathering up

As for the gas sensor alarm, Jena appreciated the phone call that WH Security placed to make sure her and her family were aware of the situation. After the gas sensor alerted the family of the problem, Jena and her husband Marcus opened all of the windows in the house to air it out and replaced their damaged water heater, eliminating the health risks from the carbon monoxide leak.

"Anyone can have an unmonitored carbon monoxide sensor, but we could have easily slept through the alarm," said Jena. "It was nice to have someone from WH Security call to make sure we were OK."

The Ketchum family sees their security system purchase as an investment in peace of mind.

As Jena said, "It's worth it to know someone's watching out for you." 

WH Security named dealer of the year by Interlogix


WH Security received the Security Pro North Central Dealer of the Year award at a ceremony on May 20 held at Interlogix's 2011 Partner Conference in Chandler, Ariz.

WH Security was recognized for having the highest growth percentage in Interlogix's north-central territory, which consists of eight states in the Midwest. WH Security Lead Technician John Truenow accepted the award on the company's behalf at an awards dinner held during the conference.

"The sales growth required for this award reflects the hard work of our staff and the tremendous support of our customers," said Truenow.

Interlogix represents industry-leading solutions for a wide range of applications with products that are

well suited for both residential and commercial applications.

"WH Security is a distinguished security dealer that is part of a select network of security experts with a proven track record of providing exceptional service and quality products to their market," said Interlogix North Central Region Director of Sales Tom Meyer. "They recognize the benefits of developing a long term partnership with their customers, and offer complete and comprehensive security solutions with a quality service team for support." 

WH Security Lead Technician John Truenow accepted the award on the company's behalf at an awards dinner held during Interlogix's 2011 Partner Conference.



Do you need a house sitter while you're away?

We're here for you.

Enjoy peace of mind while you're home or away with a customized security system that will protect your home from burglary, fire and carbon monoxide.

WH Security has been providing thousands of metro-area homes with competitively-priced security systems and monitoring for over 20 years. Let us help protect your property too!



Rockford, MN • 763-477-3000 or 800-943-2667
View safety tips on our website: www.wh-security.com

Purchase a new security system and receive two door or window sensors FREE!

Offer ends: August 12, 2011



Severe weather alerts through WH Security **NEW**

To help keep you informed about potentially dangerous storms, WH Security is now offering severe weather alerts through alarm.com.

These alerts relay information from the National Weather Service to customers via their security control panels. Upon receiving this information, the panel will beep to alert occupants of the situation and will display a severe weather warning message.

WH Security hopes that this service will help its customers reach safe locations during dangerous storms. To receive more information about this service call 763-477-3000.



Save money on your electric bills this summer

It may be surprising to hear, but in spite of the bitterly cold winters in Minnesota, residents here actually use the most energy in the summer months. When temperatures rise, your first instinct may be to crank up the AC, but doing so can also significantly affect your electric bill.

Luckily, there are many ways to conserve energy, helping to keep your monthly bill low, while still keeping your home comfortable. Below are a few helpful hints for conserving energy this summer:

1. Use a microwave or an outside grill to cook when possible. Microwaves use 50-65 percent less energy than conventional ovens and neither of these options will heat up your home while they're in use.
2. Invest in a clothesline, and try to limit the use of your dryer and dishwasher. These devices create excess heat in your home, causing your air conditioner to work harder to maintain a cool temperature.
3. Use fans to help circulate the air.
4. Close shades during the day, and make sure windows are shut and locked tight. This will help keep your home cool during the day.
5. Keep your air conditioner well maintained. Clean the coil and make sure the unit is free from clutter, so that plenty of air can circulate around it. This will help the unit run more efficiently.
6. Use a programmable thermostat to vary your home's temperature based on your schedule. Raise your thermostat when you're not home or at night to save as much as 10 percent on your cooling costs.
7. A big slice of your energy bill pays for heating water. Take shorter showers and make sure that your water heater is set no higher than 120° F.
8. Do a walk through of your home to make sure there are no thermal leaks. Sealing any leaks you discover will help you maintain the temperature in your home.
9. Use shade trees when landscaping in order to block summer sun from entering your home, helping to reduce cooling costs.
10. Join WH's Off-Peak "Cool Cash" air conditioning program to save 15 percent off your summer electric bills.

Events in your area!

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| July 14
Maple Grove Parade | August 5
Clearwater Parade |
| July 30
South Haven Parade | August 6
Hanover Parade |
| August 3-7
Wright County Fair | August 8
Cokato Parade |

Win this Month's Wind or Solar Generation!

Each month, two lucky members will have their names drawn. One will win the current month's output of Wright-Hennepin's wind generator and the other will win the output of the solar panel.

To enter the monthly contest, or find more information and data, go to: <http://www.whe.org/for-my-home/resources/wind-solar.html>

Last month's winners:

Xiang Chen of Maple Grove wins a credit for 893 kWh, June's output from WH's wind generator.

Paul Baer of Hamel wins a credit for 227 kWh, June's output from WH's solar panels.

Average monthly energy output year-to-date:

WH's wind generator = 750 kWh
 WH's solar panels = 225 kWh
 Average monthly energy use per household = 1,100 kWh

Contact INFORMATION

Hotline Update Staff

Lindsay Scherer - lscherer@whe.org
 Communications Specialist

Andrea Nies - anies@whe.org
 Marketing Coordinator

Jerry Kranz - jkranz@whe.org
 Production Manager

Office Hours:

8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday - Friday
 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Wednesdays.

Customer Call Center Hours:

7:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday - Thursday
 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Fridays
 Call: 763-477-3000 or 1-800-943-2667

To report an outage:

Electric dispatchers are available 24/7
 Call: 763-477-3100 or 1-888-399-1845

WH Security monitoring:

Security dispatchers are available 24/7
 Call: 763-477-4275 or 1-800-858-7811

Printed on partially recycled paper.

Win LED solar lights!

Complete WH's quiz with the correct answers and be entered for a chance to win a prize!

Pop Quiz!

All the answers for the quiz can be found in this newsletter. Please insert the correct answers, clip out the form and mail it with your electric bill, or submit your answers online at whe.org on the "Newsletter Archive" page, found under the "News & Events" section. ***Completed quizzes are due by August 15.**

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

1. During what season do Minnesotans use the most energy? _____
2. The Bry family has been watching less TV and playing more _____ as a result of *The Littlest User Contest*.
3. Use _____ when working near overhead power lines.
4. New rules created by the _____ may cause your electric rates to rise.
5. Never climb trees growing near _____.

*One winner will be selected each month. One entry per month, per household will only be accepted. Winners will be notified by phone or email.



Bry and Pribyl families work to make conservation a habit

Littlest User cont. from Pg. 1

The Pribyls said that this summer's cooler temperatures have been helpful with reducing their energy use.

"We've been lucky with the weather," said Angie. "We haven't really needed the air conditioning much, and there's been plenty of rain to water the lawn."

The Bry family has taken advantage of the cooler temperatures by opening windows in the morning and closing blinds in the afternoon to keep their home comfortable and minimize their air conditioner use.



The Bry family – (back row, left to right) Maisie, Shannon, Jeff, Payton, (front row, left to right) Caden and Riley – plan to continue their energy-saving efforts after the contest.

The contest has also been a learning experience for both families, as they've tracked the activities that cause their energy use to jump. The Pribyls noticed that their dryer has been a significant source of energy use in their home.

Angie said that she'd also learned quite a bit about conservation from the initial walk through that WH performed on all contestants' homes. This gave the contestants an assessment of their energy use and advice on how to cut back.

The Brys believe that this contest has been a helpful tool for teaching their kids about energy conservation.

"It's a great opportunity to explain conservation to your kids," said Jeff Bry. "This contest is helping them develop good habits."

Additionally, the contest has brought out the competitive side of the Brys. Even Payton – the youngest member of the family – has learned to shut off her closet light in the morning and turn off her humidifier.

"The kids have been great about reducing," said Shannon.

The Pribyls are pleased with the progress they've made throughout the competition.

"At the beginning of the contest, we set a goal to reduce our use by 25 percent, and we've reached that," said Angie.

The Brys' and Pribyls' progress – as well as the progress of the other contestants – is being tracked at www.whe.org, under the "Quick Links" section where participants and the general public can view the status of the competition between Wright-Hennepin's Watt Watchers and Lake Region's MiniMizers, each individual household's energy savings, and blog postings from the participating households about their experiences.

The households in the contest are tracking their daily energy-conserving efforts by using MyMeter. MyMeter is an energy-use monitoring software that allows its users to view complex energy-use data in a simple graphic format. This allows the participants, as well as other members in both cooperatives, to view how changes they've made around their homes directly affect their energy use.

"MyMeter has been extremely helpful for tracking our progress," said Jeff.


As of this writing, the WH Watt Watchers are leading the competition



The Pribyls – Angie and Ted, pictured with Willie Wirehand (a rural co-op mascot created in the 1950s) between them – have been surprised by how much they've been able to reduce their energy use.

with an overall reduction of 43.80 percent. The Lake Region MiniMizers are trailing behind the Watt Watcher with an overall reduction of 11.36 percent.

Both families have noticed savings on their electric bills and plan to keep many of their energy-saving habits after the conclusion of the contest.

"It's not that hard," said Ted. "It's just about breaking old habits." 

Prescription discounts available through Co-op Connections

The Co-op Connections card can save you money on a variety of items and services – even prescriptions.

The prescription discount feature of the card allows you to save between 10 and 60 percent on prescription drugs at more than 60,000 national and regional


pharmacy chain stores – including CVS, Walgreens, Wal-Mart and Target.

To receive this discount, simply present your Co-op Connections Card along with your prescriptions to the pharmacist. The pharmacy's computer system will compare the Co-op Connections'

contracted discount price with the pharmacy's retail price when the prescription is processed. You pay the lower of the two prices directly to the pharmacy at the point of sale.

This discount can be used in place of insurance for prescriptions that are not

covered under your plan, but cannot be used in conjunction with insurance.

To find a participating pharmacy near you, call 800-800-7616 or to get a price quote for your prescription, enter the strength, quantity and dose at www.rxpricequotes.com. 

Be a **Cool Cat** and....

Save Money this Summer
with **Cool Cash!**

Join Wright-Hennepin's "Cool Cash" energy saving central air conditioning program today and receive a **15% discount*** on your summer electric bills.

- No cost to join, no appointment necessary.
- One phone call signs you up.

Wright-Hennepin's "Cool Cash" energy saving air conditioning program will put money in your pocket and help the environment by saving energy.

Call today and start saving!

763-477-3000 or 800-943-2667 www.whe.org

*Certain restrictions apply. 15% discount is based on the general service rate after the power cost adjustment for your energy use during June, July and August and does not include other monthly charges.

June board meeting highlights:

June highlights cont. from Pg. 2

- Held regular quarterly executive session.
- Guests included:
 - Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange's Account Executive Randy James who presented a summary of WH's various insurance coverages.
 - Interlogix's Regional Director of Sales Thomas Meyer and Sales Representative Jeff Carlson, who presented WH Security with the North Central Security Pro Dealer of the Year Award. Meyer's provided a presentation on emerging trends in the home-security marketplace.
 - Basin's VP of Generation Wayne Backman addressed the board and employees during the annual legislative luncheon.

Hotline Update (USPS 000839) is published and distributed monthly from the cooperative's office in Rockford, Minn. Periodicals postage is paid at Maple Lake, Minn. 55358-0330. Subscription is \$1 annually. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Hotline Update, PO Box 330, Rockford, Minn. 55373-0330 ©2011 Wright-Hennepin Cooperative Electric Association.