



Editor, Patsy Whitehead, CCC

Featured above: Nolin RECC Line Technician
Gene Baskett, 40 years of service

News you can use

Weathering the ‘Perfect Storm’

Our nation’s electric utility industry is heading into a “perfect storm.” While the amount of electricity we use every day steadily increases, the capacity to generate and transmit that power is running short. In the past, fossil fuel-fired power plants were the go-to option to meet growing new demand with proven technology, but upcoming federal regulations on carbon dioxide emissions is changing that. The cost of complying with new regulations could make electricity less affordable for everyone—a major concern for Nolin RECC and its members.

In December, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), a part of the executive branch, declared that six key greenhouse gases from auto emissions, including carbon dioxide, are “endangering public health and welfare” of current and future generations. Emissions from motor vehicles of four of those greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide, were also said to contribute to dangerous air pollution.

The endangerment findings put a foot in the door for EPA to issue sweeping new rules that could impose strict limits on carbon emissions, including those from power plants. The cost of generating electricity would go up, and in the end those costs would hit consumer pocketbooks.

Congress is working on its own set of carbon dioxide regulations, and we must continue to ask that any resulting legislation be fair, affordable, and technologically achievable. I have been addressing legislation issues on climate change for the past several years. As of this date, we are all still waiting to see what happens as the U.S. Senate begins to study the Waxman-Markey bill, which would reduce greenhouse gas emissions 17 percent by 2020 and 80 percent by 2050.

Whatever the political outcome, the honest truth is the change won’t come overnight. Fossil fuels currently account for more than 70 percent of all electricity generated in the United States. New technology is the key to keeping traditional options up-to-date and refining new ways to affordably keep the lights on. Cleaner use of fossil fuels, an increased use of renewable energy, and a big commitment to energy efficiency will all be necessary.

Electric co-ops have a long history of providing safe, reliable, and affordable electricity to their members, and no “perfect storm” is going to keep us from continuing to do our job. Co-op

research projects are already under way to expand the current limits of renewable energy, make coal- and natural gas-fired power plants cleaner and more efficient, and possibly even capture carbon dioxide from plant emissions before they go up a smokestack and store them deep underground to keep them out of the atmosphere.

Nolin is a member of the Cooperative Research Network (CRN) based in Arlington, Virginia. Recently CRN was awarded a \$33.9 million grant from the U.S. Department of Energy, to be used to support a wide-ranging “smart grid” research project. The effort brings together 27 electric co-ops in 10 states, which will match the grant money awarded to create a pool of nearly \$68 million for ground-breaking technology development. With a smarter electric grid, we’ll be able to deliver electricity to our consumers more efficiently—cutting the amount of emissions we’ll need to generate as a result.

Co-ops have stepped up to challenges in the past, and I have no doubt our response to this challenge will not be any different in the end. But we need your help in relaying to Congress just how important it is to keep climate change legislation fair, affordable, and technologically achievable. To make your voice heard, join the Our Energy, Our Future® grassroots awareness campaign at www.ourenergy.coop.



Mickey Miller
President & CEO

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Short Circuits:

Old Wiring Could Be Hazardous

Residential electrical wiring changed during the 20th century as new appliances appeared on the scene and electricity evolved from a luxury to a mainstay. Since a third of American homes were built more than 50 years ago, home buyers and folks living in older homes should be aware of how wiring changed during the last century.

An explosion of appliance purchases followed in the late 1940s and early '50s. But the arrival of air conditioning during the 1960s soon rendered many mid-century home electrical systems obsolete. More recently, residences built as little as 20 years ago might be insufficient for handling entertainment systems and personal computers.

Each year, household wiring and lighting cause an estimated average of 32,000 home fires. On average, these fires result in 950 injuries, 220 deaths, and nearly \$674 million in property damage, according to the National Fire Protection Association.

Homeowners should not assume all is well simply because fuses aren't blowing, circuit breakers aren't tripping, or they're not receiving shocks or smelling burnt plastic. Inside the walls, wire insulation could be cracking and crumbling, especially if wires are drawing more current than they were designed to handle. The wood frame above plaster ceilings could also become charred by light bulbs that are too close to the ceiling or higher in wattage than the light fixture's rating.

To avoid such hazards, consumers should understand the limits of home wiring systems. Often, this depends on when a home was built or if the electrical system was upgraded.

Anytime you receive a shock from an electrical appliance, outlet, or wall switch in your home, it's a warning that you should talk with a qualified electrician. If a fuse blows or a circuit breaker trips right after you replace or reset it, you have trouble somewhere. In older homes, heat means too much electrical current's being drawn through outlets. If your receptacles or plugs are hot to the touch you may have an overload.

When too much current gets drawn, wires heat up, bak-

ing and eventually weakening the insulation. Wires with damaged, decayed, or brittle insulation can lead to shocks and fires.

Another issue associated with older home wiring systems is the number of receptacles in each room. Today's electrical code requires outlets be placed every 12 feet of running wall space, about one per wall in the average 10-by-12-foot room. Houses built before 1956 were required to have outlets placed every 20 feet, while homes built before 1935 weren't required to have wall outlets at all.

Relying on extension cords is not the answer to running your electric devices. Extension cords should not be a substitute for permanent wiring.

Proper grounding, meanwhile, prevents painful or even deadly electrical shocks when electricity flows through an improper path. Newer homes are wired with cables that include a ground wire. The ground wire allows for use of three-pronged receptacles needed to power certain appliances, particularly ones with metal shells, such as refrigerators and washing machines.

Many wiring systems installed in the 1950s and earlier used non-metallic wiring, which lacked a ground wire. Homes from this era boast only two-pronged outlets, unsuitable for many modern conveniences. Simply replacing two-pronged receptacles with three-pronged receptacles violates the National Electrical Safety Code if

no ground path exists.

In some cases, older homes may feature newer wiring systems. Before buying a home have someone certified in electrical work inspect the system to be safe. Visit www.inspectorseek.com for referrals.

Source: Underwriters Laboratories, Inc.



This improperly wired overhead lamp switch reveals a potential home danger. Electrical code requires wire nuts for connections, but these connections have been taped. The wires could become exposed and touch the lamp's metal base, resulting in electrical shock. *Source: Underwriters Laboratories*

Nolin Announces Policy Change on Underground Power Lines

There are times and places where it makes more sense to bury power lines.

It will be a long time before any of us forget the aftermath of the 2009 ice storm. Although the ice storm brought with it a long and costly recovery, there are some positive results.

One good change is that Nolin RECC now requires all new and upgraded residential, commercial, industrial, and farm electric services to be installed underground. Underground service will help eliminate power outages during a major storm like the one we had last January.

Underground lines cost three to four times as much as overhead lines, but they limit visual pollution and are well protected from damage caused by ice and wind, including falling trees and branches.

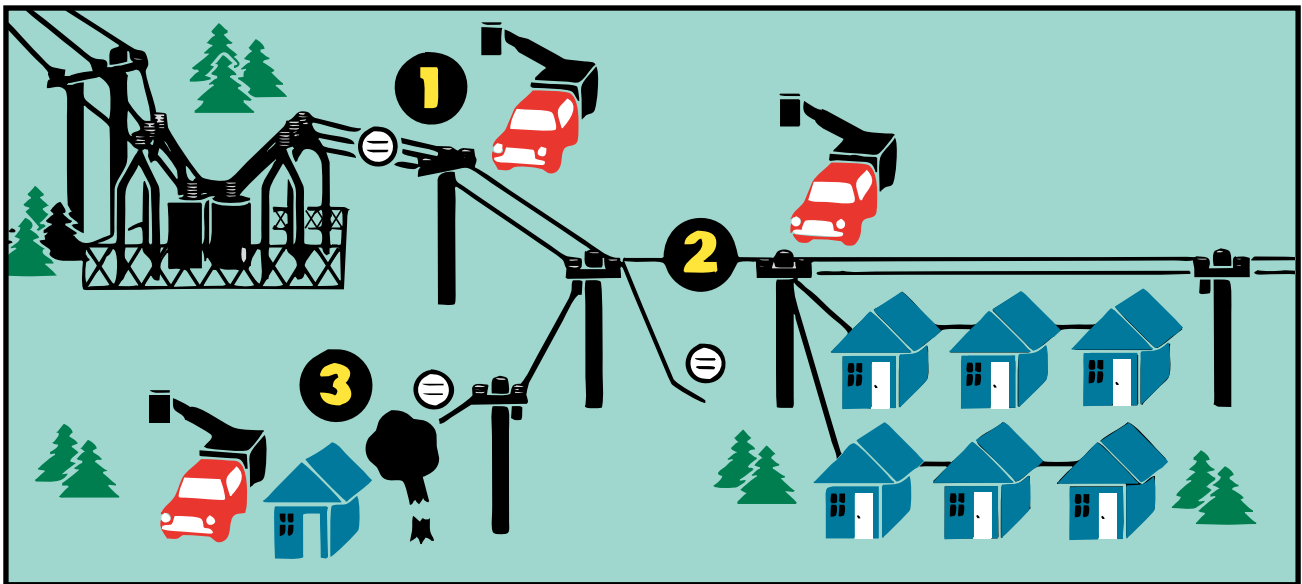
Although underground lines are protected from damage, they are harder to repair than overhead lines.

The Nolin member is responsible for providing the conduit and the ditch. If a service pole is required to string electric wire across a road or other obstacle, underground wire is required from the service pole to the home or business. If a service pole is not required, then underground service is required from

the transformer pole to the home or business. This new policy does not affect temporary service poles. Once the temporary is switched to permanent service, underground service is required.

Requests for exception to the underground requirement must be made to Nolin's engineering department. Variance requests may be approved in areas where trench depth is not obtainable or extreme terrain conditions or manmade obstacles exist. Variance to the underground service requirement may be granted only after a Nolin engineer meets with the member.

Getting You Back Online



In any electrical outage, the first priority is to get the greatest number of people back online as quickly as possible. That's why electric co-ops follow a sequence of

repairs that restores power to large groups of consumers before tackling smaller groups and individual consumers. This fictitious example details a typical repair sequence.

- 1** The main distribution line from the substation must be repaired before anyone can have power.
- 2** Next, crews repair the lines that bring power to the greatest number of customers in a community.
- 3** After larger pockets of customers have power, crews repair service lines to individual homes.

Al Akridge humbled with Prestigious Award



To say Al Akridge is humble does little to describe his “very humble” reaction as he heard his name announced as the 2009 Gene Yates Cooperative Spirit Award recipient. The award presentation by last year’s recipient, Jerry French, left Al nearly speechless as he stepped up to accept the award.

“There are many others at the co-op who should be recognized with this honor,” said Al at a special luncheon this past December.

Al was nominated by his peers for this award based on his dedication to Nolin members, community involvement, and his exemplary humanitarian qualities.

Modesty is one of the special attributes that earned Al this award. Other characteristics worthy of mention include Al’s good nature and willingness to help others in time of need.

Having been raised on a farm, Al learned early in life to lend a helping hand to neighbors. “There were six kids in our family and with three of them being boys, we helped out on neighboring farms as often as we could,” says Al. “It was neighbor helping neighbor—very similar to the co-op way of doing business.”

In addition to making a difference in his community through helping provide Christmas gifts to needy children and helping with food drives to feed the hungry, Al has helped many of his co-workers at Nolin. Several years ago, when a co-op employee developed cancer, Al was instrumental in getting a program started that allowed Nolin employees to donate a portion of sick leave to another who had a terminal illness.

Al and his wife of 38 years, Diane, live in LaRue County and are members of Buffalo Baptist Church. They have three grown children; Jason, Alicia, and Drew. His two sons have followed in Dad’s footsteps as they both are line technicians—one at Salt River Electric and the other at LG&E.

The Gene Yates Cooperative Spirit Award came just in time for Al Akridge to announce his retirement from Nolin RECC. Coincidentally, Al retired in January after completing close to 38 years at the co-op.

Congratulations, Al Akridge, and thanks for all you do to help others!

The Gene Yates Cooperative Spirit Award was created in 1999. It signifies humanitarian qualities like compassion, dedication, integrity, and community involvement, and was named after long-time Nolin RECC employee Gene Yates, who served the members of the co-op for 40 years and continues to volunteer in his community. The award is presented each year to a Nolin employee who displays similar humanitarian qualities like the ones Gene Yates possesses.

Long Time Nolin Employee Retires Filling his life with simple things

Nearly 38 years have passed since LaRue County native Al Akridge started working at Nolin RECC. Now instead of working on power lines, Al will begin a new chapter in his life after officially retiring January 15. He says his retirement plans are simple: “I plan to enjoy the simple things in life!”

Working in nearly every capacity in Nolin’s engineering department, Akridge has seen his share of storms during his career span. But the three storms he remembers vividly are when his three children were born. “Jason was born during the 1978 snow storm,” says Al. “My daughter, Alicia, was born on a night when I was working a trouble call during a thunderstorm—I had to call for backup so I could take my wife to the hospital. My youngest, Drew, was born during a thunderstorm too, but I don’t think I was on call.” Any way you look at it, there is just no stopping Mother Nature!

Al and his wife of 38 years, Diane, were married just one month before Al began his career at Nolin in April 1972. Five years later, Al found himself with a broken back after taking a bad fall while hanging tobacco. Two months after his injury,

Nolin Employees Recognized for Service

The employees featured here represent 125 years of combined service to Nolin and its members. As co-op employees, these folks dedicate themselves to the Touchstone Energy philosophy by meeting high standards of integrity, accountability, innovation, and commitment to community. A special dinner was held to pay tribute to all 96 Nolin employees and to show appreciation for their hard work throughout the year.

5 Years of Service



Jennifer Pyles



Robert Thornton



Brian Young



Director, Rick Thomas

10 Years of Service



Jeff Brooks



Shaun Scherer

15 Years of Service



Paul Baker



Director, David Brown

20 Years of Service



Billy Pait

35 Years of Service



Jerry French

Al returned to work as a staking technician, unable to climb poles again.

These days will find Al taking it easy around the house. As a cancer survivor, he is feeling well and plans to take advantage of his good health by spending time with his 2-year-old granddaughter, Addison. He also looks forward to a new grandbaby due in September.

Al laughs as he says, "I'm going to be a professional gardener and handyman while I help others along the way.

"There are few places that can compare to the job satisfaction and the people at Nolin RECC," says Al. "I have great respect for everyone at Nolin, and so many of my co-workers have made a positive influence on my life—I just can't begin to say goodbye, so I won't."

Al and his wife, Diane, share a laugh with their granddaughter, Addison.



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Appliances consume power even when turned off

Pull the plug and save



I PULLED THE PLUG ON MY ENERGY COSTS JUST BY PULLING A FEW PLUGS.

TVs, game consoles, DVRs, cable boxes, and almost anything that has a plug uses energy even when it's off. I'm saving \$222 a year by pulling plugs and turning off power strips. What can you do? Find out how the little changes add up at TogetherWeSave.com.



**NOLINRECC.COM
TOGETHERWESAVE.COM**

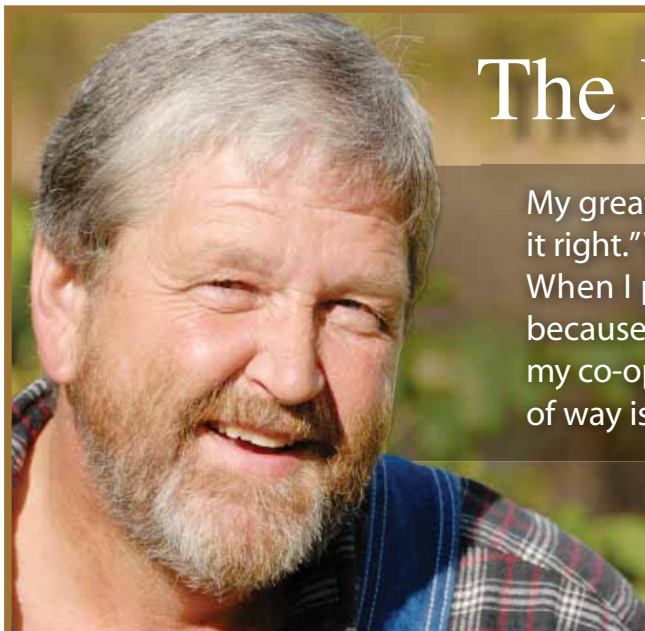
In the average American home, appliances and home electronics are responsible for about 20 percent of the energy bill. They make our lives easier and most of us don't mind paying for the energy when we use appliances, but what about the energy they consume when we aren't using them?

Many appliances, VCRs, televisions, especially plasma and LCD sets, stereos, computers, chargers of all kinds, and many kitchen appliances consume energy even when they aren't in use. The Department of Energy estimates that in the average home, 75 percent of the electricity used to power home electron-

ics is consumed while the products are turned off.

Saving this energy and some of your energy dollars is easy. Unplug the appliance, or as in the case of an entertainment center, put several into a power strip, so you can cut the power to the whole system when it's not in use.

Just how much can you save? Go to www.togetherwesave.com, take the home energy tour, and find out how much unplugging and other simple energy-efficiency measures can save in your home. For additional energy-saving measures, visit www.simplesavings.com.



The Right Way

My great-grandpa had a simple rule: "If you do it, do it right." We've followed that rule for four generations. When I put up my new barn, I built it to last. And because the site was close to the power line, I called my co-op before I began. Because building in the right of way isn't the right way.

NOLIN RECC

For more information, you can visit www.call811.com or call (800) 752-6007.

Three Nolin RECC members rewarded for giving to community

Operation Round-Up Gives Back to Givers

Three co-op members recently learned they were each receiving a cash reward because of their voluntary participation in Operation Round-Up (ORU), a program designed to help charitable and worthy causes throughout the community.

Members enrolled in ORU agree to have their electric bills rounded up to the next highest dollar, and the extra change goes into a special account. A membership drive concluded in December, which placed new enrollees as well as current participants of the program in line to win \$25, \$50, or \$100.

Thomas Oakes was the winner of \$25, Charles Scifres won \$50, and Gayle Andrews won \$100 in the drawing held at Nolin RECC.

Thanks to our generous Nolin members who voluntarily contribute to ORU. Members may enroll in ORU any time of the year. There is a form on the back of your electric bill that allows you to sign up for the program, or you can sign up online at www.nolinrecc.com.



Nolin member Gayle Andrews of Rineyville (left) receives \$100 from Nolin RECC Cashier Supervisor Kathy Williamson. A participant of ORU since December 2008, Mrs. Andrews says, "This is a chance to help a lot of people and it doesn't take a lot of money from any one individual, it just takes a lot of people willing to come together and help."

Two Important Dates to Remember

08-26-0002-01

This reminder goes out to your high school junior or senior:

Don't forget these two important deadlines:

**The Washington Youth Tour
deadline is
March 12**

**The College Scholarship
deadline is
April 1**

You don't want to miss out on an opportunity like this. Call Nolin RECC today for applications or visit our Web site at www.nolinrecc.com.



We've Got Your \$25 Number! \$25

WIN \$25 Worth of FREE Electricity

Nolin News features a contest called "We've Got Your Number." Hidden inside this issue are two randomly selected member account numbers. If you spot your account number, contact the Member Services Department at 765-6153, and win a **\$25 CREDIT on your electric bill**. You must identify your number and call by the 15th day of the month's issue containing your number. Account numbers could be anywhere in your *Nolin News*!

New Member Credits

All members signing up for new service with Nolin receive a short survey. Members who return the completed survey to Nolin are automatically eligible to win a \$20 credit on their electric bill. Each month, one name is drawn and a lucky Nolin member receives a bill credit on their next statement. Congratulations to our latest winner, **Dale F. Marrou, of Radcliff**.

Online payments

Access your Nolin RECC account through our Web site at **www.nolinrecc.com**. Click on "YourAccount" to check your consumption history and make payments by debit card, Visa, or MasterCard. To apply for budget billing and automatic draft online, click on "Residential Bill Payment."

How much is too much?

Are your electrical outlets overstuffed with power strips, extension cords, and outlet splitters? That's not just an unsightly tripping hazard. It's a fire hazard.

Plugging more appliances, lights, and electronics into a single outlet than its circuit is meant to handle causes the receptacle or cords to overheat and potentially start an electrical fire. The Consumer Product Safety Commission attributes 3,500 fires each year to outlet issues.

How do you know if you're pushing your outlet to the brink? Check for these common indicators of potential electrical hazards:

Hot outlets: If you can't touch a cord, plug, or faceplate for more than five seconds without saying, "Ouch!" the outlet is overloaded.

Shocks: Small shocks from touching appliances or outlets could point to danger.

Blown fuses: If fuses continue to blow after you replace them, or circuit breakers constantly trip, the wiring cannot handle the outlet's load.

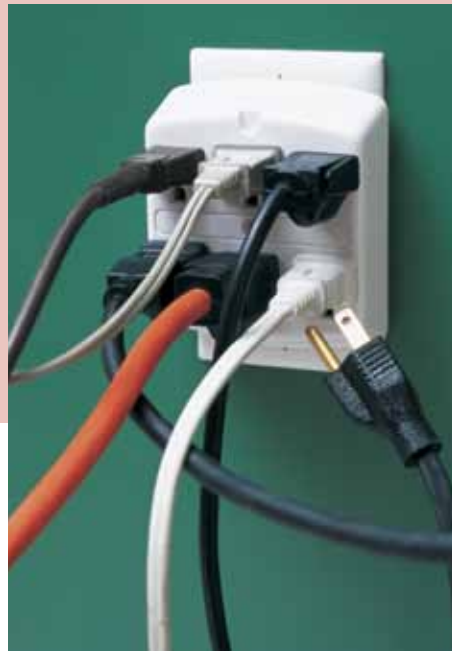
Flickering lights: Flickering or dimming lights could indicate an overloaded outlet.

Wavering screens: Similarly, if your computer or TV screen wavers when a large appliance is plugged in, it could mean the outlet is overstressed.

High-wattage appliances: Never plug a high-wattage appliance, such as a refrigerator or dryer, into an extension cord.

Any of these symptoms could mean

your home's wiring can't keep up with the increasing energy demands of your large appliances and electronics. Call a licensed electrician to give you an estimate for wiring repairs or upgrades.



HOW TO REACH NOLIN RECC

ELIZABETHTOWN OFFICE

411 Ring Road, Elizabethtown, KY 42701-6767
8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Mon-Fri • (270) 765-6153

RADCLIFF OFFICE

101 West Lincoln Trail Blvd., Radcliff, KY 40160
8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Mon-Fri • (270) 351-2199
(Office closed from 12:30-1:30 daily)

TOLL-FREE BUSINESS CALLS — 1-888-637-4247

EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBER — (270) 769-6396

EMERGENCY TOLL-FREE CALLS — 1-800-572-1147

Web site: www.nolinrecc.com

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