

W. Scott Ramsey

Watching Costs for You

Warren RECC is working hard to save you money. Over the past three years, we have trimmed costs in order to offset wholesale power rate increases from the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA). With the threat of increased regulatory costs from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), TVA has also made efforts to reduce costs.

For every \$1 you spend on your electric bill, 75 cents goes to TVA. That leaves only 25 cents for Warren RECC's operating budget. The last time Warren RECC had a rate increase was in April 2011, almost four years ago. For the last three consecutive years, Warren RECC has reduced its operational and maintenance costs – 2.3 percent, 1.5 percent, and 2.4 percent respectively. The money saved is helping pay down debt, make new system improvements, and offset some of the rising costs from TVA.

This year, Warren RECC will conduct a cost of service study to determine if our rates are in line with expenses. We hope to maintain the current rate without any adjustments. Each year, TVA also must determine if its rates need adjusting for various reasons including added regulations from the EPA.

Farm Safety

Warren RECC partners with our farming members to provide electric service to rural areas. On any given day, farming operations and electricity can be dangerous to life and property. Warren RECC spends considerable time, effort, and money to educate our farming members on the benefits of electricity, but also on the hazards and dangers it, along with propane and natural gas, can pose when not utilized correctly.

Equipment and implements make farm life much easier and productive, but they can also be dangerous around utility equipment. A ripper or sub-tiller is an implement that is pulled behind a tractor and used to till the soil at a deep level for improved soil mixing. An incident occurred recently where a ripper came in contact with a natural gas supply line next to a driveway. The line was torn and leaked natural gas for two days before the smell was detected and the gas was shut off. While natural gas is lighter than air, it is not significantly lighter; thus, it can hover low to the ground for days when depending on atmospheric conditions. If there had been a spark or flame to ignite the gas, this event could have ended very badly.

If you have a ripper or sub-tiller, please plan your work with a survey of surrounding utilities. Many utilities are buried and cannot be seen. If you have any questions or need assistance, please call your local Warren RECC office. Each day, we want everyone to go home safely.

Renewable Energy Program

Nowadays, we hear a lot of talk about renewable energy. It has become the catchphrase of the 21st century. Some people are still a little confused as to what renewable energy is and its importance.

Renewable energy is energy that is generated from natural resources – such as sunlight, wind, water, and biomass – and is constantly being renewed. Renewable energy is a reasonably clean source of energy that has a lower environmental impact than fossil fuels.

Although renewable energy resources are free, the technology used to capture the energy they produce is more expensive than traditional power generation methods. Also, renewable energy resources alone simply cannot provide the constant 24/7 demand for electricity from consumers.

Warren RECC believes in a balanced energy portfolio that includes renewable energy, nuclear, and fossil fuels, such as coal and natural gas. That's why we offer our members an opportunity to participate in a renewable energy program.

Not everyone can afford to install solar panels or wind turbines. As an alternative, Warren RECC members can participate in TVA's Green Power Switch program. For as little as \$4 a month, Warren RECC members can support renewable energy from sources such as wind, solar, and biomass. Each \$4 block of Green Power Switch ensures 150 kilowatt-hours of electricity is generated by a renewable resource and added to the power grid in the Tennessee Valley. The charge is simply added to your monthly Warren RECC electric bill.

To learn more about Green Power Switch, visit www.wrecc.com or contact your local Warren RECC office.