

REA Energy Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey



Chad Carrick
President & CEO

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- Shane Cribbs**
Network & Systems Manager
- Dave Daugherty**
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- Jeff Dishong**
Ebensburg Operations Supervisor
- Lisa Gardill**
Accounting & Finance Supervisor
- Stacy Patterson-Hilliard, CCC**
Communications & Marketing Supervisor
- Local Pages Editor**
Chris Masterson
Reliability Supervisor
- Patrick McAndrew**
Manager of Engineering
- Bryon Roland**
Purchasing & Facilities Supervisor
- Brendan Short**
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- Chris Weller**
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- Outages & Emergencies**
1-800-332-7273
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- Office Hours**
Indiana Office: 7 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
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7 - 11 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Monday - Friday

Guest Column



Petitions for director candidates due by June 23

By Stacy Patterson-Hilliard, CCC,
Communications & Marketing Supervisor

THE BOARD of directors for REA Energy Cooperative, Inc. is comprised of nine cooperative members who each represents a specific geographic area of the cooperative's service territory. Directors are elected to four-year terms on a rotating basis.

In 2017, Districts 5 and 6 are up for re-election. Robert Neese is currently serving as the District 5 director. District 5 consists of Cherryhill, Pine and Rayne townships in Indiana County. John Learn is currently serving as the District 6 director. District 6 consists of Chest, Elder, and Susquehanna townships in Cambria County, and Banks, Canoe, Grant, Green, and Montgomery townships in Indiana County.

Qualifications

To be eligible for director candidacy, individuals must meet the following criteria and all other guidelines listed in the cooperative's bylaws:

- ▶ Be at least 18 years old,
- ▶ Have signed and submitted an application for service at primary residence,
- ▶ Have received electric service at primary residence continuously for the past year,
- ▶ Not be employed by, or financially interested in, any business in competition with REA,
- ▶ Have never been an employee of REA or any electric cooperative or association,
- ▶ Not be a close relative of a director or employee of REA,
- ▶ Have paid all balances due to REA within 90 days of billing during the previous one-year period,

- ▶ Have not been convicted of theft of services from REA, and
- ▶ Have not been convicted of, or pled guilty to, a felony or crime of moral turpitude.

Complete director qualifications are detailed in the cooperative's bylaws in Article III, Section 2. (a). Packets containing all the necessary information and forms are available at the cooperative's offices and on the cooperative's website, www.reaenergy.com.

Important dates to remember

This year, the first day members can submit petitions to run for director is March 24, 2017. To register as a candidate, you must reside in District 5 or 6. A petition must be filed bearing the signatures of at least 15 REA Energy members who reside in the district the nominee is running for. All petitions shall state the residence and directorate district of the nominee. Upon validation of signatures, the petition will be posted at the cooperative's headquarters.

Interested applicants will need to have their petitions submitted and received at the cooperative by 3 p.m. on June 23, 2017. A random selection of ballot positions will be performed at the cooperative's Indiana office by the cooperative's solicitor at 3:30 p.m. on June 27, 2017 (date subject to change). Each nominee shall be entitled to attend the selection of ballot position.

A ballot containing the names of all nominees will be mailed to members in Districts 5 and 6 in September. Election results will be announced at the annual meeting on Sept. 21, 2017. 

The importance of right-of-way maintenance

By Brendan Short

Right-of-Way/Forestry Supervisor

REA ENERGY is committed to and strives toward providing the highest quality service to our members. Right-of-way (ROW) vegetation maintenance plays a major role in meeting this commitment, so REA can provide safe and reliable electric to its members.

There are benefits of having a well-established vegetation maintenance program (VMP), including public safety. Distribution lines are high-voltage lines that can be a danger to the public. If trees are allowed to grow into any form of high-voltage line, it can create a very dangerous situation for utility personnel, unsuspecting landowners and the public.

Electrical energy is always trying to find its way to ground, but it needs a conductor to get there. An example would be a healthy looking tree, which is a conductor. When tree limbs are touching distribution lines, there is the potential that the distribution energy is using that tree to find a path to ground, which could energize a portion of that tree. If landowners notice this situation, they are advised not to take matters into their own hands; instead, call REA Energy and report the situation. Trained professionals in the industry can assess the situation and resolve it.

The second benefit of a well-established VMP is decreased storm-restoration times. With a proper VMP in place, storm-restoration times may be reduced drastically, because a properly maintained ROW allows utility personnel better access to the lines so they can see where the outage is located. This allows personnel to better assess the situation and determine what tools and materials may be needed to properly restore the line.

With a non-maintained ROW, utility lines can become entangled within brush and tree limbs. When ROWs are in this form, restoration times may increase because personnel have to spend more time looking for the outage location. Once the location of the outage has been located, utility personnel may

be engulfed within an overgrown ROW. Untangling the utility lines is very time-consuming for vegetation management crews. This makes it very hazardous for utility personnel and the public.

Landowner notification

REA uses various methods before any vegetation management work takes place on the property. All attempts will be made to notify landowners. Methods of notification include automated phone calls, letters, newspaper ads, *Penn Lines*, Twitter and Facebook posts. Final notification will be a personal notification from a representative of the professional tree contractor. At this time, the representative will explain what work must be accomplished within their given property. Landowners at this time should ask questions so they have a complete understanding of the work that will be performed within their property.

REA cycle trimming program

There are approximately 2,600 miles of electric line to maintain in the cooperative's territory. REA Energy requires tree trimming, tree removal and herbicide treatment on a cyclical basis. Currently, the cooperative has adopted a five-year vegetation management cycle to take care of all of the ROW in our service area. Adequate trimming and spraying programs make it possible to provide reliable electric service and reduce outage time.

In 2017, the following cycle trimming projects are scheduled:

- ▶ Curry Run Metering Point – 60 miles
- ▶ Summerhill Substation – 58 miles
- ▶ Birtle Metering Point – 21 miles

- ▶ Strongstown Substation/Rosebud Metering Point – 176 miles
 - ▶ Kenwood Substation – 86 miles
 - ▶ St. Augustine Substation – 113 miles
- In 2017, the following mowing/ herbicide projects are scheduled:
- ▶ Washington Substation – 138

Reliability

Our focus this year is to reduce tree-related outages. This is achievable with proper maintenance and the cooperation of members in working with the cooperative to maintain ROW. REA Energy appreciates your cooperation with ROW tree-trimming crews and vegetation control. Working together, we will reduce outages, keep the system safe for employees and landowners, and reduce outage time. If you have any questions regarding ROW issues, you can visit our website at www.reaenergy.com to see proper specifications for ROW clearance or contact the Indiana office at 724-349-4800 or the Ebsensburg office at 814-472-8570. 🌳

Plant the Right Tree in the Right Place

Trees beautify our neighborhoods, and when planted in the right spot, can even help lower energy bills. But the wrong tree in the wrong place can be a hazard... especially to power lines.

LARGE TREES	MEDIUM TREES	SMALL TREES
<p>Height/spread of more than 40 feet, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maple • Oak • Spruce • Pine • Birch • Sweetgum • Linden 	<p>Height/spread of 25 to 40 feet, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Washington hawthorn • Goldenrain tree • Eastern redbud • American arborvitae • Dogwoods 	<p>Avoid planting within 20 feet of power lines. When planting within 20 feet is unavoidable, use only shrubs and small trees.</p> <p>Height/spread of no more than 25 feet such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Star magnolia • Crabapple • Lilac

For more tips on smart tree planting in your community, contact your local electric cooperative or visit www.ArborDay.org.

Be safe! Always call 811 before you dig to locate any buried utility lines.

Source: The Arbor Day Foundation and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

REA Energy celebrates 80 years in 2017

By Stacy Patterson-Hilliard, CCC,
Communications & Marketing Supervisor

TAKE a minute and think what your life would be like without electricity. There would be no television, no radio, no computer and no lights. How much different would your lifestyle be if not for the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) working to bring electricity to this area and the determination of one man to make it a reality in this area in 1937?

Some current REA Energy Cooperative members remember what life was like without electricity. Memories may consist of reading the newspaper by the light of a lamp, cooking with a gas stove, milking dairy cows by hand and listening to a battery-powered radio with only a few stations. Now fast forward to current times. With one click of a mouse you can read about current world events online. While many still use a gas stove, electric stoves are available. Many dairy farms are now equipped with high-tech milking parlors and some, like one in the REA Energy service area, are piloting ways to create power for themselves, and

cars can now come equipped with a satellite radio system. What a difference 80 years has made!

Creation of the Rural Electrification Administration

By the 1930s, nearly 90 percent of urban areas had electricity, but only 10 percent of rural areas did. Private utility companies, which supplied electric power to most of the nation's consumers, argued it was too expensive to string electric lines to isolated rural farmsteads. Plus, they said, most farmers were too poor to be able to afford electricity.

Luckily for the rural area dwellers, the Roosevelt Administration believed that if private enterprise could not supply electric power to them, then it was the duty of the government to do so. As a result, the REA was created in 1935 to bring electricity to rural areas.

By 1939, the REA had helped to establish 417 rural electric cooperatives, which served 288,000 households. The actions of the REA encouraged private utilities to electrify the countryside as well, and the number of rural house-

holds with electricity rose to 25 percent.

On March 4, 1937, Southwest Central Rural Electric Cooperative (REA Energy Cooperative, Inc.) was incorporated. This was a result of the determination of Sterling J. Orange, who was also the first general manager of the cooperative, to bring electricity to rural residents of Indiana, Cambria, and parts of surrounding counties.

Today, with 68 full-time employees and one part-time employee, and nearly 19,000 members in seven counties, REA Energy continues to serve our members with reliable electric service, reasonable rates, and a sense of being a "good neighbor," not just another company. Come celebrate our anniversary with us at this year's annual meeting. Thank you from your board of directors, management, and employees for your support and loyalty throughout the last 80 years and for years to come.

We here at REA Energy are interested in hearing the stories from our members of the cooperative and their memories of the lights coming on or other co-op memories. If you or someone you know would like to share their story, call 724-349-4800 and ask to speak to Stacy Hilliard or Marissa Barnouski. ☀



WAY BACK WHEN: This undated photo shows past employees of the cooperative. If you recognize any of the men in this photo, please contact Stacy Hilliard or Marissa Barnouski at REA Energy Cooperative, 724-349-4800 or 800-211-5667. You can also e-mail reaenergy@reaenergy.com.

Don't forget to stop by REA Energy's booth at the Indiana-Armstrong Builders Association Home Show at the S & T Arena March 17-19. Members who visit the booth will receive a free gift.



REA's safety internship program

Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) student Brady Moran started in the position of safety intern on Jan. 23. Some of his duties include: working on reviewing the hazard communication protocol, developing lesson plans for the Safe Work Practice Manual and conducting noise exposure surveys. Brady is currently attending IUP majoring in safety sciences. In his free time, Brady enjoys watching Pittsburgh sports, golf and playing on the IUP ice hockey team.



INTERNSHIP PROGRAM: Brady Moran is the new REA Energy safety intern, effective in January.

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

Don't forget to spring forward on **March 12!** Set your clocks ahead by one hour.



Right-of-way management/facility construction news

REA Energy contractors will be completing tree-trimming work in the following areas in March:

- ▶ Contractor crews from Asplundh Tree Expert Co. will be trimming the rights-of-way of the Curry Run and Summerhill Substations areas, in addition to emergency maintenance areas. Crews from Penn Line Service will be trimming the right-of-way of the St. Augustine Substation area. Notification of work will be made using our automated phone system to members in the areas affected. Contractors will perform all right-of-way work per REA Energy specifications. If you have any questions, call 724-349-4800, or you can view the specifications online at: www.reaenergy.com. All crews will carry cards and have magnets on their vehicles identifying them as REA Energy contractors.

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