Pitt and Greene
Electric Membership Corporation
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Where customers have a choice

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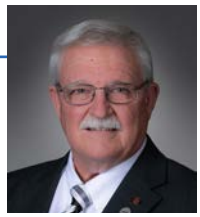
A MESSAGE FOR YOU

Mark A. Suggs
EVP and General Manager



In past manager's messages I have shared the many changes that are affecting the utility industry. Our national organization, NRECA (National Rural Electric Cooperative Association), released a series of graphs to help understand what is taking place. The one below is the last in the series. With our new administration we will see more changes, and I will do my best to keep you informed.

EPA Power Plant Rule

Fifth in a series

The North American Electric Reliability Corp. has found that energy policy is now among the top threats to reliable and affordable power. In April, the Environmental Protection Agency finalized its new power plant rule that rapidly curtails carbon dioxide emission from coal and gas plants. The rule is sure to lead to plant closures, higher power prices and significant reliability challenges as demand for electricity skyrockets in the coming years. Here are the key facets of the EPA rule and their likely impacts.

What's in the Rule?

- EPA relies on the Clean Air Act for its authority to regulate CO2.
- Existing coal plants that plan to operate after 2038 and new baseload gas plants must reach 90% carbon capture and storage by 2032.
- Coal units retiring before 2039 must co-fire with 40% natural gas beginning in 2030.
- Coal units retiring before 2032 need no new emissions controls.
- EPA deferred finalizing guidelines for existing baseload gas units.
- New peaking gas units must drastically limit operations.
- States must file implementation plans with EPA by June 2026.

Compliance Costs

CCS: Adding carbon capture and storage would cost at least $1 billion per plant and is currently untested at scale.

CO2 pipeline: An estimated 65,000 miles of new pipeline would be needed to move CO2 to where it can be stored to meet net-zero goals; only ~5,000 miles currently exist in the U.S.

Transmission: Some estimates say U.S. transmission capacity will need to grow two to five times from current levels by 2050.

New generation: A sharp increase in intermittent wind and solar and declines in always-on coal and gas generation are expected.

Hydrogen: New gas units can meet emissions requirements by co-firing hydrogen, but it is an unproven technology.

What Are the Impacts?

- Premature retirement of coal and gas plants will hurt reliability, particularly during peaks.
- Shifting generation to intermittent renewables will complicate resource planning and hurt reliability.
- Supply shortfalls are likely as demand for firm power skyrockets and peak U.S. load is expected to jump by around 38 GW in the next four years.

Legal Challenges

NRECA, states and others are suing EPA, saying the rule:

- Violates the Clean Air Act because EPA asserts vast new authority of major economic and political significance without a clear statement from Congress, going against the Supreme Court's ruling in West Virginia v. EPA.
- Requires the use of inadequately demonstrated technology, including 90% carbon capture.
- Mandates unrealistic and unachievable timelines.
- Includes compliance options that unlawfully require generation-shifting.

CA; Design: Jen Wheeler

Three DIY Efficiency Projects to Tackle This Year

A New Year brings new opportunities to save energy—and money. You may think energy efficiency upgrades require a great deal of time and expense, but that's not always the case.

If you're interested in making your home more efficient but don't want to break the bank, there are several DIY projects you can tackle to increase energy savings. Let's take a look at three inexpensive efficiency upgrades that can help you save energy throughout the year.

1 Trim Dryer Vent

Level of difficulty: easy.

Supplies needed: tin snips, gloves, measuring tape and masking tape.

If your dryer vent hose is too long, your dryer is working harder than it has to, using more energy than necessary. The vent hose should be long enough for you to pull the dryer out a couple feet from the wall, but the shape of the hose should form a line—it should not have a lot of slack, with twists and curves. A shorter, unobstructed vent hose increases the efficiency of your dryer, dries clothing faster and reduces lint buildup, which can create potential fire hazards.

Simply measure, mark and trim the hose to the desired length, then reattach the hose to your dryer and exterior vent. If you're unsure about the hose length, check out YouTube.com for a quick video tutorial.

2 Seal Air Leaks

Level of difficulty: moderate.

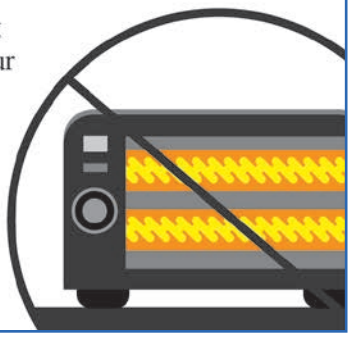
Supplies needed: caulk and caulk gun, weather stripping, gloves, putty knife, paper towels.

Sealing air leaks in your home can help you save 10% to 20% on heating and cooling bills. Apply caulk around windows, doors, electrical wiring and plumbing to seal in conditioned air. You should also weather strip exterior doors, which can keep out drafts and help you control energy costs. Types of caulking and weather stripping materials vary, but ask your local hardware or home store for assistance if you're unsure about the supplies you need. For more information, the Department of Energy provides step-by-step instructions for caulking and weather stripping: https://bit.ly/2Kesu6W

TIPS TO DITCH THE SPACE HEATER

Space heaters are energy hogs, and older models can be extremely dangerous. This winter, ditch the space heater and try these alternative solutions to stay cozy.

- Use an electric blanket to keep warm during the night.
- Caulk and weatherstrip around all windows and doors to prevent heat loss.
- Consider adding insulation to your attic and around duct work.



3 Insulate Attic Stairs Opening

Level of difficulty: moderate.

Supplies needed (*if you build the box yourself*)*:* rigid foam board, faced blanket insulation, tape for foam board, measuring tape, utility knife, caulk, caulk gun and plywood.

A properly insulated attic is one of the best ways to optimize energy savings and comfort in your home, but many homeowners don't consider insulating the attic stairs, or the opening to your attic space. Even a well-insulated attic can leak air through the stair opening, but luckily, there's an easy fix.

An insulated cover box can seal and insulate the attic stairs opening. You can build your own insulated cover box or purchase a pre-built box or kit from a local home improvement store like Home Depot or Lowe's. If you decide to build your own, check out these step-by-step instructions from the Department of Energy: **https://bit.ly/36YNCYQ**. It should also be noted, if your attic opening is located in a garage that you do not heat and cool, this upgrade will not be as effective.

Saving energy doesn't have to be hard. With a little time and effort, you can maximize energy savings and increase the comfort of your home.

Energy Efficiency

TIP OF THE MONTH

March is an ideal time to service your home cooling system, ensuring it runs efficiently when the heat of summer arrives. Routine maintenance, like cleaning or replacing filters, checking refrigerant levels and inspecting parts, can improve your system's energy efficiency and lower your energy bills. By addressing potential issues early, you can avoid costly emergency repairs and extend the lifespan of your unit. Scheduling service in the spring helps you beat the peak-season rush, giving you faster access to qualified technicians. A well-maintained cooling system can save energy and keep your home comfortable all summer long.

Source: energy.gov

Be Ready for Storm Season

Preparedness is the Best Defense

Spring is on our doorstep and many of us look forward to more opportunities to be outdoors and enjoy warmer weather. Springtime brings many activities like cooking out with family and friends, time spent working in the garden and simply slowing down a bit to enjoy life.

Unfortunately, spring and summer can also create the perfect conditions for severe storms.

Our crews here at Pitt & Greene EMC are always prepared and standing by to respond should power outages occur in our area. When severe storms cause power disruptions, our line crews take all necessary precautions before they get to work on any downed lines.

I would encourage you to also practice safety and preparedness to protect your family during storms and outages.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency recommends the items below as a starting point for storm and disaster preparedness, but you can visit **ready.gov** for additional resources.

- Stock your pantry with a three-day supply of non-perishable food, including canned goods, energy bars, peanut butter, powdered milk, instant coffee, water and other essentials (i.e., diapers and toiletries).
- Confirm that you have adequate sanitation and hygiene supplies including towelettes, soap and hand sanitizer.
- Ensure your First Aid kit is stocked with pain relievers, bandages and other medical essentials, and make sure your prescriptions are current.
- Set aside basic household items you will need, including flashlights, batteries, a manual can opener and portable, battery-powered radio or TV.
- Organize emergency supplies so they are easily accessible in one location.

In the event of a prolonged power outage, turn off major appliances, TVs, computers and other sensitive electronics. This will help avert damage from potential power surges and will also help prevent overloading circuits during power restoration. That said, do leave one light on so you will know when power is restored.

If you plan to use a portable generator, make sure it's rated to handle the amount of power you will need, and always review the manufacturer's instructions to operate it safely.

Listen to local news or a NOAA Weather Radio for storm and emergency information. Severe storms can occasionally bring down power lines. If you see a downed line, always assume it's energized and never approach it. If flooding occurs, never walk through areas where power lines could be submerged.

Advance planning for severe storms or other emergencies can reduce stress and anxiety caused by the weather event and lessen the impact of the storm's effects.

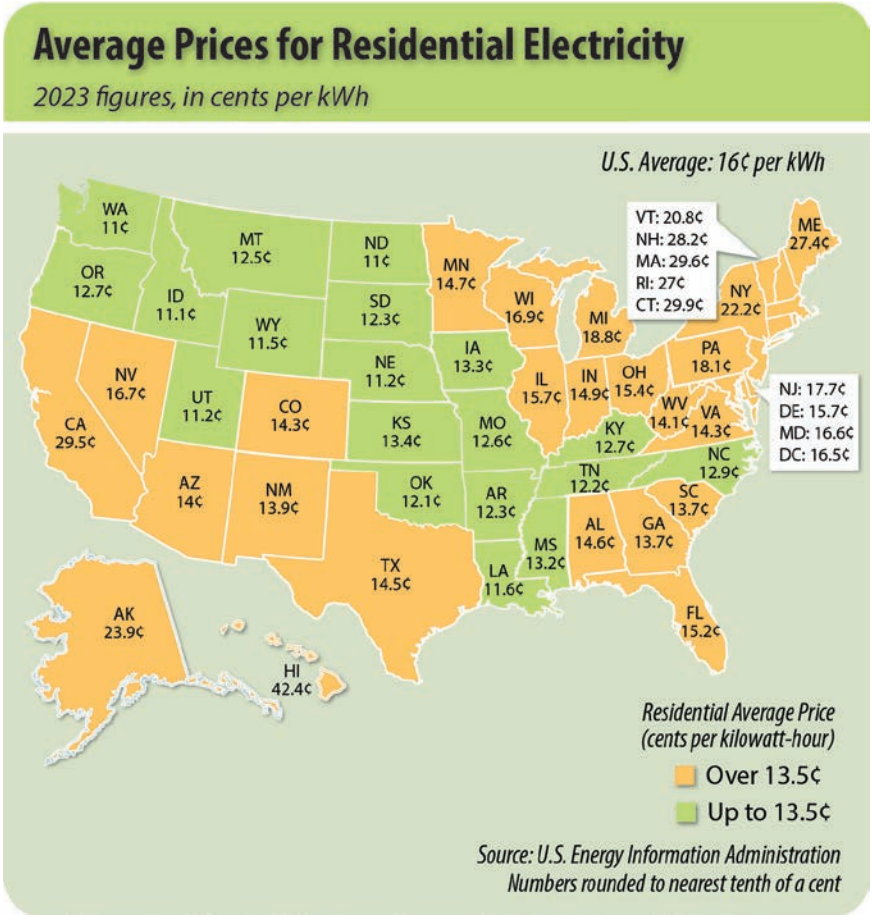
Signed up for Text Power?

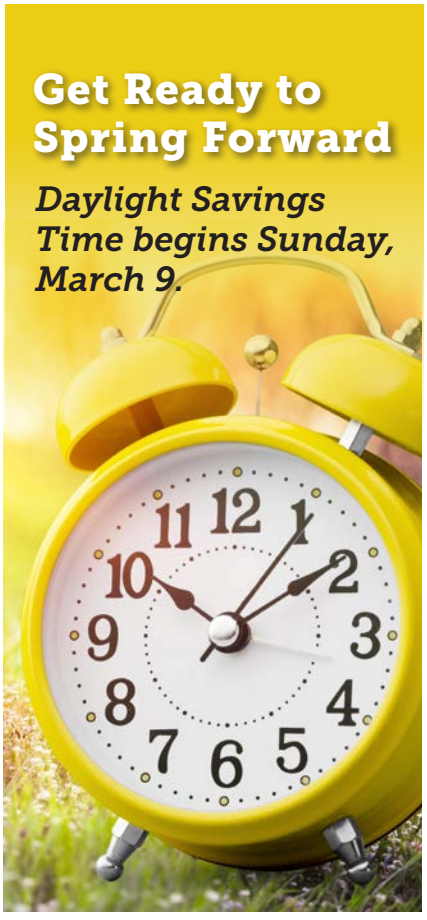
A vehicle accident Wednesday morning, Jan. 29, caused many of our members to wake up to no power. This truck was involved in an accident that caused it to strike one of our main poles, knocking out the power to those living on Hwy. 58 towards Lindell, Pope Farm Road, Bullhead Road and surrounding areas. It took our lineman several hours to make the necessary repairs.

Members who had signed up to receive text messages from us by Text Power messaging were notified of the situation and we were able to keep them updated on the expected time repairs would be completed.

If you have not signed up and want to receive notifications of what may be happing in your area, scan the QR Code or call our office and speak with a Customer Service Representative.

Text Power QR Code





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