

Bedford Rural Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

Bedford REC
P.O. Box 335
Bedford, PA 15522
814/623-5101

Email: support@bedfordrec.com
Website: www.bedfordrec.com

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OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday
7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

The value of electric cooperatives



by Brooks Shoemaker
General Manager

THERE ARE three main types of electricity providers in the United States.

Investor-owned utilities (IOUs) serve primarily densely populated areas. Municipal-owned utilities also serve densely populated cities from the very large, such as Los Angeles, to the very small, like Berlin, Pa.

Then, there are rural electric cooperatives like Bedford

Rural Electric that mostly serve sparsely populated parts of the country.

In the utility business, population matters — a lot. The costs to serve any given service area are similar. So, the more customers that you have, the more you can spread the costs. It keeps rates lower.

Municipal-owned utilities, which operate in cities and towns, have the greatest density — 48.3 customers per mile of line, generating an average of \$113,301 of revenue per mile of line. IOUs follow with 34 customers per mile of line, while generating average revenues of \$75,498 per mile of line. Finally, electric co-ops average 7.4 members (not customers, but members) per mile of line, bringing in an average of \$14,938 of revenue per mile.

If I were to give this data to any business school in the country and ask (based on this information) what the rates should be for each of the utilities, the answer would likely be that electric co-ops would have a rate 7.5 times greater than municipal-owned utilities and five times higher than IOUs, but that is not the case. Why not?

It has to do with the business model. IOUs are owned by outside investors who may or may not be users of the electric utility they own. These companies' stocks are traded on Wall Street, and those investors demand a return on their investment. This drives up the price that their customers pay. Many municipal sys-

tems charge rates that generate a “profit” for their cities to help pay for other services. At Bedford Rural Electric, we operate on a not-for-profit basis. Of course, we are a business and must generate enough revenue to cover costs (the largest being the purchase of wholesale power and maintaining and rebuilding our system). But most importantly, we don't have to charge inflated rates to satisfy outside stockholders.

Since our members are our owners, we can focus on our one and only job — providing safe, reliable, and affordable power to you. That is just another way your co-op brings you value.

Have a successful planting season rooted in safety

As the weather grows warmer, and farmers return to their fields, Bedford Rural Electric urges everyone in agricultural-related industries to be on alert to the dangers of working near overhead power lines. Operating large equipment near these lines is one of the often overlooked, yet potentially deadly, hazards of working on a farm. We recommend that everyone maintains a 10-foot minimum clearance from power lines.

Be aware of increased height when loading and transporting tractors on trailer beds. Many tractors now have tall antennas extending from the cab that could make contact with power lines. Avoid raising the arms of planters or cultivators near power lines, and never attempt to raise or move a power line to clear a path.

Simply working too close to a power line is dangerous as electricity can arc or “jump” to conducting objects, such as a ladder, pole or truck. Remember, non-metallic materials, such as lumber, tires, ropes, and hay, will conduct electricity depending on dampness, dust, and dirt contamination.

(continues on page 12d)

Make seasonal flowers from corn husks

BY LINDA WILLIAMS

AS YOU plant your garden this spring, throw in a few kernels of Indian corn. Then, save the husks and throughout the year, you can make flowers for any season.

Monique Ridet, a Bedford Rural Electric Cooperative member from Manns Choice, is an artist who wears many hats, as she spends time creating jewelry and mosaics, taking photographs, and raising orchids. She also uses corn husks to make flowers for wreaths and arrangements.

Monique, who is the current vice president of the Bedford County Garden Club, was asked to make an arrangement for the club's bi-annual Christmas Home Tour a couple of years ago.

"It was for the Golden Eagle Restaurant," she remembers. "The wallpaper in the room had flowers printed on it, and I got the idea of matching flowers made from corn husks. When I was finished, I arranged them in an antique sewing machine drawer to accentuate the Victorian look."



FINISHED PRODUCT: Monique Ridet sometimes looks for "treasures" to use for centers for her flowers at hobby stores, while other times she uses natural items she finds in yards and woods.



THIS IS HOW IT'S DONE: Monique Ridet shows one of the flowers she creates from a corn husk.

Her technique for making the flowers is entirely hers and she is not aware of anyone else doing anything similar with corn husks. Because of this, she is thinking of writing an instruction book this year.

"I find corn husks from Indian corn work best," she explains. "Corn husks from field corn or sweet corn are not flexible."

While she likes to raise her own corn, she notes it can be purchased from a farm market or store for later use. Indian corn husks come in various shades, from white to dark plum to brown.

Her supplies include corn cut from the husk, cuticle or embroidery scissors, several sizes of needle nose or jewelry pliers, a wire cutter, floral wire, crepe paper, duct tape, water soluble glue, some Styrofoam balls, a pencil, and a corn cob.

Her first step includes soaking the husk in water

with a few drops of dishwashing detergent for at least an hour to get rid of dirt and bugs. She then presses the wet husk in an old unused sketch book.

"I chose a sketch book because the pages are white," she says. "Newspaper or pages with print might rub off."

Placing a weight on top of the sketch book, she lets it set for several days. Once the husk is dry, she softens it by rubbing a corn cob over it. While the

"I don't really try to make my flowers look like real flowers. The book will show you how to make a rose or a hyacinth, but I prefer to have my flowers look like 'Monique' flowers. They are from my imagination."

husk is drying, she draws a pattern for her petals using tracing paper. She recommends a book titled, "Handmade Flowers from Paper and Fabric," a David & Charles Publishers craft book by Steve Biddle and Megumi Biddle.

"I learned a lot of the techniques



CLEANING IS IMPORTANT: Monique Ridet shows how she washes the corn husks in dishwashing detergent prior to beginning the flower making.

from this book," Monique says. "But, I don't really try to make my flowers look like real flowers. The book will show you how to make a rose or a hyacinth, but I prefer to have my flowers look like 'Monique' flowers. They are from my



EYE ON THE CENTER: Finding just the right material for the flower's center is an important part of the process.

imagination."

Once she decides on the pattern, she places it on the husk and cuts around it with the embroidery scissors. Monique usually creates her flowers using three sizes of petals. Each flower has about 18 petals. She curls the petals around a pencil.

"Make small, medium, and large petals," she continues.

Using a glue brush, she glues the different sizes of petals together to form a flower. Then, she clips them with a clothes pin and allows them to dry for two or three days.

"This is not a fast creation," she explains. "It can take two to three days to make one flower because you have to wait for it to dry. If you want to make an arrangement or a wreath, it will take several weeks."

Imagination can run rampant when it is time to arrange the petals around the pistil or center of the flowers.

Monique suggests studying various types of flowers and getting ideas from them. Some flowers have flat centers and some have pod type centers. She looks for various materials at hobby stores to create the type of flower she

wants. Since she loves jewels, she often dots the centers with them. Spray glitter makes a festive finishing touch.

When the flower is finished, she decides on a stem.

"You can use plain wire wrapped with floral tape or you can find natural sticks," she explains.

One of her favorites is a



THE ARTIST AND HER FLOWER: Monique Ridet displays a completed corn husk arrangement.

daylily stem as it dries in the fall. She has found tiny carpet tacks add to the aesthetic value of her husk flowers while

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at the same time they attach the petals to the center.

When she has an assortment of her creations, Monique puts them with greenery or dried materials to create an arrangement. Early spring-budding branches work well for spring arrangements.

Monique says you can make flowers from many things including fabric, but she finds the corn husks to be more challenging.

The Bedford County Garden Club takes a break from meetings in the winter, but resumed meetings in March. For more information on the club's activities, watch the local paper or contact Claire Leichter, president, or Monique. 🌻

FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

(continued from page 12a)

If your equipment does come into contact with power lines, stay in the cab and call for help. If the power line is energized and you step outside, your body becomes the path to the ground. Even if a line has landed on the ground, there is still potential for the area to be energized. Warn others who may be nearby to stay away and wait until help arrives.

If exiting the cab is absolutely necessary because of fire, the proper action is to jump — not step — with both feet together, hitting the ground at the same time. Do not allow any part of your body to touch the equipment and the ground at the same time.

Energy efficiency tip of the month

Summer is right around the corner. Have you changed your home's air filter? Filters get loaded with more and more particles as they do their job. This actually has the effect of making them more efficient, but it also increases resistance and reduces airflow. Remember to check filters once a month. ☀

Emergency Power Needs

As a service to our members, Bedford Rural Electric needs to be aware of situations where special needs exist. Please provide the following details:

(Please print clearly)

Account: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____

Cellphone: _____

Email Address: _____

Special Needs: Medical

Farming/Livestock

Other _____

Each year, our goal is to provide service with no outages. Unfortunately, that is not a realistic expectation. Outages do occur and during severe storms, service restoration may take several days or longer. Therefore, we strongly recommend that our members with special needs install standby backup generation equipment. Please contact our office for more information on this type of equipment.

Tree Planting Guide

50'
40'
30'
20'
10'
0

10' 20' 30' 40' 50' 60' 70'

NO TREE ZONE

Small Tree Zone: Trees less than 25' tall/spread at least 25' from lines.

Medium Tree Zone: Trees 25'-40' in height/spread at least 40' from lines.

Large Tree Zone: Plant trees larger than 40' in height/spread at least 60' from lines.

National Rural Electric Cooperative Association
A Division of The Electric Power Corporation

TROUBLE CALL SCHEDULE

In case of trouble ...

First Check your fuses or circuit breakers.

Second Check with your neighbors, if convenient, to see if they have been affected by the power failure.

Third **Call 24-hour number, 623-7568**
OR call 800/808-2732 during office hours

(Please help us save money - only use this number if toll charges apply.)

Please give person receiving call your name as it appears on your bill, your telephone number and your map number if known. Any specific information about the outage will also be helpful in pinpointing the problem.

Alternate numbers ...

- Dennis TursichWeek of April 6623-0922
- Scott ShookWeek of April 13623-2395
- Ed HankinsonWeek of April 20733-4005
- Scott BischofWeek of April 27839-4640
- Adam ClaycombWeek of May 4635-3376

In case you cannot reach any of the above ... Call:

- Jim Wood Bedford 623-6121
- James Clark Everett 652-9791
- Mark Rowan Bedford 623-7890

During widespread power outages, many members are calling to report power failures. You may receive a busy signal, or in certain cases your call may go unanswered. This occurs in after-hours outages when the office is not fully staffed. Please be patient, and try again in a few minutes.