

Live Lines

Woodbury County Rural Electric Cooperative

September 2011

Our Marching Orders: Affordable Power

Our nation's military is very impressive with its long-range planning and precision in carrying out its mission. But no matter how prepared they might be, the military can't make a move without marching orders from the top.

That is the bind that electric cooperatives are in right now. We excel at long-range planning—most of the power you use today was designed three or four decades ago. We stand at the ready with plans for new infrastructure, power plants, and innovative technologies to provide electricity for many decades in the future. But there's a problem—we're waiting on marching orders from our nation's leaders.

With a flurry of proposed regulations being discussed for power plants (and more to come), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has been following their own set of marching orders and deadlines set by the courts. However, what the final regulations will look like remains unclear. Co-ops need to know the rules—our marching orders—for power generation. As our appetite for electric power continues to grow, the need for power plants, additional transmission lines and local poles and wire also grows. But what type of facilities should they be that will make the most sense financially? Until the government provides more certainty, it is very difficult to plan for the next three decades.

Woodbury County RECs mission was set by you, our members, 73 years ago. You charged us to provide safe, reliable, and affordable power.

Where this power comes from impacts a sizable portion of your electric bill—roughly 50 percent of each dollar you pay us goes

to buying wholesale power. Bucket trucks, poles and wire, tree trimming, payroll, and other operating expenses are covered by the rest.

Although expensive, power plants and expanded transmission systems are an investment in a better future for all of us. We'll keep our ultimate mission at the forefront of our efforts as we work with Congress to get our marching orders and keep the lights on for the next 73 years. It's one more way we're looking out for you. For our children and grandchildren's sake, we need to make some tough decisions soon—and we need to get them right.



Special Notice!

By keeping the caulking around doors and windows in good condition, you may save up to \$50 per year on your energy bill. When purchasing a tube of caulking, look for one with silicone as part of the mix. It will stay more pliable during changing weather conditions and last longer.

“Americans are fully aware of the impact on their wallets. The Obama cap-and-trade agenda would cost our economy \$300 billion to \$400 billion annually. It would hurt families, business and farmers – basically anyone who drives a car and flips a light switch.” -- Sen. Jim Inhofe (R-OK) in an op-ed for USA Today. Inhofe is the senior Republican on the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

The Recipe Corner

Luscious Round Steak

2 1/2 – 3 lbs. tenderized round steak, cut into serving size pieces
1 medium onion, chopped
30 oz. can tomato juice
6 oz. can tomato paste
1 pkg. dry vegetable beef soup mix
1/2 tsp. basil
2-3 T. vegetable oil

Brown steak in vegetable oil in electric skillet. Mix and pour rest of ingredients over steak. Cover and let simmer at 200 degrees for 2 hours or simmer for 30 minutes and transfer to casserole dish and put in oven for 1 hour at 350 degrees.

How times have changed

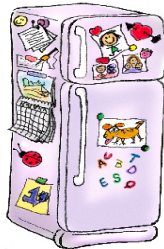
The first monthly newsletter for Woodbury County REC members was printed in April 1940. In that issue, an “Honor Roll” of members who used over 80 kilowatt hours per month was printed. Those were considered large electric users at the time. There were only 9 members listed.

Today, that 9 number would be closer for members who use less than 80 kilowatts per month. There are just a few pump services or electric fence services that would use that amount.

Another interesting subject, in that April 1940 newsletter, was the lead story on the front page. A new invention, “an electrically heated chicken brooder house” had just come on the market which was big news. The information said, “no more worrying about oil heaters going out and how convenient it was to just plug the house in.” Yes, times have changed. How many of you have even seen a chicken brooder house?

Appliance Recycling Program Available

The disposal of old unwanted freezers, refrigerators and window air-conditioners can sometimes be a problem. Woodbury County REC has a program available to help you recycle those appliances and give you a check in the process.



You could receive a check for \$25 just by recycling your old fridge, freezer or window A/C. The purpose of the recycling program is to remove old inefficient appliances from service thereby saving you dollars on your

energy bill each and every month. Additionally, there are rebate dollars available if you should purchase a new “Energy Star” rated appliance.

To qualify for the recycling program there are several requirements which must be met. One of those requirements is that the old refrigerator, freezer or window A/C must be in working condition. If you have an old appliance you want to dispose of, give the REC a call. We will be able to give you complete details of the recycling program as well as how to apply for a rebate on a new “Energy Star” qualified appliance.

Notice: If you're interested in having your monthly electric bill automatically withdrawn from your checking or savings account, please give the REC office a call. We will send you a form to fill out and return to the office along with a voided check from the account you want the payments taken from. This option is especially handy for snow birds and others who are gone from home for long periods of time.

With harvest approaching -



LOOK UP! BE CAREFUL!