The co-op commitment to affordable power

Each month, you budget for your phone, electricity, house and car payments. Generally you know how much each bill will cost and plan your spending accordingly. But what if you couldn't control your energy costs? What if, each month, they climbed beyond your reach?

At Pickwick Electric Cooperative, we strive to deliver affordable power to you every day. It's why electric cooperatives were created, and it's a commitment we plan to keep. But national energy legislation could force prices higher than many consumers can afford, effectively taking us back to the dawn of the 20th century.

Karl Dudley
President
Pickwick Electric Cooperative
kdudley@pickwick-electric.com

In the 1920s and early '30s, central station electric service was a luxury that only 10 percent of rural residents nationwide enjoyed — and those who had power paid dearly for it. When Franklin D. Roosevelt visited Warm Springs, Ga., in 1924, he was dismayed to find electricity for his small cottage cost four times what it did at his estate in New York. After being elected president, he created the federal Rural Electrification Administration by executive order to make power affordable for all Americans. As a result, electric co-ops were born.

Innovations in line-building pioneered by co-op engineers and the competitive pressure co-ops placed on investor-owned utilities to serve rural areas slashed the cost of providing electric service in the countryside. In the decades since, co-ops have established a proven track record of offering stable and affordable electric rates. Data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration, in fact, shows that in this past decade, co-op electric rates have consistently run lower than the industry average. This is further proof that we're committed to keeping electricity bills within your means.

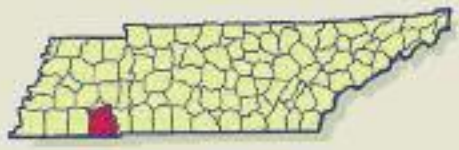
But the struggle for affordable power that farmers and their neighbors fought three-quarters of a century ago has flared up again. Unless a large dose of common sense prevails in Washington, new regulations on energy production could cause the cost of electricity to be too expensive for rural America.

Electric cooperatives are needed once again to make sure affordable power will be available in the future. Our job, on your behalf, is to work closely with Congress to find the best solutions for addressing climate change while keeping the price of electricity within your means.

Pickwick Electric Cooperative remains committed to providing you with safe, reliable and affordable energy.

Pickwick Electric Cooperative

Serving members in all of McNairy County and portions of Chester, Hardeman and Hardin counties in Tennessee and Alcorn and Tishomingo counties in Mississippi.



530 Mulberry Ave.

P.O. Box 49

Selmer, TN 38375

Phone Numbers:

731-645-3411

731-632-3333

1-800-372-8258

Web site:
www.pickwick-electric.com

These five pages contain local news and information for members of Pickwick Electric Cooperative.

PEC offers engineering and technical assistance

Pickwick Electric Cooperative offers its commercial and industrial customers engineering and technical assistance through the Comprehensive Services Program (CSP) provided by the Tennessee Valley Authority. CSP covers all areas of energy use and includes these services:

- **Power Quality** — Studies address voltage problems originating inside or outside the facility that adversely affect the end-user.
- **Metering** — We install temporary metering equipment to gather data on facility electrical use.
- **Energy audits** — General survey of energy use in a facility is taken and metering and recommendations are given to correct for low power factor.
- **Power factor grounding/lightning** — Grounding study, grounding testing and lightning-protection recommendations.
- **Demand-side management** — Monitoring and testing electrical systems and recommendations related to managing peak demand, energy management opportunities, process and facility improvements.
- **Water Heating** — Studies explore heat pump water-heater applications, standard energy-efficient water heaters and cost comparisons of electric versus fossil-fuel systems.

Brian Smith, TVA power utilization engineer, performs an infrared scan at Monogram Refrigeration in Selmer.

- **HVAC** — Heating, ventilation and air-conditioning studies examine the sizing of system comparisons, investigate problems with existing systems and provide recommendations for improvement.
- **Lighting** — Studies provide recommendations for the design of lighting systems in such places as sports fields, roadways, parking lots and commercial and industrial plants.
- **Wiring and electrical distribution equipment** — Studies analyze the facility's distribution system, including the sizing of wiring and equipment, and provide recommendations for system improvement.
- **Infrared scans** — Infrared scans of electrical equipment such as transformers, breakers and bus and conductor connections for hot spots as well as scans for facility heating and cooling loss.
- **Ultrasonic testing** — Ultrasound technology can locate compressed air leaks caused by vibration, holes in hoses, loose joints and cracks.

These services are available at no cost to our commercial and industrial customers. For more information about this program, please call the PEC office at 731-645-3411.

Energy Efficiency
Tip of the Month

Use a programmable thermostat to vary your home's temperature based on your schedule. Lower your thermostat when you're not home or at night to save as much as 10 percent on heating and cooling costs!

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

What's going on with CFLs and mercury?

By Jennifer Taylor, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

Sitting in my home surfing the Internet one rainy afternoon, I came across an article about mercury in compact fluorescent light bulbs. Since several of my lamps and light fixtures have CFLs, I wanted to know, "What's going on with them and mercury?"

CFLs save money, use less electricity and help promote energy efficiency. But what if a bulb breaks or burns out? I can easily picture my manic feline, Otis the cat, turning a lamp over and breaking the CFL. Is the amount of mercury in the bulb harmful? How would I clean it up safely? After a quick switch to the Environmental Protection Agency's Web site, I learned there are no serious concerns.

CFL with the Energy Star Label.

How do you clean up a broken CFL?

According to the EPA, the greatest risk if a bulb breaks is getting cut from the glass shards. Research indicates that there is no immediate health risk to people should a bulb break if it is cleaned up properly:

- Sweep up, do not vacuum, the glass fragments and particles.
- Place the broken pieces in a sealed plastic bag and wipe the area with a damp paper towel to pick up any remaining stray shards or particles. Put the paper towel in the sealed plastic bag when you are finished.
- If weather permits, open the windows and ventilate the room.

What should you do with a CFL when it burns out?

Like paint, batteries, thermostats and other hazardous items, CFLs should be disposed of properly. The EPA is working with CFL manufacturers and U.S. retailers to expand disposal options. You can search for disposal options online by using your ZIP code at www.earth911.com, calling 877-EARTH-911 or visiting www.lamprecycle.org

Also, check with your local waste management agency. If a disposal site is not available in your area, the EPA suggests placing the burned-out or broken bulb in a plastic bag, which should be sealed before being placed in the trash. Never send a CFL or other mercury-containing product to an incinerator.

The benefits of CFLs greatly outweigh the risks. "There is only a very small amount of mercury in CFLs, hardly enough to worry about," said Jim Stine, senior principal of the Environmental Policy Department for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. "On average, the bulbs contain 5 milligrams of mercury. Compare that to 3,000 milligrams of mercury in older thermostats and 500 milligrams of mercury in a mercury thermometer." Switching from traditional light bulbs to CFLs is an effective, accessible change every American can make to save energy and help the environment.

Holiday closing

The Pickwick Electric Cooperative office will be closed Friday, April 10, in observance of Good Friday. Should you have an emergency, we will have standby crews available. We can be reached by calling 645-3411, 632-3333 or 1-800-372-8258. Have a safe and enjoyable holiday.

Pickwick Electric Cooperative pays its share of taxes

Steve King, right, presents a check in the amount of $429,811 to Stanley Mitchell, McNairy County trustee, for PEC's county ad valorem taxes. PEC is the largest taxpayer in the county.

Like most property owners in Tennessee, Pickwick Electric Cooperative also pays taxes. Since PEC provides electric service to counties and towns located within its service area, the cooperative is required to pay ad valorem taxes to local governments.

Providing dependable electric service requires large investments in materials and equipment. Although the property on which cooperative poles are located belongs to our members, we do own the poles, wire, transformers and other related equipment. This is what our taxes are based on.

Last year the cooperative paid $597,404.61 in taxes. These local taxes are based on assessments by the Public Service Commission and are paid to McNairy, Chester, Hardeman, and Hardin counties and to the towns of Adamsville, Bethel Springs and Selmer.

Below is the amount of ad valorem taxes paid to each county and town:

Chester County	**$ 8,221.00**
Hardeman County	**494.00**
Hardin County	**89,918.00**
McNairy County	**429,811.00**
Adamsville	**9,941.89**
Bethel Springs	**1,763.72**
Selmer	**57,255.00**

Watch out for electrical hazards on the farm

Those who live on a farm know that not only is it hard work, but it can be dangerous, too. Each year, some farmers are electrocuted when large farm machinery comes into contact with overhead power lines.

Often, the situation occurs because a newer, bigger piece of equipment no longer clears a line the way a smaller one did. In addition, shifting soil may also affect whether machinery avoids power lines from year to year.

The following tips will help keep everyone on a farm safe:

- Look over work areas carefully for overhead power lines and utility poles.
- Make sure you have ample clearance when moving large machinery such as combines, grain augers, pickers, balers, and front-end loaders. Do this every year as equipment sizes or soil conditions may change.
- Store large equipment properly if near or under power lines. When planning new construction, factor in existing power lines.
- Be extra careful when working around trees and brush; they often make it difficult to see power lines.
- Train all farm workers to keep an eye out for overhead power lines.

If you have any questions about electrical safety in your home or on your farm, call Pickwick Electric Cooperative.

A handful of quarters could help change the world. Join TVA and your local power company as they work to create clean, green sources of renewable energy by harnessing the power of the earth, sun and wind. To learn how you can sign up for the Green Power Switch program, call the Pickwick Electric Cooperative at (731)645-3411 or visit **www.greenpowerswitch.com.**

Environmental equivalency is based on purchase of two blocks of green power per month for a year.