

Sullivan County Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

SULLIVAN COUNTY REC

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****Board Leadership Certificate**

*****Director Gold Certificate**

OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday
7 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

COOPERATIVE CONNECTION

Tackling Energy Vampires in Our Homes



JOHN LYKENS

OCTOBER IS BY FAR ONE of my favorite months of the year. The unrelenting heat and humidity of the summer transitions to cooler fall temperatures. Our forests become a canvas for priceless masterpieces as vibrant combinations of yellow, fire-orange, and crimson leaves paint beautiful murals on the hillsides.

Plus, the harvest is coming to an end, hunting season is just beginning, and ghosts and goblins will be taking to the streets on the last day of the month.

Did you realize another type of goblin — an energy goblin — is lurking in our homes and businesses, gobbling up kilowatts? Also known as energy vampires, these devices and appliances quietly and stealthily consume electricity even when they're switched off or are in standby mode.

Common culprits include plugged-in phone chargers, cable boxes, coffee makers, gaming consoles, TVs, computers and printers. And that tiny red light on your TV? That's the glow of an energy vampire at work. (Learn more about these vampires on page 18D.)

Individually, the cost may seem small — just a few cents a day — but across your home, month after month, it adds up. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, energy vampires can account for up to 10% of your home's electricity use. For some members, that's like paying an extra month's bill every year for electricity that never produced any benefit to you.

The good news is you have the power to fight back. Here are a few useful tips to save money:

- ▶ **Unplug chargers** (for cellphones, battery-operated tools, etc.) when not in use. They use power even if a device is not attached to them.
- ▶ **Use power strips** for entertainment systems, office equipment, computers, TVs, printers and coffee makers, and turn the strip off when you're done.
- ▶ **Smart plugs are good alternatives to power strips.** Use smart plugs for entertainment systems, office equipment, computers, TVs, printers, and coffee makers, and turn them off with a bluetooth device. Better yet, program the smart plug to shut off when you're sleeping or not at home and then to turn it back on when you are awake and at home.
- ▶ **Choose Energy Star® appliances**, which are designed to minimize standby power.
- ▶ **Enable sleep modes** on computers and gaming systems.

These simple steps can help you protect your wallet and the planet by reducing demand on the grid.

The cost of nearly everything — electricity included — is increasing every year. By finding ways to use less, you will curb the impact these increases have on your budget. Remember: Your cooperative is here to help you, our members, conserve energy and keep more of your hard-earned dollars in your wallet.

To speak with a cooperative employee about additional energy-saving tips, call our office Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. We are happy to serve you in the best way possible. Cooperatively, we can find ways to sustainably consume electricity as efficiently and affordably as possible for decades to come. Semper Fidelis! 🇺🇸

JOHN LYKENS
CEO

Everhart & Hoover Crews Begin Large-Scale Projects at SCREC

SARAH PARRISH, COOPERATIVE COMMUNICATOR

EVERYONE RECOGNIZES OUR TRUCKS WITH the signature green ball and “Sullivan REC” on them. But for the past few months, members have probably seen just as many white and orange trucks working on our electric lines and replacing poles.

Everhart & Hoover Power Line Construction, Inc. was contracted by Sullivan County Rural Electric Cooperative (SCREC) to work on two massive projects: one, a three-phase rebuild and relocation along Route 87 between Forksville and Hillsgrove; and the other, a pole replacement effort to ensure proper overhead clearances are maintained for communication attachments.

ALL PHOTOS BY SARAH PARRISH



NEW VS. OLD: The cooperative's new three-phase line (left) will be accessible from Route 87. The old line (right) ran off the road through woods, rocky terrain, valleys, and over cliffs.



ALL CLEAR HERE: Before the start of the three-phase project, contracted crews from Spako's Tree Service cleared the right of way along Route 87, south of Forksville.

A new three-phase line

The Hustontown-based company began the three-phase project in July. This particular section of line was built in the 1940s as a single phase and was later upgraded to a three-phase feed in the 1950s. These days, that feed can't keep up with our members' larger load demand and it's unable to backfeed for long distances. The new three-phase distribution line will allow us to distribute electricity farther and handle additional load.

Comparing old with new, the old three-phase line has wooden crossarms, small diameter poles and porcelain insulators. In addition, the power line is smaller than the diameter of a pencil. The new line will have fiberglass crossarms, which resist rot and decay, stronger and taller poles, and polymer insulators that don't crack, break, or chip and are resistant to UV rays. In addition, the new line is approximately a half-inch in diameter.

The new line is also being relocated for easier accessibility. Most of the old line is off-road, and the steep, rocky terrain makes it inaccessible to bucket trucks and difficult to access on foot.

When lineworkers have to hike the right of way while hauling gear and then climb poles, it greatly increases outage restoration time. With the new line relocated along Route 87, lineworkers will be able to patrol the line from the road. They will also be able to access lines and equipment with bucket trucks, which will significantly cut outage times.

MAKING PROGRESS: Below, Everhart & Hoover crews set the new, larger three-phase line poles. Notice the fiberglass crossarms and polymer insulators.





GETTING READY: Crews from Everhart & Hoover started unloading replacement poles at job sites in late August. The replacement project will take months to complete.

The project began with our contracted tree crew, Spako's Tree Service, clearing the new right of way along the road. This couldn't have been done without the generosity of our members who granted us the right of way along Route 87 to relocate the line.

Following this and PA-1 Calls (811 Before You Dig) to check for underground facilities, Everhart & Hoover began setting and framing the new three-phase poles. Once the poles are set and anchors are placed to support angles, their crews will string new power line. Eventually, crews will coordinate switching members from the old three-phase line to the new line. This includes building new service drops to members if necessary and upgrading preexisting equipment.

"I'd like to thank our members in advance for their cooperation during this project — especially when it comes to power interruptions while switching their power delivery," Operations Assistant Jeff Spako says.

In all, the project took more than a year to plan, but the wait and hard work will be worth it in the long run. In addition to benefiting members along the three-phase line, it will help members in the Rose Valley, Barbours, Proctor, Loyalsockville, and Mill Creek areas by allowing us to backfeed electricity during outages.

Pole replacements

That brings us to the second massive project under way: Everhart & Hoover crews replacing poles throughout our service territory.

Our poles were originally placed to only support our lines. Since our co-op's incorporation in 1936, the development of communications (telephone, internet, fiber, and TV) has become an everyday part of life. While some companies attach their lines to their own poles, others attach their communications lines to our poles.

For a communications company to attach to our poles, they must first submit an application for attachment. Once received, each affected pole is inspected to make sure it meets the National Electrical Safety Code specifications for line clearance.

Upon verification that the pole can meet all clearances, the company receives the go-ahead to attach its lines. If, however,



HEIGHT DIFFERENCE: To ensure adequate clearance, communications companies are paying to replace co-op poles so they can safely attach communications lines. This new pole on the right is much taller than the old pole installed in the 1940s.



UP TO CODE: All line clearances must meet standards established by the National Electrical Safety Code. Clearances vary based on where the line spans.

it's determined the pole can't meet the clearance standards, the company must pay to install a new pole. These pole replacements are done at no cost to the cooperative, which also receives revenue from pole rental fees.

In the last year, a number of communications companies have requested to attach to our poles. As a result, approximately 100 poles will need to be replaced. Because we are a small cooperative, we don't have the manpower to perform the work on top of our daily responsibilities.

Beginning in August, Everhart & Hoover began replacing poles. You'll find their workers scattered throughout our service territory, from Overton to Huntersville and Estella to Rose Valley. We would like to thank our members once again for their cooperation with these extra crews.

There's a saying — "It takes a village to raise a child" — but it also takes a village to ensure our 900 miles of electric line and equipment can deliver power to our members as safely and reliably as possible. Our village of employees, directors, members, and contracted crews have helped SCREC expand and implement new technology over the last 89 years. 🏡

The Principles of Co-op Membership

Cooperative Principle 5: Education, Training and Information

A Monthly Spotlight

SARAH PARRISH, COOPERATIVE COMMUNICATOR

THE ELECTRIC INDUSTRY IS CONSTANTLY evolving; just think of the technological advances we've made since our co-op was first incorporated in 1936.

To stay up to date with the most recent safety procedures, policies and regulations, cost increases, and infrastructure advancements, Sullivan County Rural Electric Cooperative's (SCREC) employees and directors routinely continue their education aimed at better performing their jobs and ensuring everyone's safety.

Continuing to learn and staying abreast of changes in the electric industry is a core cooperative principle.

The fifth cooperative principle, "Education, Training, and Information," is defined by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association as "education and training for members, elected representatives (directors), CEOs, and employees to help them effectively contribute to the development of their cooperatives. Communications about the nature and benefits of cooperatives, particularly with the general public and opinion leaders, help boost cooperative understanding."

Perhaps the most important part of that statement is educating and relaying information to the public. At SCREC, safety is our No. 1 priority. Of course, our lineworkers go through rigorous training to ensure their safety, but as employees and directors of the cooperative, it's our duty to educate our members and the public on electrical safety, too.

SCREC employees regularly visit elementary schools, summer camps, county fairs, annual meetings, and other events to share safety tips. Electrical safety information is also available on

our website, screc.com, on our social media pages (search "Sullivan County Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc." on Facebook and "sullivancountyrec" on Instagram), in our monthly bill message, and in *Penn Lines*.

Whether it's learning about the latest energy policy changes in Washington, D.C., practicing pole top rescues, or studying how to implement supervisory control and data acquisition systems in our substations, each and every employee and director at SCREC continues to learn so they can better serve the co-op and you, our members. 🦋

