

Sage advice from a grandfather

I know Ellie was much too young to absorb the recent “remember who you are and whose you are” talk I had with her, but something going on in our cooperative was weighing heavy on my heart. So much so, that I have decided to go public with my sage advice to her.

Things that matter

When you get to be my age, you learn that material things can be very easily replaced, and it’s the things that can’t be replaced that you should protect and guard at all costs. Those things include your name, your family and your health. All are of equal importance in my book.

We all protect our families to the best of our ability, and we know, regardless of whether or not we take action, how to pretty much guard our health. It’s our good names that sometimes require the most thought

and careful protection. It’s sometimes the slightest little thing that can have a negative impact.

The plain truth

One of the biggest things that can have an impact on your name these days is your credit record. Establishing and maintaining a good credit history can be a tremendous benefit. You can borrow money when you want or need to do so; you can get a better rate when you’re shopping for a loan and you get special consideration when a service provider determines whether or not a deposit is necessary for you to establish an account.

Horry Electric is just one of many service providers that run a credit check prior to opening up an account with an individual. The credit score determines the deposit amount that will be required before service is connected.

Electricity is something you pay for after you’ve used it. A security deposit is required to cover the risk we take by serving someone who doesn’t have such a good credit record. It also protects the best financial interest of the cooperative and its members.

Not an easy job

One of the worst jobs at the cooperative is the one that involves disconnecting a service for non-payment. We practically bend over backward so we don’t have to do it, but we still end up disconnecting an average of 50 a day. The rest of the nearly 250 names that appear on the average disconnect list printed each day have scrambled around and paid the amount due and the late charges to avoid disconnection and all of the fees, charges and additional deposits that are frequently required.

Here’s your sign

A “better late than never” attitude applies to some situations in life, but not with credit. Late payments cost money. For the person who pays late, the cost comes in penalties, late fees and the negative impact on credit history. For the company waiting for the payment, it takes time and money to generate late notices, disconnect notices and reminder phone calls. Physically sending someone out in the field to disconnect service, which is the very last resort, is also expensive and only



James P. “Pat” Howle,
CEO and Executive
Vice President

adds to the final amount that has to be paid before service can be reconnected.

Sage advice

“Always remember who you are and whose you are” is something my parents would say to me whenever I was going to be out from under their watchful eye. It wasn’t that they expected me to get into trouble; they wanted to make sure I didn’t. Remembering whose you are and what will happen if you get into trouble is pretty powerful when you’re a kid.

The “remember who you are” part of their advice to me is what finally led me to the realization of the things that matter most in life — your name, your family and your health. It’s the “and whose you are” part that struck a chord with me in relation to disconnects.

My parents taught me to be self-sufficient and independent. At the same time, they taught me there is no shame in asking for help as long as you’ve made a genuine attempt on your own first and that you ask for assistance long before you get in over your head.

The fees, charges and steps we have in place before we resort to disconnection are intended to encourage good payment practices and discourage actions that will negatively impact the credit history on an account. In addition, we keep a list of local social service agencies on hand for members to contact for possible assistance. I’m sharing my sage advice with Ellie because I’m her grandfather. I’m sharing these thoughts with you, because, at an electric cooperative, we have a commitment to our community, and we want you to remember who you are and whose you are.

James P. “Pat” Howle

Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner
The power of human connections



P.O. Box 119

Conway, SC 29528-0119

Conway Off ce: 369-2211

Socastee Off ce: 650-7530



(to report power outages only)

369-2212

Johnny M. Shelley
President

James P. “Pat” Howle
Executive Vice President and CEO

Eugene Harriott Jr.
Vice President

Ashley Anderson
Secretary/Treasurer

Franklin C. Blanton
Marcus E. Gerald
Ben P. Harrelson

Henry W. Boyd
Elaine D. Gorde
Bobby E. Jordan

Newsletter Editor

Penelope D. Hinson
(843) 369-6333

penelope.hinson@horryelectric.com

Energy-smart member opts for top of line in water heaters

Linda Dean knows all about energy efficiency. As owner of several rental properties in Myrtle Beach, the Horry Electric Cooperative member says she is “very conscious” of the importance of adequate insulation, efficient heating and cooling systems, and good ductwork.

“Bad ductwork can cost you high dollars in a heartbeat,” she notes. To head off problems, she notes, “Just in the last three years, I have replaced my ductwork in all of my properties.” She has also had energy-efficient HVAC systems installed. One of her rentals even has insulated windows.

Aside from home heating and cooling, water heating is another major factor in most people’s energy bills. Dean is ahead of the game there, too.

Co-op goes the distance

Earlier this year she purchased, for her own residence, what’s often billed as “the most energy-efficient water heater you can buy.” She bought an 85-gallon water heater by Marathon, which is not widely available in “big box” home improvement stores. Her electric cooperative helped her get the Marathon.

Almost all of the electric co-ops in South Carolina, including Horry Electric, now have access to the Marathon units through their utility distributor, CEE-US (Cooperative Electric Energy Utility Supply). Members can just call Horry Electric to arrange a delivery to the co-op.

No rusting and busting

Dean had consulted with Horry Electric’s Senior Marketing/Energy Management Rep, Ricky Lowder, about replacing her water heater. Her old steel-tank unit, purchased in the early ’90s, was still working, but Dean was ready to upgrade. “I didn’t want to wait until I needed to change it,” she says. In her rental properties, she’s seen the damage a rusted and busted water heater can cause.

Another factor was relatively poor water quality in the area where she resides. Dean



Linda Dean, an Horry Electric member in Myrtle Beach, with a cutaway model of a Marathon water heater. This display represents a model that would hold just 15 gallons, but it does show the amount of insulation in a Marathon. Dean purchased an 85-gallon Marathon for her home. “It’s the greatest,” she says. “I’ve been very pleased.”

Water Allread

wanted “something that wouldn’t rust,” and Marathon fits the bill. A Marathon water heater also won’t produce the rotten egg smell caused by anode rods found in conventional steel heaters.

“It’s the greatest,” Dean says. “I’ve been very pleased.”

She had a separate shed built behind her home to house the unit. The shed itself is well insulated and designed for easy access to the unit. It’s unlikely she’ll need to access the Marathon, however. Marathon guarantees that their seamless polybutylene tanks will never rust, corrode or leak. Marathons come with a lifetime warranty.

The company, established in 1989, is now part of the Rheem family. Marathons are thickly insulated. The company says it’s had consumers report still having warm water five or six days after storms had knocked down power lines in their area. Marathon-heated water will only lose about 5 degrees in 24 hours, the company says.

In Marathon water heaters, the inner tank is designed in a test-tube shape with a domed

top and bottom. The outer shell of the water heater is made of tough polyethylene, similar to a garbage can. The wide gap between the tank and the shell is filled with thick foam insulation. With the test-tube shape, there is extra insulation thickness at the top where the water is hottest.

Energy Experts ‘good to know’

Like many products and appliances that are super-energy efficient, Marathons cost more upfront than standard water heaters. The payback comes in lower energy costs over their lifetime — which is almost endless, the company says. As Marathon advertises, their water heaters “save money because you’ll never have to buy another water heater.”

Dean adds that Lowder, one of Horry Electric’s Energy Experts, has been super helpful in advising her of energy-related questions. He is one of three energy management specialists available to assist all co-op members. As Dean says, “He’s a good person to know like that.” †



A cure for flashing

Usually, blinking appliance clocks are a result of momentary outages that occur when there's a disturbance of some kind on the line. It could be a lightning strike, an automobile hitting a pole or a squirrel or tree branch coming in contact with an energized power line.

Actually, when lights blink, it is an indication that Horry Electric's equipment is working the way it should to protect power lines from damage.

To prevent the flashing "12:00" problem, look for appliances with built-in battery back-up. Battery back-ups are not designed to keep the unit operating during an outage, but it will preserve the memory and settings so they will still be there when the power comes back on.

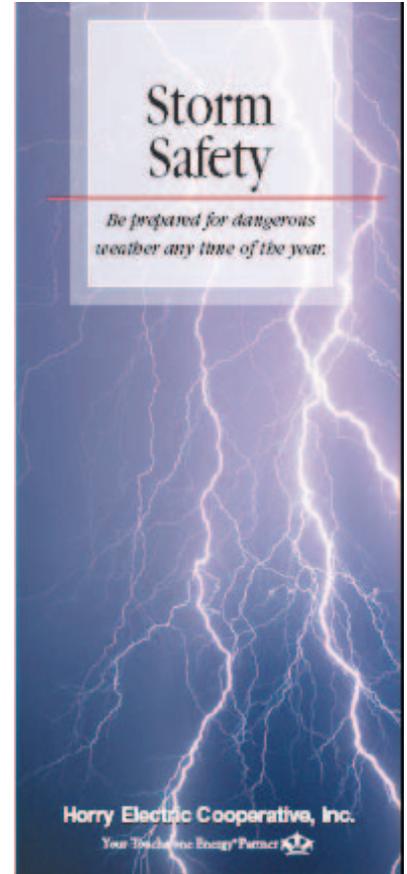
Do you have our newest storm safety brochure?

Storms can pop up just about any time of year, causing power outages and creating potential safety issues.

If you don't want weather-related outages to leave you totally powerless, pick up a copy of our newest storm safety brochure.

You can access the brochure on our Web site at horryelectric.com or stop by our main office in Conway or our Socastee location. Copies are also available at our counter in the Horry Telephone Cooperative office located on Highway 9 in Longs. †

The storm safety brochure is one of the many informational materials available to member/owners of Horry Electric Cooperative.



Did you know...

The cost of a Sunday newspaper is approximately the same price as providing electricity to the average home for eight hours?

Electricity, a good value.



Small change, changes lives

Imagine the opportunity to help the less fortunate in our community with what amounts to little more than spare change. That's exactly what members of Horry Electric Cooperative do when they choose to participate in the Operation Round Up® Program.

What is Operation Round Up?

Members of Horry Electric Cooperative have the opportunity to participate in an innovative program that provides funding for all kinds of worthy projects here in Horry County. It's called Operation Round Up, and it is administered by the Horry Electric Trust, a board of community leaders from Horry County who serve on a voluntary basis.

The bills of participating co-op consumers are rounded to the next-highest dollar each month. The extra cents we collect from each consumer go into the Round Up fund. The average consumer will contribute about six dollars a year. If all Horry Electric consumers join in, we will round up nearly \$300,000 annually!

Operation Round Up funds stay right here in Horry County. The guidelines we use for awarding Operation Round Up funds address needs for food, shelter, clothing, education, health care and other vital community services. Because we're a Touchstone Energy® Partner, we believe it's only right that we should work for positive change within the communities we serve. We consider it both a duty and a privilege to join with our members in leveraging the real power — the power of human connections — for the good of all.

Contributions to Operation Round Up are tax deductible.†



Yes, I want to sign up for Operation Round Up.

NAME (ON ACCOUNT): _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

ACCOUNT NUMBER: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

Return by mail to HEC, P .O. Box 119, Conway , SC 29528-0119 or drop off at Horry Electric Cooperative's Conway office (2774 Cultra Road).

For more information about Operation Round Up, call your local Horry Electric Cooperative Office:

Conway: (843) 369-2211
 Socastee: (843) 650-7530
 Little River: (843) 399-8444
www.horryelectric.com

The Touchstone Energy® symbol is your assurance that we're a community-minded cooperative providing high standards of service to customers large and small.

What's going on with compact fluorescent light bulbs, mercury?

By Jennifer Taylor

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 were no serious concerns.

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 earth911.com, calling (877) EARTH-911 or visiting 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, Environmental Policy Department for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. "On average, the bulbs contain five 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. †



A CFL from Energy Star

Walter Allread

Jennifer Taylor writes on co-op and consumer issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

Watch for signs of electrical system overload

Increased electrical use during hot summer weather increases the risk of fires in homes with older or damaged wiring systems. Summertime necessities, such as air conditioning, can strain and overload an electrical system, creating a serious shock and fire hazard.



An old fuse panel

"Nationwide, an estimated 50 million older homes and buildings with outdated electrical wiring and systems are at greater risk of dangerous deterioration and becoming overloaded," says Safe Electricity Director Molly Hall.

The wiring of many homes is not equipped to properly handle and support today's increased electrical demands. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), more than half of all homes in the United States are at least 30 years old. The wiring in many of these older homes was designed to handle only about half of the electrical demands of today's residents.

"Overloaded electrical circuits, and faulty equipment and wiring can cause not only inconvenient power outages, but hazardous conditions that could result in injury, or even death," says Hall.

Watch for these warning signs. If you have any of these present, you should have your home inspected by a professional:

- Lights often flicker, blink or dim momentarily
- Circuit breakers trip or fuses blow often
- Cords or wall plates are warm to the touch



or discolored

- Crackling, sizzling or buzzing is heard from outlets

A home electrical inspection to find and correct hidden hazards could prevent many of these tragedies. The time and investment in having a qualified electrician check your residence, and perform a few home repairs and upgrades are small compared with the protection and safety they provide to your family and home.

No matter the season or age of homes, residents should be vigilant and check for electrical hazards such as cracked or fraying electrical cords, overloaded outlets and circuits, and improper wattage light bulbs in lamps and light fixtures. Also, make sure smoke alarms are placed and functioning properly. †

© Safe Electricity, All Rights Reserved

USE PowerTouch

to get in touch...

PowerTouch from Horry Electric Cooperative is the best way to help us get your lights back on even quicker.

This outage management system lets you easily report an outage from your home telephone, or from another location by entering your meter or account number.

Important: We **MUST** have your **up-to-date telephone number** where you receive service for PowerTouch to work most effectively.

Please fill out the attached form, mail in with your payment or drop off at your nearest co-op office.

Now use **PowerTouch** to get in touch at
369-2212

Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 



My Up-To-Date Phone Number and Service Address.

Account Name _____

Street Address _____

(Where You Receive Service - No P.O. Boxes Please)

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number _____

(At This Address)

E-Mail Address _____

Your Co-op Account Number _____ Date _____