

**Northwestern  
Rural Electric  
Cooperative  
Association, Inc.**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

Northwestern REC  
P.O. Box 207  
22534 State Highway 86  
Cambridge Springs, PA 16403  
Home Page:

<http://www.northwesternrec.coop>

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**Billing/Moves/Credit/Consumer Services**  
1-800-352-0014  
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**Emergencies/Outages**  
1-800-474-1710  
**Administration/General**  
1-800-472-7910  
FAX  
814/398-8064

**OFFICE HOURS**

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

Mary Mulligan-Haines, Editor

FROM THE MANAGER & CEO

**A new year – A new work plan**



by Michael D. Tirpak  
General Manager & CEO

**MISSION STATEMENT:**

“Northwestern Rural Electric Cooperative, as a member-owned electric service utility, will seek innovative ways to provide reliable and economical services to improve the overall quality of life in our areas of influence.”

In the new year of 2008, the member-owners of Northwestern REC will

have some important opportunities to meet with their board of directors and management to discuss their cooperative and its plans for the present and the future. If you are a member of Northwestern, please mark your calendars for mid-April (the exact dates will be coming soon) to attend the Spring Member Resource Meetings held in about five locations throughout our service territory. Also, mark your calendars for Saturday, Aug. 2, 2008, to attend the co-op’s 72nd annual meeting at the Crawford County fairgrounds.

Reliability is a continuing major initiative for 2008. We will continue to replace old distribution lines with new poles, conductor and hardware, and try to locate these lines closer to the public roads. We have seen a reduction in the number and duration of electric outages in areas where we have completed our system improvements. In 2008 we plan to rebuild approximately 58 miles of lines that service about 900 members. This work is planned for the Beaver, Centerville, Conneautville, Edinboro, Geneva, Mill Village, Mount Hope, Plum, Saegertown, Tamarack and Vernon sub-station areas.

In 2008 we will begin a major

enhancement project of our very successful Load Management System, which will require several years to complete. Our 20-plus-year-old Load Management Control System will be replaced with the latest, state-of-the-art system called TWACS, which is a two-way system that will send information back to the office about equipment status, voltage and outage information. This will help us better manage our distribution system in addition to sending signals out to over 9,000 controls to shed water heaters and electric heat when system load peaks occur. The enhanced Load Management System will have other abilities, such as automated meter reading, that will revolutionize how we read and process use information of our 20,000-plus members.

Allegheny Electric Cooperative, our wholesale electric supplier, is covering the capital costs of purchasing this system. Northwestern needs to install this new system in our substations and in our members’ homes. This is an exciting project that will hopefully be finalized by the end of 2010.

These are just a few of the items we plan to discuss at the Spring Member Meetings, so please plan to attend and provide us with that valuable member feedback. Stay tuned next month when we will be announcing some important changes that will be taking place with our retail electric rates in April of 2008.

Until I see you at the spring meetings, best wishes for a Happy New Year! ☀

Michael D. Tirpak  
General Manager & CEO

# Northwestern REC is the northwest Pennsylvania distributor of the ACADIA™ all-climate heat pump

**NOW** homeowners can save on energy bills and avoid fossil fuels even when temperatures drop below zero with Acadia, new from Hallowell International.

Cold climate residents especially rejoice as this patented all-in-one heating and cooling system cuts costs and reduces carbon footprint.

As homeowners brace for record-high heating bills this winter they have a new source of relief with Acadia: the combined heating and cooling system from Hallowell International. This patented new system is all-electric, eliminating the need for expensive and pollutant fossil fuels. Acadia outperforms conventional heating systems by 200 percent, and has already lowered home energy bills by up to 70 percent — even when outside temperatures reach well below zero.

Acadia early adopters have experienced sizable energy savings and appreciate that they are also helping the environment. Steve S., a homeowner in Portland, Ore., said, “We originally bought the Acadia because we wanted to reduce our carbon footprint. The more we learned the more excited we became...We are very happy with the Acadia and think it’s not only great technology to help us reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, but also it is surprisingly inexpensive to run.”

How does it work? Simply stated, Acadia is a next generation heat pump, a single system engineered to comfortably and efficiently heat and cool homes no matter what the weather outside, making it both economical and environmentally friendly. Traditional heat pumps lose efficiency when temperatures outside drop below freezing, requiring additional, expensive resist-



ance heaters to keep homes heated. The engineers at Hallowell International resolved this issue with the patented Opti-Cycle booster that enables the Acadia to run efficiently in temperatures as cold as -30 degrees Fahrenheit.

The savings are even greater when compared to fossil fuels. Acadia is 300 percent efficient, compared to the 95 percent efficiency rate of the best natural gas furnaces.

“The Acadia is a wonderful milestone for cold weather consumers and, of course, the environment,” said Duane A. Hallowell, President and CEO of Hallowell International. “We continue to develop technologies that will aid in protecting our planet and are within reach to the average consumer.”

To learn more about Acadia, please visit [www.gotohallowell.com](http://www.gotohallowell.com), [www.northwesternrec.coop](http://www.northwesternrec.coop) or call 1-800-472-7910 for more information.

## About Hallowell International

Founded in 2005, the vision of Hallowell International could not be clearer: Think past the boundaries of conventional home heating and cooling solutions to create alternative approaches to residential climate management. The company is committed to creating innovative concepts and products that are highly energy efficient, eco-friendly, easy to install and easy to maintain. Hallowell’s products are for both residential and commercial use and are distributed throughout the United States and Canada. The local distributor for the Acadia is Northwestern REC, located in Cambridge Springs. Hallowell International is headquartered in Bangor, Maine. To learn more about energy efficient products provided by Hallowell International visit, [www.gotohallowell.com](http://www.gotohallowell.com). 

## Locally owned and operated

When you hear the word local, think of your electric cooperative. The fact that we are a locally owned company — owned by the consumers we serve — keeps us focused on your needs and local priorities.

Your co-op is a local business, owned by the people it serves. That means conducting business through a locally elected board of directors and an annual meeting where policy is proposed and voted on by consumers. It's the "people" part — the personal involvement, the grassroots activities — that characterizes what electric co-ops are all about.

Your co-op's commitment to you begins with helping you keep your electric bill as low as possible. We deliver service to you at the cost of service. There are no hidden fees and no profits for investors in faraway cities. People who know the community resolve questions about service and

billing locally.


Because electric co-ops are so closely linked to their communities, there are countless examples of activities that have the "co-op touch:" conducting safety programs at local schools and organizations; participating in local events; working with community organizations; participating with civic groups supporting local hospitals — the list goes on and on.

It is precisely because your electric co-op is a local business, owned by its member-consumers and staffed by local professionals, that it is in a good position to listen and respond to your needs. All these things — helping consumers save energy, economic development, and volunteerism — point to one thing: your electric co-op and its staff are more than just an electric utility. They are an integral part of the community. That's why Northwestern REC will continue to do everything we can

to improve the quality of life in your community.

Why would an electric utility be involved in these kinds of activities? Because your cooperative has always played an important role in our communities. Service means not only making sure the electricity is flowing but also making sure that the community and its citizens are thriving and prospering.

Service means helping friends, neighbors and business colleagues — the people you see on a day-to-day basis. Service means reaching toward new horizons to make a life better for everyone.

Northwestern REC is a company that cares about the people it serves. That service goes a long way beyond keeping the lights on. It's neighbors helping neighbors. That's what it's all about — that's the electric co-op tradition. 

## Touring the nation's capital in your dreams?

**IMAGINE** 1,400 high school juniors and seniors from every state across the country, together in one hotel, in Washington, D.C. For one week, they marvel



at the historic sites, meet with elected officials, learn about our government and discover facts about rural electrification. In a nutshell, that's the

annual Rural Electric Youth Tour.

Northwestern REC annually selects high school juniors and seniors as Youth Tour Scholarship winners — one way we can help enrich the lives of the young people in our community. Last year, the following winners enjoyed the Youth Tour: Robert Oliver, Conneaut Lake; Molly Mattis, Cochranon; Jinnie Templin, Maplewood; Nathan Schwab, Conneaut Valley; Angelina Frazzini,


Tiusville; Michele Harger, Titusville; Zada Johnson, Maplewood; and Michael Flick, Meadville.

There are many other highlights during the week, beginning with Youth Day. Youth Day allows students to discuss issues they care about. They also hear various speakers discuss rural electrification and the business culture in today's world. Later in the week, they visit places like Mount Vernon, the FDR, Lincoln, Jefferson, World War II, Vietnam War, and Korean War memorials, and the Iwo Jima Monument.

Students get a chance to meet, mingle and dance on a boat cruise down the Potomac River, and spend another evening in semi-formal dress at the Kennedy Center for a play.

Youth Tour Scholarship winners are chosen through an interview and testing procedure. Students from all local high schools as well as homeschoolers are eligible to apply.

Fill out the coupon if you are current-

ly a high school junior or senior and would like to win one of our Youth Tour Scholarships. Return it to Northwestern REC, P. O. Box 207, Cambridge Springs, PA 16403 by Feb. 15, 2008. 

### Youth Tour Application

*Apply for a Youth Tour Scholarship and It Might Become Your Own Reality Show*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Parents' Names \_\_\_\_\_

School Attending \_\_\_\_\_

## Broadband internet services

### WHAT IS IT?

Broadband is often called high-speed internet, because it usually has a high rate of data transmission. A number of definitions exist, but in general, any connection to the customer of 256 kilobits per second (Kbps) or more is considered broadband internet.

### WHAT COMPANIES OFFER BROADBAND SERVICES?

Northwestern REC is investigating the prospect of providing broadband over the power lines with a company called IBEC. It is impossible now to predict an availability

date for this service. Technology is changing rapidly and several companies offer broadband services. Northwestern REC does not recommend any company or service over another but hopes to help you know where to look. In general, cable companies, wired telephone companies, wireless telephone companies and satellite companies offer broadband services in certain areas.

Unfortunately, not all areas are covered, but coverage areas increase almost daily.

## Member \$en\$e Coupon



Technology you want. Service you desire.

**HIGH-SPEED  
WIRELESS INTERNET  
IS NOW AVAILABLE!**

**Attention: Northwestern Rural  
Electric Cooperative Customers...**

**Verizon Wireless now offers  
High-speed wireless internet in  
areas of Crawford & Erie Counties.**

**Call Complete Wireless at 814/734.7500  
for special NREC Member Pricing!**

## Electricity theft and vandalism pose safety and financial concerns

**THEFT INVOLVING** electricity and related materials is a problem all electric utilities face — and it's a problem for electricity customers, too. Since Northwestern REC is member-owned, electricity theft could end up costing you money. Compensating for electricity theft drives up prices for everyone involved.

Theft of electricity also puts your personal safety at risk. Tampering with an electric meter can make it unsafe and unstable. When people steal electricity, they put themselves, their neighbors, family, and pets all at risk for electric shocks, power surges, sparks, and fire from exposed voltage. Stealing electrical related materials can also pose a significant risk to the culprit, resulting in injury or even death from exposure to live electricity.

Electricity theft isn't isolated to rural areas or to big cities. It's a problem utilities encounter from coast to coast, from agricultural operations to housing complexes to business offices. Although electricity can be easily acquired through a utility, some people are still willing to risk physical damage or loss of life just for the sake of some free kilowatt hours. Others may not realize the serious legal and potential health implications. Stealing electricity is illegal under Pennsylvania law and violates electrical codes.

Keeping power safe and affordable is a priority for Northwestern REC. That is why we routinely inspect cooperative meters and equipment. We want to ensure we're doing our best to protect you from the risks of electricity theft. We take a proactive approach to this serious problem to reduce theft and reduce related costs.

You can also play a role in this process, by immediately notifying us if you suspect someone is gaining access to our power supply without paying their fair share of the costs or by tampering with equipment. If you have information related to electricity or materials theft, please call us at 1-800-352-0014. Rest assured, we'll keep your name anonymous. Because you share in the ownership of Northwestern REC, when people steal from the cooperative, they're stealing from you, too!