

Currents

Your Link to Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative



High Voltage . . .



Seven Medical Myths Debunked

We are inundated with advice on every conceivable topic but probably the most popular, after weather wisdom, is health. A recent report in the *British Medical Journal* puts paid to seven common myths about health and the human body. Once the laughter and chuckles subside over anything from the medical community in the UK, a shining example of universal health-care, take a look at the results. Your Mothers may disagree with several of the findings but they are interesting and informative. For the complete article online, go here:

<http://www.livescience.com/health/071220-medical-myths.html>

- **You need to drink eight glasses of water per day** – False. Boy am I happy about this, fewer trips to the necessary room.
- **Reading in dim light will damage your eyes** – False. Phew, those evenings as a child reading under the sheets with a flashlight won't come back to haunt me after all.
- **If you shave your face or legs, the hair will only grow back faster and stiffer** – False. Hmmm. This directly contradicts my own personal experience (face shaving only)...
- **The tryptophan in turkey makes you drowsy** – False. Thanksgiving myth busted. Well sure. Eat that much of anything and you'll get drowsy.
- **We only use 10% of our brain** – False. I was afraid they were going lower but they didn't state a new level. Cowards, stir up some controversy.

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Commentary by the President & CEO



Weathering The Storm... Lessons Learned

by Jim Siglin
President & CEO

The February ice storm is now a distant memory. Many of our members had questions on our procedures and where to receive help. Now seems like a good time to review this information since we never know when Mother Nature will strike our system again.

Your cooperative has a disaster and storm restoration plan that is the result of years of experience and updating. It has been updated again following the February storm with additional lessons learned.

Restoration begins before the storm when we put our crews on alert if a major weather event is predicted. Once the storm hits we implement the plan in a number of stages. First (and throughout the process) is response to safety issues. Here we address dangerous situations where wires are down and energized, facilities are in jeopardy of causing damage and so forth.

Next is assessment and stabilization. We look at all our data sources: our control systems with remote sensors, your calls, input from crews and from civil agencies. Where possible, we attempt remote reconnection and rerouting to get service restored, stabilizing the system and (hopefully) limiting further outages.

Now comes the meat of the process, actual service restoration. We focus on restoration of large sections first. For instance, we will put a substation back in service that provides power to several hundred customers before repairing a service to a single neighborhood. The focus on the large pieces first gets the most members back in service the fastest. From here, we focus

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on progressively smaller restoration efforts. The final stage is restoration of single services.

After the storm, we look at the lessons learned and update our plan and practices as appropriate.

The most common concern from our members in an outage is, "When will we have the power back on?" There is always a certain level of frustration when our representatives cannot give you an exact time frame. In situations like the February storm, we could not tell you because the storm continued to damage the system as we worked. In more than one case, we restored power only to have additional trees and branches fall into the power line and knock it out mere minutes later.

In extensive outage situations such as this, you need to have an emergency plan of action. Over the years, we have published our emergency preparedness guidelines (as in the November 2007 Currents) to help your planning activities. Here is a summary of key elements.

- Have a **flashlight, battery powered radio** and **extra batteries** for light and information. Tune your radio to the Sussex County Clear Channel station. As part of our plan, we provide the major media outlets in the county with regular updates.
- **Have emergency numbers at hand:** friends, family, civil agencies. While we pride ourselves on rapid restoration, it isn't always possible. If extended periods without power, heat or

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ANNUAL MEETING

Make plans for the 71st
Sussex REC Annual Meeting

June 2, 2008
High Point High School

Pidgeon Hill Road

Registration & Refreshments 6:00 PM
Meeting 7:00 PM

**Enjoy live entertainment,
prize drawing, a \$10 bill
credit and more.**

Cummins Onan Launches New Generator Line

The new Cummins Onan RS12000 Stealth generator is a marvel! It is clear from the design and feature set that they listened to customers and dealers to design and produce a top shelf product that addresses the issues of noise, ease of maintenance and enhanced control via the Internet. Yes, I said the Internet. Now that all my fellow gadgeteers are tuned in, let's walk through the new unit.

The most inescapable change is the design. Yes this is a home generator. I myself have indulged in all the name calling possible; "1972 VW Mini Van, mushroom and so forth." Now that I have that out of my system, I have to say its kind of cute. Well, form follows function and this unit is cute for very specific reasons.

Key among these reasons is sound attenuation. This generator runs quieter than a typical lawn mower (less than 64 db (A) at 7 meters under full load) so it reduces the annoyance potential for the neighbors. Also, in an extended outage, it might also reduce unwanted "drop-ins" since the neighbors might not even know its running! Just kidding. The case has baffles and insulation to reduce the sound to unprecedented levels. The overhanging top is also there for a reason – it keeps the elements outside where they belong. Air is drawn in through holes under this lid and into the generator while falling weather and debris is kept out.

Want to service the unit? Lift the lid and prop it open like your car hood. Unlatch the



two doors and swing to the side. Now you have free access to the motor and generator. The oil dipstick is on the top and the oil drain and filter are both at the front where you can reach them with ease. The battery and electronics make their home in the left hand door so access and service is a snap.

"Does that thing have a Hemi?" Not a hemi but it does have a Subaru engine! In my circle of friends, Subaru has legendary longevity and reliability. In this case, there is no all wheel drive but when you need power, this baby will deliver every time. Just like its automotive brethren.

Finally, there is the user interface (*saved the best for last*). This unit is wired directly to the generator and can use a wi-fi Internet

connection. It allows you to check the generator status, schedule generator exercises and with the Internet capability, you can get notifications of maintenance and check operational status from anywhere in the world. Now, when you are basking in the sun on a beach somewhere and news of a major ice storm reach your ears, you simply saunter to the nearest Internet café, settle down with a drink and make sure your generator is operating properly.

Give us a call 973.875.1365 or stop in our office to see one up close. You can also go to our website and download a pdf brochure on the unit at <http://www.sussexrec.com/srec/resources.html>.

Backup generation never looked better!

Weathering the Storm

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cooling is going to present a health risk, take action. Use your telephone numbers and get help. Civil agencies have responsibility for civil safety. To take full advantage of your phone list, have a **hard wired telephone** or **properly charged cell phone**. Phones that use a power pack will not work.

- **Perhaps the most important thing to do, in advance, is take steps to address any medical needs.** If you have a life sustaining medical device that requires electricity, you must be prepared to power it without electricity for several hours. *Battery backup devices, emergency generators, mechanical alternatives* need to be on hand at all times. It may be physically impossible to restore power to

individual homes for hours, irrespective of medical requirements.

Let me close with a comment about roles and responsibility. Ours is quite simple, get the power back on as soon and as safely as possible. Your role is also simple, be prepared to take care of your own and your family's safety, health and comfort.

Restoration really is a team effort. You let us know your power is out and you are now free to take care of your own personal situation. We take your input and use it to map the extent of the outage and plan the most effective way to get the lights back on. The Touchstone Energy tagline seems especially appropriate here, "*Together, we have the power to make a difference.*"

**BE A HERO
SAVE A LIFE
GIVE BLOOD**

Blood Drive at
Sussex Rural Electric
Cooperative
Tuesday, April 29, 2008,
2 p.m. to 7 p.m.

GADGET REVIEW

I feel the need to write about gadgets. Given the wealth of gadgets available, it's a bit hard to know where to start but that indecision won't last long.



How about a Bang & Olufsen remote control? I love this company and their products. Not for the faint of pocket book, B&O creates some remarkably lavish items. Their latest remote control is a case in point. Known for their designs, the new Beo5 is really cool. At \$650+ it had better be! Still, imagine the look on your friends and guests faces when you navigate your home theater setup with this bad boy. Just be sure the remote doesn't cost more than what it is controlling. Read all about it here: <http://www.bang-olufsen.com/page.asp?id=365>



Unlike the Beo5, I have actually had my hands on the next gadget, the iPhone from Apple. Do I need it? No. Do I want it? Oh, yeah. Apple is another company with fabulous designs. The way the iPhone works reminds me of the screens used to track criminals in the movie "Minority Report".

You slide stuff around on the screen with your fingers. Not good if you have greasy fingers, I suppose. You can surf the web for real, handle all sorts of office tasks or simply listen to music and watch videos. \$399.00 to get into this game still has me thinking...

Any robot fans in the audience? Well, I am. I grew up on a staple of robots in movies, books, comics and toys. And, I must say, I have never outgrown that fascination.

Today, robot lovers should be in heaven. Technology advances have put some extremely sophisticated 'bots within reach of most. For my money, I am leaning towards HiTech's RoboNova 1. This 12" robot can do amazing things – dance, do gymnastics, stand up from a prone position! Wow! And it isn't a simple radio control product. You can program it to your heart's content. Available in kit or preassembled form from \$1000.00. Check it out here: <http://www.lynxmotion.com/Category.aspx?CategoryID=91>



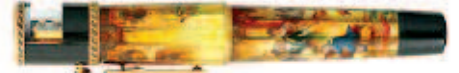
How about your own home CNC (computer numerically controlled) machine? Sears can get you outfitted with their CompuCarve. Using the included software, you can transfer a design from your PC to a piece of wood in no time. Automated sawdust production, now that's satisfying. All this for only \$1899.00, plus NJ



sales tax. Read all about it here: http://www.sears.com/shc/s/p_10153_12605_00921754000P

My Luddite side has insisted on a bit of equal time. Therefore, I immediately gravitated to one of my favorite things, fountain pens. Not just because they are the antithesis of technology, but because they are wonderful gadgets in their own right. The word processor and text messaging has supplanted handwriting to a huge degree which is a shame because handwriting can be a beautiful medium (doctors excluded – where do these folks learn to write?). I enjoy writing by hand and find the use of a fountain pen the most satisfying way to do so.

Fountain pens range in price from a few dollars to tens of thousands of dollars. Granted, most of these high-end models would be a literal pain to use. They are miniature works of art, think Faberge. A



fine company is Krone. They are available for a more modest few hundred dollars. Check out a few here: <http://www.fountainpenhospital.com/> and click on the Krone link on the left side.

And how about watches? No, not those battery powered chunks of silicon but real life mechanical watches. After languishing for years following the advent of the quartz movement, mechanical movements are back with a vengeance, especially those that wind themselves. The pinnacle of the watchmaker's art is the tourbillon. This complication, invented by Louis Breguet



(kind of the Mozart/ Beethoven of watch making) over 200 years ago, uses a unique suspension of the balance wheel and escapement to counteract the effects of gravity when the movement is vertical. This greatly improves the accuracy. The Zenith shown can be yours for a paltry \$97,500. By the way, don't wear it scuba diving or while working on your vintage car. http://www.brandname-only.com/grch_xxttowa1.html Want to know more about the tourbillon complication? Try here: http://www.luxluxe.com/information.php?info_id=33

Let me close with a gadget that is really out there – a desktop factory! Here's the catch line from the review, "In the future, imagine not having to wait for a product to ship or having to go to a store. You simply dial up what you need and have it produced in your personal desktop factory." Now if that doesn't get your geek/gadget blood stirring you need to get to the ER and have your pulse checked. Just think – if you can design it, the desktop factory will produce it. Nice. While this gadget isn't quite there yet, it is laying the ground work. Peel five of those Clevelands off your roll of cash and head over to <http://www.desktopfactory.com/> to place your order.



Well, I'm off to purchase a lottery ticket – then I can satisfy every gadget whim I have!

Medical Myths

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- **Hair and fingernails continue to grow after death** – False. Glad this creepy one is off the books. Ripley's Believe It or Not will have to retire a couple of exhibits.
- **Use of cell phones in hospitals can interfere with sensitive medical equipment** – False. That's comforting but it doesn't make their use in such places any less rude, annoying, intrusive...According to the Myth Busters television show, cell phones don't interfere with aircraft electronics and flight controls but at 30,000' I for one am not willing to push my luck.

As always, in the pursuit of the interesting and informative for your reading pleasure.

MEMBERS ASK

Following the February ice storm, I received a request to upgrade the information presented on our website. The requestor wanted additional information on the Outage page about what to do to prepare for an outage and who to call for assistance for issues other than electric service. Surf your way to <http://www.sussexrec.com/outages/outagehome.html> to see how we did in meeting this request.

WHAT DAY IS IT?

We are coming up on the Annual Report editions of Currents so I thought I'd regale you with three (3) full months of obscure celebratory events. So, what leaps off the page? I like the fact the June opens with donuts and ends with vinegar. Guess that makes it the sweet and sour month. April is soy foods month. Okay, warning in advance to those who like imitation food made from soy – I have yet to have anything even remotely palatable. If you have something I should try to disabuse me of this notion, e-mail me: ttate@sussexrec.com. If it really does taste like the real McCoy, I'll send you a Sussex REC grilling set, just in time for May, National BBQ Month! Can you grill soy or does it simply melt? And how about May with Cinco de Mayo, Totally Chipotle Day and Salsa Month – that's a spicy line up in any book. Hope you find one to enjoy.

April

Apr. 1/Sept 30	Home Improvement Time
Apr. 1-30	Car Care Month
Apr. 1-30	Customer Loyalty Month
Apr. 1-30	Fresh Florida Tomato Month
Apr. 1-30	National Decorating Month
Apr. 1-30	National Kite Month
Apr. 1-30	National Lawn Care Month
Apr. 1-30	National Pecan Month
Apr. 1-30	Soy Foods Month
Apr. 1-30	Straw Hat Month
Apr.13-19	Women's Nutrition Week
Apr. 10	National Siblings Day
Apr. 12	National Licorice Day
Apr. 15	Income Tax Pay-Day
Apr. 22	National Jelly Bean Day
Apr. 20-26	Administrative Professionals Week
Apr. 20-27	Passover

May

May 1-31	Get Caught Reading Month
May 1-31	Gifts From the Garden Month
May 1-31	National Barbecue Month
May 1-31	National Bike Month
May 1-31	National Egg Month

May 1-31	National Good Car Keeping Month
May 1-31	National Hamburger Month
May 1-31	National Physical Fitness & Sports Month
May 1-31	National Photo Month
May 1-31	National Salad Month
May 1-31	National Salsa Month
May 1-31	National Sweet Vidalia Month
May 1-31	National Vinegar Month
May 1	May Day
May 4-10	National Pet Week
May 4-10	Reading Is Fun Week
May 5	Cinco de Mayo
May 5	Totally Chipotle Day
May 6	No Diet Day
May 11	Eat What You Want Day
May 11	Mother's Day
May 12-18	Children's Book Week
May 14	National Receptionist Day
May 15	Nylon Stockings Anniversary (1940)
May 16	National Pizza Party Day

June

Jun. 1	Donut Day
Jun. 1-7	National Business Etiquette Week
Jun. 1-30	June Dairy Month
Jun. 1-30	June is Perennial Gardening Month
Jun. 1-30	June is Turkey Lovers' Month
Jun. 1-30	National Candy Month
Jun. 1-30	National Iced Tea Month
Jun. 1-30	National Rose Month
Jun. 1-30	National Safety Month
Jun. 1-30	National Soul Food Month
Jun. 1-30	National Steakhouse Month
Jun. 14	Flag Day
Jun. 15	Father's Day
Jun. 20	Summer Begins
Jun. 21	Vinegar Day

Make the wise choice

When it's time to buy a new water heater, there are a number of choices you can make. You can purchase a heater warranted for six or eight years, one that will be cheap to buy, but expensive to operate. Or you can invest in a Marathon and save money in operating costs...for a lifetime. Marathon - super efficient and warranted not to leak for as long as you own your home.



- **Seamless Polybutylene Tank** will never rust, corrode or leak.
- **Environfoam® Insulation** completely surrounds the tank. Superior efficiency with no Ozone-depleting chemicals.
- **Heating Elements** designed to maintain water temperatures and perform in the harshest water environments (just like ours here in NJ).
- **Bowl-Shaped Tank Bottom** developed to allow more complete tank draining.

Contact us today for model availability, pricing and complete information. 973.875.5101 x117 or go to our website:
<http://www.sussexrec.com/brochures/Marathon.html>

Marathon WATER HEATERS *Simply the wisest choice in water heaters.*

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The power of human connections

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