


Currents

Your Link to Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative



High Voltage. . .

 Not much is as frustrating as running out of hot water, especially in the middle of a shower in February. Our water is very tough on water heaters so problems are not uncommon.

Water heaters are difficult to troubleshoot, aside from a leak, and usually require a plumber. Here are two common problems in our area.

1. **Heating elements.** Scaling and sediment can disable one or both elements. Pushing the reset button can sometimes revive them but to see if they have failed you need to run a continuity test.

2. **Dip tube.** This plastic tube directs the cold supply water to the bottom of the tank. If broken, cold water mixes directly at the top of the tank with the hot water.

If your tank passes muster, try these things to stretch your supply.

1. Replace your older shower heads with low flow versions that use 2.5 gallons per minute to save hot water and energy.

2. Stagger the uses of hot water so your tank can keep up (don't shower and do laundry simultaneously).

3. Consider a larger tank if your needs have changed (larger family, new spa, etc.).

If you find a new tank is required, look for efficiency and durability. We find the Marathon line to be ideal for our area. Contact us for information or go to our web site at:

www.sussexrec.com and click on the Energy Use & Efficiency Information link on the left. The Marathon information is clearly identified from there.

Commentary by the President & CEO



High Efficiency Heating Now Available in Electric

by Robert M. Kolling
President & CEO

I hope the title of this article has captured your attention because some exciting new options are now available for your heating needs. Technology has come to our aid in electric heating at a very propitious moment, a point in time when fossil fuel alternatives are soaring in price. Let me highlight three options.

The first is the geothermal heat pump. This technology uses the constant temperature of the earth below the frost line as a giant heat exchanger to enable heat pumps to achieve remarkable efficiencies. You'll see these systems rated with a COP (coefficient of performance) nearing 3 at certain temperatures. In layman's terms, this means one kW of input power yields three kW of output (whether in heat or cooling). By contrast, resistance electric heat has a COP of about 1. The refrigerant for the geothermal system is carried through a series of underground pipes where thermodynamics and physics work their magic. A typical residential home can be heated and cooled for a fraction of traditional alternatives, in some cases for as little as \$700 per year.

The second form of efficient heat is electric thermal storage which takes advantage of lower off peak electric rates (\$.062 vs \$.112 per kWh) to "charge" a heating medium that is used to provide heat during peak rate periods. These systems can be either central systems or individual room units and can be combined with heat pumps to provide additional conditioning. The typical home can generally be heated for about 40 - 50% less than fossil alternatives.

Energy Conservation Tips for
Renters and Tenants
February Observances

Page 2

Meet Your Employees
Youth Tour 2007

Page 3

News & Events

Page 4

More recently technology has taken the conventional heat pump and adapted it to our cold weather. The all climate heat pump boasts a COP almost equal to that of the geothermal heat pump and operates at temperatures down to - 10 degrees without using resistance electric heat as a supplement (like a conventional heat pump does). As a result, you can heat and cool the typical home for nearly the same as geothermal and you avoid the expense of the ground loops. The equipment still costs more than a conventional heat pump so expect paybacks in the 3 - 5 year range.

Is electric heat a risk? I say 'no' but then people would consider me to have a "slight" bias in the matter. Let me offer the following for your consideration:

1. All fossil fuels will continue to experience price volatility and price spikes for the foreseeable future.
2. In NJ, insurance companies will continue to increase premiums or force removal / relocation of oil tanks to mitigate their exposure to spill cleanup costs.
3. The forecast for cooperative electric rates is nearly flat and stable for the future.
4. Fossil fuels are burned locally adding thousands of small pollution points to the local environment.
5. Burning fossil fuels also produces carbon monoxide which presents serious health risks if it enters your home.
6. The efficiency of electric solutions continues to outstrip those of the fossil alternatives.

No decision can be completely devoid of risk but this one has little, especially if your system is carefully designed to accommodate future upgrades and improvements. And you can be assured that your cooperative will continue to provide as much information as possible about heating and cooling options so you can make the best informed decision.

Contact us today or go to our website for more information on the latest in electric heating options at www.sussexrec.com under the Energy Use & Efficiency Information link on the left.

Energy Conservation Tips for Renters and Tenants

Article written at the suggestion
of P. Schwarz

This article is directed to those in our community who rent their living quarters. Most leases require the tenants to pay the utility bills for their apartment or home. This makes sense for most landlords since they do not control how the tenants run the property and therefore do not want to expose themselves to unexpected utility charges.

There is generally a concern that spending any money on a rental property is a waste since the value accrues to the landlord. This is certainly true when it comes to major changes such as replacing windows. But for the tips in this article, the benefits to the tenant make it worthwhile.

Now, let's take a look at what you can do at little or no cost. Focus first on weather-stripping and caulking. Make sure all the exterior doors have good tight seals. Simple adhesive foam strips work well and a floor sweep can seal bottom gaps. Check the molding around windows and doors in exterior walls and use tube caulk to seal gaps where you feel air. Water - based products work well and clean up is a snap.

If your windows do not have storms, consider applying plastic film over them. The type that shrinks for a tight fit under the heat of a hair dryer is a good choice plus it's a hoot to install. If you are not on the ground floor the film can be applied on the inside but take care with installation so you don't damage the molding.

Control the areas you heat and cool by closing doors, closing registers so they are not open all the way, move furniture so it does not block supply or return vents, reduce the setting on the thermostat or invest in a set-back thermostat. Also reduce the setting on the water heater from the factory set point to about 115 degrees.

Replace regular lights with high efficiency alternatives. Turn off lights, TVs and radios if you plan to be out of a room for any length of time. It is amazing how much energy this consumes. Install low flow shower heads and report any dripping faucets or leaky plumbing to your landlord right away.

Using ceiling or floor fans to circulate air

also helps with both efficiency and comfort. If you use ceiling fans, have them blow down in the summer and up in the winter. This creates a cooling breeze on hot summer days and pushes warm air to the floor in winter. Floor fans can move conditioned air from one spot to another. Be sure to get floor fans that have safety guards to protect toes and fingers.

Let me close with some cautionary notes.

1. Before doing anything, clear it with your landlord.
2. When you shut down or reduce the tem-

perature in parts of your home, be sure to keep it warm enough that any water pipes don't freeze.

3. Once you get everything sealed up avoid using unvented supplemental heat sources that use fossil fuels because of the danger of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Everyone can benefit from such measures. Check out more tips at our web site, www.sussexrec.com under the Energy Usage and Efficiency Information link on the left. The on-line energy audit is of value to renters and homeowners alike so don't forget to give it a spin.

February Observances

You know, it used to be so simple when it came to holidays. There were the majors, Easter, July 4th and so on. Now, there seems to be a day, week or month for just about everything. I blame the greeting card companies and those evil special interests we hear so much about. At any rate, you can be prepared for any and all observances in February with the handy list below.

Feb 1-7	Solo Diners Eat Out Week
Feb 1-28	American Heart Month
Feb 1-28	Bake For Family Fun Month
Feb 1-28	February is Fabulous Florida Strawberry Month
Feb 1-28	National Bird Feeding Month
Feb 1-28	National Cherry Month
Feb 1-28	National Children's Dental Health Month
Feb 1-28	National Weddings Month
Feb 1-28	North Carolina Sweet Potato Month
Feb 1-28	Return Shopping Carts to the Supermarket Month
Feb 1	Bubble Gum Day
Feb 2	Groundhog Day
Feb 4	Super Bowl XLI
Feb 11-17	Jell-O Week
Feb 14	Valentine's Day
Feb 18-24	National Pancake Week
Feb 19	President's Day
Feb 20	Paczi Day (Do you know what this is? The first person to correctly identify the holiday will get a nice goodie pack from my storeroom. Call me at 1-973-875-5101 x117 or e-mail at ttate@sussexrec.com with your answer.)
Feb 21	Ash Wednesday
Feb 21-Apr 7	Lent
Feb 22	National Chili Day

Source: The Ohio Council of Retail Merchants,
50 West Broad Street, Suite 2020, Columbus, OH 43215; (614) 227-7833.

Meet your Employees...

Chris Reese, Supervisor of Technical Services

Originally from Matawan, New Jersey, Chris has an MBA from Fairleigh Dickinson University and a bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering from Villanova University. He began his career at Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative 14 years ago as a Staff Engineer then moved into the position he now holds as Supervisor of Technical Services.

Chris' job encompasses all facets of Sussex Rural's Information Technology systems and every aspect of your cooperative is touched by systems under his care. Our billing and customer information system, outage call service, phone system, network, SCADA system and PCs all fall under his domain. Chris loves to see new technology enhance the co-op's capabilities. "Watching how our SCADA and AMR systems have developed and evolved to where we can read a meter, verifying an outage, and pinpoint the location right from the office, sometimes in just minutes," is very satisfying. There is one aspect of his job that he does not enjoy, "getting the 2 AM outage phone calls on a Saturday night." Needless to say, we can all understand his sentiments, but he takes it in stride and does what is needed to help the members.



Chris Reese

Chris marvels at the Cooperative when outages occur. He says "as stressful as they are, some of the most interesting experiences I've had occurred during major storms. Seeing how hard everyone in the co-op works to get power restored is really energizing. Every employee works with one common goal - to get the lights back on. Luckily it's not something we have to do everyday, but when it happens, it's something to see and participate in."

Currently residing in Wantage, Chris and his wife Robin have two beautiful daughters, Caroline, 4 and Lauren, 2 in whom he takes great pride. In his spare time, he enjoys the game of golf and watching baseball (Yankees of course). He enjoys the "overall aspect of trying to master the fundamental objective of hitting a ball with a stick."

Chris is one of the people you can count on at Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative.



43rd Annual Youth Tour, June 10 - 15, 2007

Every year the electric cooperatives across the US send over 1300 students on an all expenses paid trip to Washington, DC to experience a week of history, politics and fellowship.

If you are a High School Junior whose parents or legal guardians are members of Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative you can apply for one of the spots we have available. For an application contact your high school guidance counselor or club advisor or you can visit our website at www.sussexrec.com and click on Youth Tour or call 1-973-9875-5101 x 116 or 117. Hurry as the deadline is March 1, 2007.

"—it was the experience of a lifetime. I cannot thank you all enough for giving us the opportunity to go and represent Sussex Rural Electric. Our trip down there was just packed with adventures and learning experiences. Everything—from our visiting of the war memorials and monuments, to our visiting of the Spy Museum, to our viewing of 'Mame' in the Eisenhower Theatre—was just amazing. To meet so many outstanding youth, though, from around the States, was by far my favorite part. Thank you again for giving me such an unforgettable experience."

Mary Jean Lanzilotti, Youth Tour 2006



Global Positioning Systems (GPS)

By Tom Tate

Being a certified gadget guy, these GPS devices truly intrigue me. Having logged about 1,000,000 miles behind the wheel in my driving career, I have had a serious need for something like this on more than one

occasion (and no, ladies, I am not one of those men who won't ask for directions). But, who needs to ask for directions when this little wonder contains directions for the entire country and Canada to boot?

GPS capabilities come in an amazing array - cell phones, personal digital assis-

tants, PCs, wrist watches, handheld models, fish locators (you know, to precisely mark that secret fishing hole) and portable units for automobiles, to name a few.

What do these devices do? They have varying capabilities but their base function is to guide you from point A to point B and help you with rerouting if you encounter a snag (road work, accident, and the like). Who couldn't benefit from this! Many have audible prompts so you can cruise blissfully along while a little voice tells you when and where to turn. And most boast accuracy to within a couple of feet.

Can you get by without one? Sure, but then it's a gadget and they are desirable for their own sake. I like the tomtom (not surprising) and Garmin offerings. You can read about them at www.tomtom.com and www.garmin.com or do a Google search. My Google search returned 269,000,000 matches! Talk about popular...

News & Events

Sussex / Wantage

Winter Fitness Program - will begin Jan. 15, running through April 1. Every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday at the Clifton E. Lawrence School from 7-8:15 p.m. (unless school is closed for snow or holiday). Pay as you go \$3.00/workout. Bring sneakers, towel/mat, weights (optional), and of course, water. Sponsored by the Wantage Recreation Commission. Leave your stresses behind this winter. Come workout with us! Any questions, contact Geri Stella 875-4704.

Vernon

Tricky Tray - to benefit the Immaculate Conception School. Friday, February 9 at the Crystal Springs Country Club (Emerald Ballroom), Vernon. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. No one under 18 admitted. For more information e-mail squirrel@net-zero.net.

County Wide

Literacy Volunteers of Sussex County (LVSC): Considering being a tutor of adults? Come to our orientation for new tutors, March 7 at 6:30 p.m., at Newton United Methodist Church. This is followed by six Wednesday-night training sessions, same place at 6:30 p.m. To sign up or learn more about it, call 973-300-9444.

Court Appointed Special Advocates of Morris & Sussex Counties (CASA-MC)

Special advocates for children in foster care are needed now. Will you give your time and determination to make a difference for a child? Attend an information session at the Newton Judicial Complex, Monday, Feb 5 at 12 NOON. For more information call 973-579-0723 or visit the website at www.CASA-MC.ORG

Sussex County MUA - Electronics

(E-Waste) Recycling event on Saturday, March 3, 2007, 7 a.m. - 2 p.m. Sussex County residents, schools, businesses and municipalities may bring limited quantities of electronics equipment on this day for free disposal. Examples of items to bring include: computer processors, monitors, printers & peripherals, televisions, VCR's, DVD & CD players, fax machines & copiers, stereo equipment & radios, cell phones, etc. For quantity limits and more information call 973-579-6998.

Spaghetti Dinner to Benefit "Claws Cat Rescue and Adoption Shelter of Sussex"

Saturday, March 3, 2007 5 p.m. - 8 p.m. Complete Dinner: Spaghetti, Meatballs, Salad, Bread, Drink, Coffee and Cake. Place: Sussex Firehouse, Loomis Ave., Sussex Borough Adults: \$7.00, Children \$4.00 Tickets sold in advance or at the door (if not sold out). Take-Outs available at the event. Free Feline Gift Give-Aways and Raffle Basket. Blizzard Date: Sunday, March 4, 2007. ☐

Address/ Telephone Change?

Has your mailing address or telephone changed recently? If so, please make sure you contact us and provide us with the new information. In the event of an outage, we rely on your phone number to bring up your account information quickly and accurately. You can contact us by sending an e-mail to customerservice@sussexrec.com indicating the change on your bill stub. Or call us at 973/875-5101 and select the customer service option.

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The power of human connections

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