



**Sussex Rural
Electric Cooperative, Inc.**
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Currents

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ELECTRICAL SAFETY MYTHS



Don't always believe what you hear.

MYTH: Electricity always takes the path of least resistance

FACT: Although the path of least resistance is the easiest to take, an electrical current can take any conductive path.



MYTH: Rubber gloves and shoes protect from electric shock

FACT: This is true if they are 100% rubber but most gloves and shoe soles are not. The other materials they contain can be conductors.



MYTH: Voltage must be high to kill

FACT: Although the voltage plays a role in how strong the current flows, exposure to the current itself is what's deadly. Even lower voltages can kill.



MYTH: Heavily insulated tools will always protect against shock and electrocution

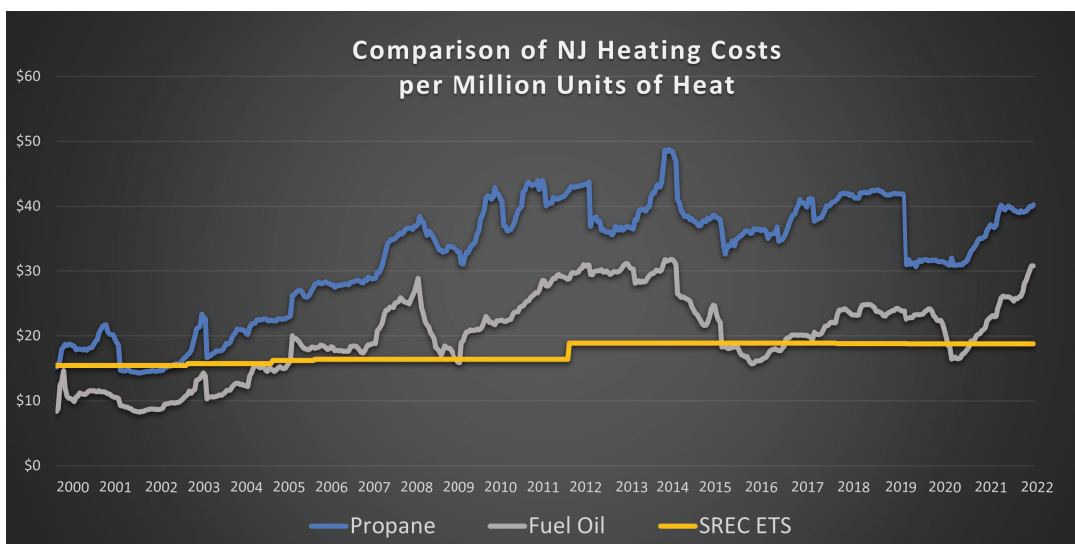
FACT: For full safety, take all precautions even if a tool is marketed as safe or insulated.



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Make the Switch to ETS

By: Chris Reese, President & CEO
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At this point in the year, we've all experienced some bitter cold temperatures. Many of us are feeling the effects not just in our frozen face or hands, but in the place it *really* hurts – our wallets. The “heating season” is almost always more expensive than the “cooling season,” and that’s the price we pay to keep our homes comfortable during the winter. But with the costs of propane and heating oil steadily increasing, it’s easy to understand why some people may be hesitant to rely too much on home heating, especially this winter.



If you are tired of the instability that comes with heating your home with propane or oil, you don't have to resort to locking up your thermostat and wearing layers around the house. There are other options that can make it easy and affordable to heat your home. Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative offers its members, and *only* its members, a unique form of electric-powered heating that is reliable, environmentally friendly, and built around a stable, steady cost - electric thermal storage heating, also known as ETS.

What is ETS?

ETS has been a staple of SREC's program offerings for decades and has been adopted by about 300 homes in our service territory. It is a quiet, odorless, comfortable method of heating your home using off-peak electricity. Offered as a furnace replacement for a gas or oil burner, or individual room units to replace electric baseboard heat (or for a room with no heat at all), ETS uses a simple technology that removes homeowners' reliance on propane and oil.

The savings of ETS comes from its use of off-peak electricity. Off-peak hours are periods of time when less people are using electricity in their homes or businesses. These mostly correspond with nighttime hours, as well as some shorter periods during the middle of the day. Because these are periods of lower electric usage on our system, it is less expensive for us to purchase and provide power during these times. We pass these savings on to ETS owners to allow them to charge their heating equipment at a reduced rate. Our current off-peak rate for ETS power is only 6.4 cents per kWh, compared to our regular residential rate of 10.9 cents.

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Make the Switch to ETS

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Here's the magic of ETS: It fits right into your existing heating system. To make use of an ETS furnace, the only change needed is to replace your current furnace with an ETS one. Your hot water baseboard pipes or your air ducts do not change. ETS efficiently stores electric heat generated during off-peak hours, and when the heat is called for by your thermostat, the unit does the same thing your oil or gas furnace did: it circulates the heated air or water through your home using your existing baseboard or air ducts. Simple!

The Benefits of ETS

When an ETS furnace or room unit is installed in your home, our technicians also install a second electric meter next to your existing one. This allows us to bill your ETS service separately at a lower rate than the rest of your home. With home heating coming from electricity, ETS owners are no longer reliant on propane or heating oil to keep their homes at a comfortable temperature.

This means no more worries about running out of oil, scheduling fuel deliveries, maintaining burners, venting fumes, or expensive annual services, and most importantly, no more need to be concerned with the volatility and high spikes of propane and oil prices. The cost of these types of fuel has varied wildly over the last twenty years (see the chart on page 1) and is on the rise again, while our price for off-peak electricity has remained much more stable over this same period of time (our ETS rate was 5.3 cents/kWh in 2000, compared to 6.4 cents/kWh today).



As an ETS owner myself, I'll say this: before I had my ETS furnace, I dreaded watching the price of oil, my tank level, and the weather forecast, and having to combine this information to avoid price spikes or running out of oil. Thankfully, ETS offers peace of mind by allowing homeowners to detach themselves from the instability of the propane and oil markets. I finally felt comfortable enough to give up control of the thermostat and my family started talking to me again (okay, I'm kidding about that last part... a little).

As a bonus, those concerned with their impact on our planet's environment can take comfort in the fact that they're using much cleaner electricity as a heat source rather than fossil fuels. Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative's power mix is about 80% *carbon free*, meaning that a switch to ETS can greatly reduce your family's carbon footprint!

Say Yes to ETS

The promise of freeing yourself from oil and propane is not the only incentive that Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative offers to make switching to ETS the easy choice. With the sale of a new ETS, members receive a rebate of \$1,000 plus \$50 for each kW of heating. We also offer a Refer a Friend program that rewards members for saying "yes" to ETS and spreading the word!

If you are interested in learning more about ETS, you can visit www.sussexrec.com/ets. This page contains much more specific information about the ETS system and how it works, as well as an online form that members can fill out to express their interest in purchasing an ETS unit. After a completed form is submitted, the member will be contacted by an SREC employee who can answer any additional questions and help determine what kind of ETS unit is best for their home.

When compared to the price of heating oil at almost \$4/gallon and propane at almost \$3/gallon, investing in ETS can provide much needed relief. With these fuel prices so high and expected to keep climbing, there couldn't be a better time to switch to ETS. Once you make the switch, you can start saving on home heating without sacrificing your family's comfort!



Did You Know?

We offer a **Refer A Friend** program for ETS!

If you're an ETS owner and recommend ETS to a friend, when they have their ETS unit installed you will both receive a \$150 bill credit!

[click for details](#)

Planning is the Best Medicine

By: Steve Sokolowski, Marketing Associate
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Advancements in at-home medical equipment have empowered more people to live independently while treating medical issues that in the past would have reduced quality of life or even put that life in danger. Across the U.S., millions of people use at-home, electric-powered equipment to treat their medical needs. Whether they make use of ventilators, oxygen machines, nebulizers, electric wheelchairs, or other devices, these individuals rely on steady access to electricity to ensure their day-to-day well-being. Many people living within our own communities fit this category.

Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative strives to provide reliable electricity to all of its members. We perform consistent upgrades of our system to make it more resilient to outages. However, it is impossible for us to completely eliminate the possibility of power outages, especially during major storms. SREC is understanding of the difficulties members who rely on medical equipment face during outages. When power goes out, our crews get to work and attempt to restore power as quickly as possible. However, every outage is different and can present different circumstances for our crews.

If you are a member who uses electric-powered medical equipment in your home, or a family member or caretaker of such a member, we encourage you to have a plan in place for when power goes out. While it can be hard to tell how long it may take for power to be restored, knowing your options can help remedy some of the uncertainty that an outage creates. Here are the measures that SREC recommends that our members take so they are always ready for an outage:

1. Enroll in our Medical Alert Program – SREC’s medical alert program is an informational service for members who use electric-powered medical equipment in their homes. Whether your medical device is life-sustaining or for improving quality of life, we encourage you to sign up to receive advanced notice of planned outages that would affect your service. SREC performs planned outages so crews can safely conduct maintenance on our system. While we cannot predict when outages caused by weather, trees, or other factors may happen, we aim to always inform the members who are most vulnerable when left without power about any *planned* outages. Medical alert members receive a phone call in advance of a planned outage to provide them with enough time to make alternate accommodations if needed, and to share how long the planned outage will last. Those who qualify can visit sussexrec.com/medalert to enroll and stay in the know.



2. Look out for outage updates – Our online outage map, found at outages.sussexrec.com, provides a real-time look at all outages affecting our system. For the most large-scale outages, we offer regular updates via social media and our email list to keep members informed of our restoration progress. To stay up to date during these situations, you should sign up for our email service at sussexrec.com/email-alerts or keep an eye on our Facebook (@[sussexrec](https://www.facebook.com/sussexrec)) and Twitter (@[SussexREC](https://twitter.com/SussexREC)) pages.

3. Have a secondary source of power ready – The most effective thing you can do to keep your medical device powered on is to have a backup power source ready. A generator is a great investment to ensure your medical equipment is never left without power. A whole-house generator, like the Cummins generators offered by our subsidiary SREC Resources, will activate automatically when your power goes out. These are more expensive than portable generators, though SREC Resources does offer financing for their whole-house generators. Portable generators are much more affordable but take more effort to start. A transfer switch, such as the GenerLink, would help make this process easier by allowing you or a caretaker to simply plug the portable generator directly into the switch behind your electric meter.

4. Make use of a support network – If you are a member who requires use of medical equipment at home, braving an outage situation alone can be scary and dangerous. If possible, we encourage you to seek aid from others – whether they’re family, friends, caretakers, or neighbors – who may be able to help you until our crews restore power. If these individuals have a generator or know of an alternate location they can bring you, it can make all the difference. For anyone reading this who does not have these medical needs, but knows someone who does, offering your own aid to them during an outage can be critical to ensuring their well-being until power is restored.

5. Enroll in NJ Register Ready – NJ Register Ready is a state-sponsored program that allows New Jersey residents with disabilities or access/functional needs to receive help in the event of a disaster. Residents can provide information that allows emergency responders to better plan to serve them during an emergency. This can be crucial during a major storm, when travelling to another location that has power might not be a safe option. Please note that all information provided is stored securely and only used for emergency planning response. You can sign up for this program at registerready.nj.gov or by calling 2-1-1.



I hope that anyone reading this finds these measures helpful in putting together a plan for a major outage. Living with a persistent medical issue is hard enough without factoring in the uncertainty that comes with outages affecting electric-powered equipment. But with the proper plan in place, an outage can go from a dire situation to something that you’re well-prepared to handle.

An SREC Timeline

2022 is Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative's 85th anniversary. The timeline below shows some of the major milestones throughout the Co-op's long history. For more insight into the story of SREC, rural electrification, and our local history, follow us on social media for weekly #ThrowbackThursday posts!



@sussexrec



@SussexREC

1900

By the turn of the century, some areas of Sussex County, such as Sussex Boro, had electric power, but the electric utility of the time would not extend service to local farmers for a reasonable cost.



1935

An Executive Order from President Franklin D. Roosevelt establishes the Rural Electrification Administration. This New Deal measure was made to help rural residents obtain the modern necessity of electricity.

1936

FDR signs the Rural Electrification Act. Committees are appointed throughout the nation, including in Sussex County, to survey territory and gauge interest in forming electric cooperatives to serve rural citizens.

1937

March 7 - Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative is formed.
April - SREC qualifies for an REA loan of \$134,000.
May 7 - The first SREC Board of Directors meets and awards a contract for construction of 128 miles of electric lines.
July 8 - SREC's system is energized and the first members get electric power for the first time.

1941

Thanks to the REA, 30% of farms nationwide now have electricity.



1955

90% of farms nationwide now have electricity.

1972

SREC becomes a part-owner of Allegheny Electric Cooperative, a power provider for Pennsylvania's electric cooperatives.

1976

Growth in electric usage, but not SREC membership, causes demand to exceed supply. After blackouts on Thanksgiving Day the previous year, SREC makes several significant upgrades to its system.

1998

The first issue of *Currents* is published by SREC.

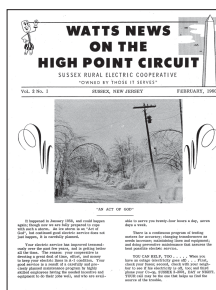
2017

SREC's Board of Directors appoints Chris Reese as President and CEO.

SREC celebrates its 85th anniversary.

1959

SREC begins printing its first newsletter, *Watts New on the High Point Circuit*



1975

SREC joins the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association, the statewide organization of PA's electric cooperatives.

1995

SREC moves to its current office located at 64 County Route 639 in Sussex.



2012

Hurricane Sandy hits Sussex County. Initially, all SREC members were affected by this storm. Due to damage the storm caused, full restoration took about a week.

2022

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

When was your cooling system last serviced? Most manufacturers recommend an annual tune up for your home's cooling system. March is a great time to schedule this service so you can beat the summer rush when the pros are busiest.

A qualified professional can check the amount of refrigerant, accuracy of the thermostat, condition of belts and motors and other factors that can greatly impact the efficiency of your system.

Source: Dept. of Energy

