



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT/CEO

The heart of our community

As we begin this special time of year, we look forward to spending occasions with our loved ones. But I can't help but take a moment to consider the kinship we experience by living in this community. We truly consider our members part of a family that we have the honor to serve 365 days a year.

We are local! The 42 employees who serve you all live within the community and may be your neighbor, or you may know them personally. The nine board trustees who direct your cooperative are cooperative members and live in the districts of the service territory, receiving their electrical service from the cooperative, just as you do.

When you call in during business hours to have a question answered, report an outage, learn more about many of our great programs, or have a service request, you are speaking to a team of caring experts that are right here in Millersburg, Ohio. That team will walk you through ways to help reduce your energy consumption and manage your electric bill through budget billing, troubleshoot issues with you, and suggest energy efficiency tips. We even have an energy advisor who can come to your residence for a home energy assessment.

This past June, the dedication of your cooperative team was exemplified as we experienced the most devastating storm in HWEC history. Our staff worked long hours, going above and beyond in extreme heat with only a few hours of respite. Many of them were without power themselves. We know the responsibility that comes with serving the community and find it very

rewarding knowing that our neighborhoods support and appreciate our service in challenging times such as the June derecho storm.

You, as members, showed the power of family during this storm. You helped your neighbors and friends clean up debris and offered a place to sleep, take a hot shower, or store food. Many of you offered a cool drink and snacks to our line crews. Countless comments were made by visiting line crews and tree-trimming experts on the kindness they received from you.

Thanks also to our 7,200+ members who donate monthly to our Operation Round Up program and gave to the United Way disaster relief fund. United Way coordinated assistance to 18 HWEC members who were unable to clean up storm debris financially and/or physically. It's another example of how cooperative members are bonded together!

This cooperative spirit isn't found everywhere. We recognize and appreciate the hearts of our community. We are who we are because of our members. We understand that we cannot thrive unless you thrive, so we do all we can to make sure our community is strong.

With gratefulness, the staff and board at HWEC wish you and your loved ones wonderful and safe holidays! Let's continue in our serving spirit and challenge each other to make a difference into 2023!



Glenn W. Miller
PRESIDENT/CEO



Keeping our family safe

The Commitment to Zero Contacts program has become a central component of safety training for Holmes-Wayne Electric Cooperative. This program was developed as a joint initiative by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) and Federated Rural Electric Insurance Cooperative in 2017.

“Anyone involved in this line of work knows the level of danger,” says Stacey Shaw, safety director at HWEC. “Our staff is handling 7,200-volt and 15,000-volt power lines daily, and while that can become routine, the hazards of the work should never be taken for granted.”

Critical to the program is avoiding complacency and overconfidence that can erode overall safety awareness after years of working in the industry. “Unfortunately, a contact accident can happen to anyone. Even the most experienced lineman,” Shaw says.

The consequences of an incident in this industry are very high, and getting that critical “buy-in” requires much more than lectures, memos, and discussions. HWEC uses a variety of techniques to make safety awareness personal and to encourage staff and other employees to regularly discuss safety concerns.

At our lineman desk and lunchroom displays, the family connection to safety is a regular reminder for co-op employees. We hang family photos on the walls to remind crews that one mistake can be fatal. As a small organization of 42 employees, everyone knows each other’s families and often share in special moments of weddings, births of children, kids’ sporting activities, and graduations.

The education starts at day one with our apprentices. “They immediately see we’re encouraging conversations about safety during job briefings, and that includes thorough inspection of personal protection equipment before work gets underway,” Shaw says.

All staff, no matter their title or years of service, are encouraged to speak up when they have questions or a safety concern, which empowers each employee to recognize that they are key to keeping everyone safe. There are no excuses.

Monthly safety meetings and the safety committee continue to support the overall safety program.

“Our member services department excels in communicating and educating our members about the process of safe power restoration,” says Shaw.

The cooperative is committed to communication through this magazine, Facebook, radio, and a variety of other avenues to remind members of the danger of downed power lines. A year-round communication blitz educates community members that a downed line doesn’t mean de-energized.

Whether electric infrastructure is damaged through storms, car accidents, farm equipment contact, or many other ways, the danger is always there. We all saw the importance of this last June when miles of line came to the ground, entangled in trees and debris.

“No one likes their power to be out, but we will never ask our staff to compromise the process and safety steps to restore power more quickly. We all have family and loved ones we want to return safely home to. That is the end goal every day.”





2023 GRADS

Are your parents Holmes-Wayne Electric members?

If so, you could win more than

\$7,100

in scholarships!

To obtain rules and applications for the **Children of Members Scholarship**:

- Visit hwecoop.com
- Call the co-op at 866-674-1055
- Stop by the co-op office
- Ask your guidance counselor

Deadline to apply: Jan. 20, 2023



Holmes-Wayne
Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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Want to help someone in the community?

The holidays are quickly approaching, and it's a time for giving. Many have reached out, asking to help neighbors and loved ones with their utility bills. A gift certificate to assist a Holmes-Wayne Electric Cooperative member might just be the ideal present for your parents, grandparents, children, or someone in need. If you're looking for a useful present for someone you know who is a member of Holmes-Wayne Electric Cooperative, contact us toll-free at 866-674-1055. You have the option to remain anonymous when giving a gift certificate.



Holmes-Wayne Electric Cooperative
wishes our members a happy
and healthy holiday season.

**HWEC will be closed
Friday, Dec. 23; Monday, Dec. 26;
and Monday, Jan. 2.**

For outage reporting:

Text @ 55050

Mobile app, SmartHub

Call toll-free 866-674-1055

For payments and meter readings:

Mobile app, SmartHub

Call toll-free 866-674-1055



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CONTACT

866-674-1055 (toll-free)

www.hwecoop.com

OFFICE

6060 St. Rte. 83

P.O. Box 112

Millersburg, OH 44654-0112

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