



Glenn W. Miller
President/CEO

You are a member, not a customer: *That's the co-op difference*

MANY BUSINESSES USE the word “member” to describe their customers. Places like Sam’s Club or Costco and even American Express like to refer to their customers as members. You pay a fee to buy their goods and services, but that

is really all you get for the “membership.” No right to vote for the board of directors or to participate in any meaningful way in the organization.

In cooperatives like Holmes-Wayne Electric, membership really does mean something more than just the right to buy electricity. Co-ops of all types are founded on seven principles that give us guidance and strategic direction. Membership also gives you rights as an owner of this co-op.

Brett Fairbairn is the director of the Center for the Study of Co-operatives at the University of Saskatchewan in Canada. He makes the case that member relations is not just part of what co-ops should be doing but, in fact, is the fundamental core business of the cooperative.

He further lays out the three strategic concepts that any co-op must get right in order to survive and thrive:

Economic linkage

Holmes-Wayne Electric Cooperative is connected to you. There is a business relationship that serves you, the member, and the co-op. Because co-ops are solely owned by people in the community, they have a mutual interest to ensure that both the co-op and the member do well and prosper.

Transparency

As an owner of the co-op, you have a right to know how it operates and how decisions are made that directly affect you. If the co-op is transparent and combines this trait with integrity and fairness, it will build trust — the key to any solid relationship. We recently provided our annual report and additional valuable information at our Annual Meeting. If you were unable to attend our Annual Meeting of the Members, a full report and summary of the meeting was provided in this publication in both the June and August issues.

Cognition

In this case, cognition is best defined as how your co-op thinks. It includes the current and historical identity, the mission, and the values it shares with its members. Research, education, and training are critical functions that Holmes-Wayne Electric must conduct on an ongoing basis to ensure that we always have the best information to make decisions.

The cooperative business model is the best one on earth, but like any enterprise, it is up to the human beings who work at the co-op, who serve on the board, and the members like you to ensure that the principles and values do not fade over time.

First and foremost, Holmes-Wayne Electric strives to be thought of as a member-owned cooperative that gives you the best value of any utility. If we succeed, our community thrives, and you will always value being a member — not a customer. ☺

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6060 St. Rt. 83; P.O. Box 112
Millersburg, OH 44654-0112

Business hours: 7:30 a.m.–4 p.m.

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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative
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Stay focused on **SAFETY** during harvest



GPS auto-steer devices help farmers decrease errors and increase productivity, but farm machinery can still come too close for safety to power lines.

DURING HARVEST SEASON, many farmers reap the benefits of advancement in agricultural technology. With the help of GPS auto-steer devices, farmers are able to decrease driver error and maximize productivity. Yet despite these advances, safety risks remain. To help farmers stay out of harm's way, Safe Electricity shares tips for a safe harvest.

GPS with auto-guidance provides farmers with real-time location data about a field, which can be used for crop planning, map making, navigation assistance, and machinery guidance. During harvest, this technology allows drivers to have their hands off the steering wheel as the combine maneuvers itself through the field. Farmers can more easily and efficiently maintain accuracy, even during low-light conditions, which enhances productivity.

"One critical part of safety around electricity is awareness," explains Kyla Kruse, communications director of the Safe Electricity program. "It's important to remember that farm machinery is vulnerable to hitting power lines because of its large size, height, and extensions. Being aware of the location of overhead power lines and planning a safe equipment route can help reduce accidents."

In equipment with auto-guidance systems, less focus is needed on steering, which may lead some drivers to think they do not need to be as aware of navigation issues. However, even while using GPS auto-steering, farm workers need to stay focused on their surroundings.

Putting safety first requires alertness, focus, and knowledge of potential hazards and safety steps. Varying pass-to-pass accuracy levels and potential issues like power poles not being correctly plotted in the system reinforce the need for drivers to stay focused on the location of the farm equipment and

to be ready to take action if necessary.

Regardless of the technology used on the farm, keep the following electrical safety guidelines in mind:

- Use a spotter when operating large machinery near power lines.
- Keep equipment at least 10 feet from power lines — at all times, in all directions.
- Look up and use care when moving any equipment, such as extending augers or raising the bed of grain trucks, around power lines.
- Inspect the height of farm equipment to determine clearance.
- Always set extensions to the lowest setting when moving loads to prevent contact with overhead power lines. Grain augers should always be positioned horizontally before being moved.
- Never attempt to move a power line out of the way or raise it for clearance.
- If a power line is sagging or low, contact Holmes-Wayne Electric Cooperative toll-free 24/7 at 866-674-1055.

If your equipment does make contact with a power line, do not leave the cab. Immediately call 911, warn others to stay away, and wait for the utility crew to cut the power.

The only reason to exit equipment that has come into contact with overhead lines is if the equipment is on fire, which is rare. However, if this is the case, jump off the equipment with your feet together and without touching the ground and machinery at the same time. Then, still keeping your feet together, hop to safety as you leave the area.

For more information on electrical safety, visit www.SafeElectricity.org. ☎

Overhead vs. underground power lines: What's the difference?

THERE ARE TWO METHODS of installing the power lines that carry electricity to your home: overhead and underground. Holmes-Wayne Electric Cooperative members sometimes ask why we use one versus the other, or why all power lines are not installed using the underground construction method. These are great questions, and the answer is that each method has its place.

Overhead line construction starts with the setting of utility poles. Poles can be set in nearly any type of terrain, even rocky ones. In the case of heavy rock, special equipment is used to auger out the hole. If placement occurs in boggy or wet terrain, many techniques are available to set poles securely. Once the poles are in place, wires can be strung and then equipment — like transformers, fuses, and reclosers — is installed. Power can then flow.

Underground line construction requires digging a trench that is deep enough to keep the lines well away from surface activities. Where the terrain is extremely rocky, underground lines may not be an option. Next, wires are laid in the trench directly or placed in conduits for protection. The trench is filled in, and the surface is restored to its original condition. Pad-mount transformers and additional equipment are installed as needed. Then the system is ready to deliver electricity.

Let's take a look at some the advantages and disadvantages of each construction method.

Overhead construction: pros

- Lower cost; quicker construction; easier to spot damage and faults; less expensive to repair and upgrade; can be built anywhere; any voltage can be placed overhead

Overhead construction: cons

- Susceptible to wind, ice, and snow; more vulnerable to damage from trees and vegetation,

which requires right-of-way trimming; vulnerable to blinks when animals and branches contact lines; susceptible to damage from vehicle collisions; less attractive

Underground construction: pros

- Not vulnerable to damage from tree branches; no right-of-way trimming required; less susceptible to damage from vehicle collisions; not impacted by wind, ice, and snow; less vulnerable to blinks when animals and branches contact lines

Underground construction: cons

- More expensive to build; susceptible to flooding; difficult to locate faults; expensive to repair; fed by overhead lines at some point, making the lines vulnerable to outages and interruptions; limitations on voltages that can be buried underground; can

be vulnerable to dig-ins; still requires right-of-way trimming for access to transformer and maintenance

Determining whether power lines should be overhead or underground boils down to what is best for the situation. Underground lines might be ideal in situations where there is a desire to keep the poles and wires out of sight, such as a residential neighborhood, park, or historical area.

Overhead systems work well when appearance is not a major concern. Examples include extremely long line distances across country, where the voltages are higher than the limitations set for underground lines.

The ultimate mix of underground and overhead construction used by Holmes-Wayne Electric Cooperative provides you, our members, with the highest possible quality of service at the lowest possible price. Cost, appearance, reliability, maintenance, and future upgrades will drive which is the better approach. ☺



HWEC linemen work diligently to replace a broken pole from a car accident on State Route 83.

Johnson joins Holmes-Wayne Electric Foundation

Matt Johnson was recently appointed to the Holmes-Wayne Electric “Operation Round Up” Foundation Board. The Foundation is governed by a five-member board that volunteers time and skills to help manage this important program.

Operation Round Up is a community service program that provides funding for charitable and benevolent purposes for individuals, families, and organization in the community. This nonprofit program was established in January 2006 and allows Holmes-Wayne Electric Cooperative members the opportunity to round their monthly bill to the next highest dollar.

“Operation Round Up has been a huge success story for the members of the cooperative and our community,” says Glenn Miller, HWEC president/CEO. “In the past 10 and a half years, we have given over \$500,000 back to our community. Pennies are adding up and making a difference in lives within our community.”

The grants help people or groups who may be going through a rough time or have no other program to turn to. The average contribution by a Holmes-Wayne Electric member is 50 cents per month, or \$6 per year.

“The beauty of this program is that it limits the burden of individual donations to a small amount, but working together, thousands of dollars can be generated, and that makes an amazing impact in the Holmes and Wayne County areas,” says Robyn Tate, HWEC’s director of human resources and community relations.

Johnson is replacing retiring board member Harold



HWEC’s Operation Round Up program is governed by a volunteer board of directors: from left are Jonathan Berger, Glenn Miller, Dan Mathie, Lisa Grassbaugh, and Matt Johnson.

Neuenschwander, who has served on the board since the program’s inception.

Holmes-Wayne Electric members not participating in the program can contact the office toll free at 866-674-1055 to enroll. Applications are available at the Cooperative office in Millersburg or on their website at www.hwecoop.com.



They’re adorable and a big part of our families, but even the family dog who plays well with the children can become naturally protective of and aggressive about its home.

During outage restoration and maintenance of our system, HWEC line staff may be on or beside your personal property to restore or maintain your power.

You can help by notifying HWEC if you have a dog that is not tied up and becomes aggressive with visitors. This allows our staff to be aware of any dangers as they try to work efficiently and safely to provide your reliable electric service.

Please call HWEC toll free at 866-674-1055 to register your dog.

