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Community News

Celebrating a Century of Service



By Eric Winslow
President and CEO

Your electric company turned 100 last month.

To celebrate a Century of Service, we hosted a banquet on April 13, 2011 — 100 years to the day that Citizens' Electric Company of Lewisburg held its first official business meeting.

Like the organizational meeting that took place in the spring of 1911, our gathering last month drew a bevy of civic leaders. Mayor Judy Wagner was on hand to proclaim April 13 as Citizens' Electric Day in the Borough of Lewisburg. Representatives from the offices of U.S. Rep. Tom Marino, state Rep. Fred Keller and state Sen. Gene Yaw honored the company with proclamations and citations from their respective legislative chambers. Union County Commissioner Preston Boop, East Buffalo Township Supervisor Henry Baylor, Energy Association of Pennsylvania President and CEO Terry Fitzpatrick, and Pennsylvania Public Utility Commissioner Wayne Gardner all attended and offered their congratulations to Citizens' Electric for reaching this major milestone.

While the celebration honored the company and 100 years of continuous operation, the evening was really about paying tribute to all the men and women — company founders, employees, and directors — who have had a hand in the company's longevity. And this really is a significant achievement for your local utility. Consider that 100 years ago, there were 343 investor-owned electric companies operating in Pennsylvania. Today Citizens' is one of only 11 that remains in operation.

That speaks volumes about the talented and dedicated individuals who have worked for, managed and governed the company over the past century.

We have survived independently for 100 years thanks to sound corporate policies, solid management objectives, fiscal responsibility, a strong sense of commitment to our customers and responsibility to the communities we serve.

Those are the reasons you, our customers, enjoy reliable electric service at affordable rates. Those are the reasons that Citizens' Electric is headed firmly into its second century, solid and strong.

So just what does the future hold for Citizens' Electric? I've been in this business for 32 years and in all my schooling and practical experience, the basic technology of an electric distribution company really has not changed all that much. Poles and wires, transformers and capacitors, they are still the same basic devices today as they were 50 years ago.

What has changed and will continue to change at an escalating pace is the level of electronics and communications and the amount of associated data and information.

In the last 10 years, we've exploded with new technology, most notably deploying an automated meter reading system and implementing digital mapping technology that enables us to view outages on our system in real time from a computer in the office.

Deploying these advanced technologies enables us to continue to maintain the highest levels of reliability and superior customer service and to do so with electric rates that are among the lowest in the state.

I am proud to be associated with Citizens' Electric Company and would like to thank all who, in one way or another, have helped guide and shape Citizens' Electric on its 100-year journey.

Looking ahead to our next Century of Service, you can count on Citizens' unwavering commitment to continue providing a reliable, affordable and safe flow of power and top notch service to our customers, and to remain a valued asset to the communities we serve.

Please give to \$1 Energy Fund

Consider signing up for Citizens' Electric's \$1 Energy Fund. By simply adding one dollar to your electric bill each month, you can help neighbors right here in the Buffalo Valley.

Your donations are matched by Citizens' Electric. This means that every \$1 donated becomes \$2, and 100 percent of those contributions are used to provide energy assistance grants to needy families in Citizens' territory.

With your help, the fund provided over \$9,210 to 37 customers last year.

To participate, simply designate your tax-deductible contribution amount on the return stub of your electric bill. You may stop your monthly donation at any time simply by notifying us.



Call 8-1-1 before you dig

Planning excavation work? Get your project off to a safe start by calling 8-1-1 before you dig.

8-1-1 is the new, abbreviated national telephone number homeowners and professional excavators can call to contact their state's One Call center.

State law requires that anyone doing excavation work of any kind is required to notify the Pennsylvania One Call System three days before digging.

Property owners and contractors can still call the long-time Pennsylvania One Call number, 1-800-242-1776, prior to performing excavation work.



Tree pruning, pole inspections to begin

Citizens' Electric resumes its annual pole-inspection and tree-pruning programs this month.

We will be contracting professional services to inspect our utility poles, primarily in an area bounded on the north by Hospital Drive, on the east by Route 15, on the west by Fairfield Road and on the south by Route 45.

Poles will be excavated around the base; those deemed to be structurally sound will be treated with an environmentally friendly wood preservative to extend their useful service life.

We will also contract with professional arborists to trim trees along our distribution line rights-of-way. The contractors are required to follow practices established by the International Society of Arboriculture. These include consideration for the health, shape, strength, growth rate, and appearance of trees before and after pruning. Tree pruning is an effective way to increase public safety and reliability.

Employees working for the right-of-way and pole-inspection contractors will carry identification cards and operate out of vehicles clearly marked with company logos. Company representatives will attempt to contact property owners before beginning maintenance work on private property. Citizens' also urges motorists who come across these maintenance activities to proceed slowly and maintain awareness of work crews.

Let budget billing even out payments

You can avoid seasonal fluctuations in your electric bill by participating in Citizens' Electric's budget billing plan.

Budget billing allows you to level out your monthly payments throughout the year, eliminating seasonal spikes as well as billing fluctuation caused by changes in your electric use. The plan is entirely voluntary and available to all customers on our residential rate schedule.

There is no cost to participate in the plan, nor are there any

savings. It is simply a convenience that levels out your monthly electric bill throughout the year. Your payment amount is calculated based on the average of your electric bills for the previous 12 months and may be adjusted periodically to reflect changes in your electric use, weather, generation rate changes, and other factors.

If you are interested in setting up a budget billing plan for your account or to learn more about how the plan works, visit our office or give us a call at (570) 524-2231.

Keep your cool with ceiling fans

Ceiling fans produce a cooling effect by moving air across the surface of the skin, making people *feel* cooler. While operating, the fan motor actually heats the space in which it operates; for that reason, they should only run when someone is in the room to appreciate the cooling effect. When no one is in the room, keep ceiling fans off.

Ceiling fans are usually mounted at the center of the room where the room's light fixture would normally go.

If you are planning to purchase a ceiling fan, be sure to get one sized properly for the room. Do this by measuring your room area (length times width) and looking for a fan with the appropriate fan diameter. For 100 square feet, you'll need a fan diameter of 36 inches; 150 square feet, 42 inches; 225 square feet, 48 inches, 375 square feet, 52 inches; and for a room 400 square feet or larger, you'll need two fans.

Some ceiling fans offer reversible operation. Fans should direct air downward in the summer so the breeze can create a cooling effect.