


**CITIZENS'**
*Electric*  
**COMPANY**

1775 Industrial Blvd. \* Lewisburg, PA 17837 \* (570) 524-2231

**Community News**

## Taking control of energy costs



**By Eric Winslow**  
*President and CEO*

As I write this, natural gas and heating oil prices have retreated significantly from their record highs of the past summer.

It's impossible to predict where those prices will be in coming months. An abnormally cold winter, upheaval in the Middle East, or a natural

disaster affecting our energy infrastructure could propel fuel prices back into the stratosphere.

And while Americans have been taking steps to decrease demand for energy by buying more fuel-efficient vehicles, reducing unnecessary trips, and turning down their thermostats, global competition for fuel resources continues to ramp up, with China and India leading the charge. Just a few weeks ago, the local media reported that anthracite coal from Northumberland and nearby counties may soon be exported to China and Brazil. The increased global demand for energy resources — including Pennsylvania coal — is here to stay and will likely continue to pressure energy prices upward despite conservation efforts.

Complicating the energy issue is the fact that we are in the midst of a national financial crisis, and it, too, has local implications. Credit has become a major point of contention in power supply contract negotiations for utilities like Citizens' Electric. Energy suppliers want additional credit assurance that they will receive payment for delivered power. That credit is available — at a steep price — and it's adding to the cost of purchased power.

There is so much volatility in the market today, it's impossible to predict where electric rates are

headed. No one expects rates to return to pre-2008 levels any time soon; so it pays to prepare for continued higher electric costs.

At Citizens' Electric, we are taking steps to keep our generation rates as low and stable as possible. To help protect customers from huge swings in electricity pricing, we purchase a mix of long-term and short-term power supply contracts to meet our load requirements. We also combine our power supply needs with those of our sister utility, Wellsboro Electric Co., when buying electric generation. This gives us purchasing power and enables us to buy power in standard block sizes, which allows us to procure generation at lower prices than would be otherwise possible.

Because we are still securing some of our 2009 contracts and because we purchase some of our energy on the daily spot market, it's too early to determine what the new generation rate on your electric bill will become Jan. 1. We will have information about our first-quarter generation rates in hand by the end of November and will be sharing those details with customers during an open meeting we will host next month. The meeting will take place Tuesday, Dec. 9, at La Primavera Restaurant in Lewisburg. (Additional details appear on the flip side of this newsletter.) In addition to discussing the state of electric rates, we will offer several presentations aimed at helping customers take control of their energy costs.

Just as most of us have taken steps to reduce purchases at the gas pump in the face of higher prices, it's imperative that consumers view electricity as a resource that needs to be used wisely. Conservation and energy efficiency measures will be critical in keeping your electric bills in check and preserving our nation's energy resources. We hope to be able to guide you in making some of those decisions during our open meeting next month. I look forward to seeing you there.

## Introducing E-Bill, Citizens' online bill payment program

Citizens' Electric customers will soon be able to view their account information and pay their electric bills online through E-Bill, our new Internet bill presentation and payment program.

E-Bill will give you the ability to:

- Pay your bill online using your checking account, MasterCard, Visa, or Discover Card\*
- View your current bill online
- View your billing history
- Update your account information

To explore the features of E-Bill, visit the Citizens' Electric website at [www.citizenselectric.com](http://www.citizenselectric.com), and click on "Payment Options," followed by "E-Bill." You will be prompted to register using your account number and type in a password. Once registered, you will be able to view your account information and may choose to pay your electric bill online.

You will also have the option of receiving an e-mail notification when a new bill is generated.

E-Bill offers you more choices and control over how and when you pay your bill. For more information about E-Bill, contact the Lewisburg office at 570-524-2231.

*\* A convenience fee applies to payments made via credit cards.*

## Please send us your customer service surveys

In order to ensure the best possible service, please complete and return the Customer Service Survey that we recently mailed to you.

The completed surveys can be dropped off at the Citizens' Electric Office, 1775 Industrial Blvd., Lewisburg, sent by fax to 570-524-5887 or mailed to: Citizens' Electric, P.O. Box 551, Lewisburg, PA 17837.

## Citizens' plans open meeting to discuss rates, conservation, energy assistance

Citizens' Electric will host an open house in the banquet room at La Primavera Restaurant Tuesday, Dec. 9, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Citizens' President and CEO Eric Winslow will update customers about the new generation rate that will be implemented for the first quarter of 2009. He will also address deregulation, the state of the energy market and answer questions from customers.

Several presenters, including a SEDA-COG representative, will speak on energy conservation and efficiency measures that customers can implement to save on energy costs.

In addition, a representative of

the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) will provide information about energy assistance that is available to low-income households. There will also be a presentation about how the Dollar Energy Fund can assist Citizens' Electric customers who are struggling to keep up with their electric bills.

Seating is limited for the event, and pre-registration is required. To register, contact Brook Bogaczyk, manager of customer service, at 570-522-6144 or send her an email at [bogaczykb@citizenselectric.com](mailto:bogaczykb@citizenselectric.com). Light appetizers and refreshments will be available.

## Need help paying your heating bills?

With energy prices at all-time highs, some households in Citizens' Electric's service territory will struggle to keep up with energy bills this winter.

If you need help paying your heating bills, you may be able to receive assistance through the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), which began accepting applications Nov. 3.

Funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the program provides energy-assistance grants to help low-income households pay their heating bills through the winter.

To receive help:

**You don't have to be receiving public assistance.**

**You don't have to have an unpaid heating bill.**

**You can either rent or own your home.**

LIHEAP offers both cash grants and crisis grants. Cash grants help families pay their heating bills. If you are eligible for a cash grant, the grant will be sent directly to your utility or fuel dealer, and the payment will be credited on your bill.

Crisis grants are available to help those who have emergency situations in which they are in danger of being without heat. Those situations include: having broken heating equipment or leaking fuel lines; being without fuel; having utility service terminated; or in danger of being without fuel or of having utility service terminated.

If you have a heating emergency, or for more information about LIHEAP, call the Union County Assistance Office at 570-524-2201 or the toll-free LIHEAP hotline at 1-866-857-7095.

To apply for help from LIHEAP, you will need to provide the assistance office with a recent heating bill, as well as the names, dates of birth, Social Security numbers and proofs of income for everyone in your household.

Below are the income guidelines for acceptance into the program:

Household size	Maximum income (before taxes)
1	\$23,110
2	\$30,221
3	\$37,332
4	\$44,443
5	\$51,554
6	\$58,665

*For income guidelines for additional household members, contact the Union County Assistance Office at 570-524-2201*