

HANCOCK-WOOD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE'S

# POWERLINES

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## LEAD THE WAY IN BUILDING A "SMART GRID"

BY GEORGE WALTON  
PRESIDENT & CEO

The federal stimulus package and various U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) initiatives are promoting development of "smart grid" to help solve America's energy crisis. In addition, DOE Secretary Steven Chu declared our nation's electricity transmission and distribution system a national priority this spring.

But what does any of this mean for members of Hancock-Wood Electric Cooperative (HWEC)?

The electric grid that covers our nation – quite literally the largest infrastructure ever built – includes millions of miles of transmission and

distribution lines that deliver power from generating stations to your front door.

Contrary to popular belief, the grid isn't unintelligent; it has sustained us for almost a century, keeping electricity safe, reliable, and affordable. But the grid is similar to a high school graduate who heads off for college. There's a lot of room for learning, in this case in the areas of energy efficiency and reliability.

The first step toward building a smarter grid involves installing a strong foundation of smart meters at homes and businesses that can talk back and forth to utilities about outages and electric use.

Electric cooperatives lead other industry sectors in deploying smart meters and

related automation devices, creating an advanced meter infrastructure inside the grid. Seventy percent of the nation's co-ops have installed some form of a smart meter, and another 11 percent will join them in the next year. This is important when you consider co-ops own and maintain 2.5 million miles of distribution lines, delivering power to 12 percent of American homes. In comparison, a recent Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) report showed only 2.7 percent of investor-owned utility customers have smart meters.

Here at HWEC, we launched an automated meter reading project in 2003. We completed installation of these meters in 2007.

These meters cut down  
(Continued on page 22)



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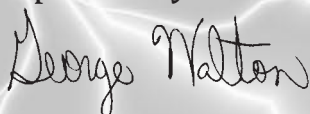
POWERLINES

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(—continued from page 21)

on operating costs and help co-ops effectively manage outages. Down the road, for example, a smart meter could tell us when the power is out instead of relying on you to call the outage in. It could help reroute power around problems, as well. Smart meters might even be able to help you manage energy use, showing you what power costs at different times of the day to help you make smart energy choices when using appliances.

At HWECC, we're committed to building a smarter grid, making it faster, more efficient, and smart enough to handle challenges this century promises to bring. An intelligent, strong grid will help consumers save money and may minimize future government mandated increases resulting from climate change and other policy goals. It's a critical part of the way we focus on supporting innovative technologies that make economic sense, allowing us to continue providing you with safe, reliable and affordable power in years to come.



See related illustration on page 24.

## Rebates available on solar water heating systems for HWECC members

Green Energy Ohio (GEO) is now receiving applications for rebates on solar water heating systems purchased after April 1, 2009. The systems must be on owner-occupied residential properties in Ohio. Their primary purpose must be to supplement domestic water heating. Qualifying applicants may apply for the rebate to cover a portion of the costs of eligible projects. Rebate funds are limited, but subject to program conditions and requirements. The maximum rebate amount is \$2,400 per applicant.



GEO is a statewide, nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting economically and environmentally sustainable energy policies and practices in Ohio. It was selected by The Sierra Club to receive funding for a solar thermal rebate program in Ohio.

To participate, go to [www.greenenergyohio.org/page.cfm?pageID=2295](http://www.greenenergyohio.org/page.cfm?pageID=2295) and follow the instructions listed there. Application forms are also available at the Web site. Act now, and use clean, renewable energy while saving both energy and money.

## Representative Jordan addresses HWECC members



U.S. Congressman  
Jim Jordan  
(R-Urbana)

U.S. Congressman Jim Jordan (R-Urbana) attended a legislative forum for HWECC members on Wednesday, May 27 at the co-op office in North Baltimore.

Topics that impact members directly, including political issues affecting the cooperative and its rates, were the morning's focus. Those attending were able to voice their concerns regarding legislative decisions that influence electric cooperatives' day-to-day operations.

# Join us for Family Fun Day

Get ready for another action-packed, FREE Family Fun Day on Friday, June 26 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., rain or shine at the HWEC office.

This year it's bigger than ever! We'll have CFL Charlie, more inflatables than ever before, our regular giveaways, and free CFLs for members who have not yet participated in the CFL Exchange program. Here's a look at everything you'll see and do:

- Meet CFL Charlie.
- Play on HUGE inflatable toys.
- Enjoy FREE sno cones.
- Eat grilled hot dogs, chips, cookies and drinks (while supplies last).
- Receive FREE giveaways (while supplies last).
- See the cooperative in action.
- Meet the employees who provide power to your homes and businesses.
- Bring your grill tank, and Prism Propane will fill it while you wait for only \$10.
- Plus, new this year – attend one or all of our Learning Sessions:
  - 11:00 a.m. - Climate change legislation
  - 11:30 a.m. - Cap and trade vs. carbon tax, and impact on rates
  - 12:00 p.m. - Energy efficiency
  - 12:30 p.m. - New outage management system demo
  - 1:00 p.m. - Hancock-Wood retail rate proposal

Also, kids will enjoy crafts and have the chance to sit in a real line truck. Tours of the new Hancock-Wood office will be given throughout the event. Plus, you'll be entertained by the music of Mike Mitchell.

**FREE** Family Fun Day  
Friday, June 26  
11 a.m. to 2 p.m.



# Start a conversation to keep electricity affordable

America is facing an energy crisis: in the midst of a struggling economy, our country needs to invest in expensive new generation and, at the same time, address climate change. These factors will drive up costs significantly. Electric bills will increase as a result of expected federal



**Our Energy, Our Future™**  
A Dialogue With America

action to address climate change. That's why HWEC members need to go to [www.ourenergy.coop](http://www.ourenergy.coop) to contact legislators directly. Congress and America's electric cooperatives must work together to find an affordable solution. Go to [www.ourenergy.coop](http://www.ourenergy.coop) today.

## Understanding the "Smart Grid"

With a "Smart Grid," every point along the electric delivery system is connected through a two-way communication system. The system is designed so outages and other power delivery problems are reported directly, allowing the co-op to more quickly respond. Electricity use is monitored and reported for billing.

As the system is developed, consumers will be able to monitor the price of electricity on an ongoing basis and may program electric appliances to use energy when the cost of electricity is cheaper. For example, a member may set the dishwasher to run at 3:00 a.m., when demand for energy is very low.

