

Bedford Rural Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

Bedford REC

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Office Hours

Monday through Friday
7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

From the General Manager



Member engagement saved the cooperative

By Brooks Shoemaker

BEDFORD Rural Electric is a member-owned, member-governed electric cooperative. When the co-op was founded in 1939, our mission was clearly to serve the needs of the community. We were a textbook example of a locally owned business.

Over time, as the novelty of receiving electricity waned, the founders passed on and new people moved into the community, some even began viewing the electric co-op like any other energy provider. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Why? Because we are different, and the key to that difference is the support and commitment from you, our owner-members. Research proves that when people own something they treat it differently. As an owner, you play a critical role in our success. Each year, if our revenue exceeds our expenses, it is allocated (and eventually returned) back to you — because you are a member of the co-op.

With that ownership comes certain rights, like the opportunity to seek election to serve on the board of directors. If that seems like too big of a commitment, we still want and need you to help chart the future of the co-op by participating in the annual elections.

We continually look for innovative ways to help you use energy more efficiently and cost-effectively. We are a stakeholder in the community, supporting local charitable organizations and providing educational opportunities for students. Sure, we sell electric-

ity, but our real power is that together, we empower this local community. When people feel empowered, they accomplish great things.

True, the world is different today than it was in 1939, but our mission of serving you and our community is constant. Working together, we will continue to accomplish great things.

Efficient kitchen lighting

In the past, a simple fluorescent ring in the center of the ceiling operated by a single switch was the norm for a typical American kitchen. It made too much light in some areas and not enough in others. Now, lighting has become an integral part of home décor and function, and layering different types of light from different sources has become popular. It is not only a smart plan, but it makes good sense from an efficiency perspective.

Task lighting, such as under-counter lighting, illuminates particular areas without causing shadows. Energy-efficient options typically feature LED-powered puck lights that can be placed precisely where they are most needed under the cabinets. Another option is the thin-diameter fluorescent tube that uses about 25 percent of the electricity of halogen or incandescent bulbs and has a much greater life span. Most can be plugged into a standard outlet. Overhead lights, whether from a central fixture, track lights or recessed, can offer indirect illumination and complement the task lights. Where possible, always use Energy

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Lilies of the valley

By Linda Williams

GARDENER and artist Dorothy Vensel always said daylilies were going to be her hobby in retirement.

Today, she is realizing that dream. Dorothy and Smoke Vensel own 10 acres of pastured, wooded land in picturesque Bedford Valley. They raise a few beef cattle, some hay and daylilies. In the spring, the wooded area surrounding their home is ablaze with yellow daffodils.

In July, the Vensels' garden was chosen as the "Garden of the Month" by the Bedford County Garden Club.

Always a gardener, Dorothy used to travel to greenhouses each spring with her friends, "Mouse" Grass, Sally Haver, and Barb Benigni, to find new and unusual flowers. Sally's interest in daylilies planted a seed with Dorothy, and she started finding varieties she especially liked. Eventually, she ended



up with a plot 4 feet by 90 feet.

Other daylily knowledge was gleaned from Denise Wright of Everett and Tom Thompson, who recently retired from growing his own daylilies.

Daylilies are hearty, spread quickly, and are a never-ending source of color throughout the summer months. But

A WINNING GARDEN: The Vensels' garden is named winner of the Garden of the Month award by the Bedford County Garden Club. From left are, Denise Wright, club co-president; Dorothy Vensel; Connie Lesh and Judy Jackson, Garden of the Month Committee members.

they are not without work. Dorothy spends an hour or two each day deadheading, weeding, watering, and giving them tender loving care. They grow so thick and fast that by August the weeds are nearly gone. They are actually edible and have a sweet taste deer find very appealing. The Vensels have discovered that fishing line pulled taut around the plot keeps the deer at bay.

Smoke does the mowing and mulching of the daylilies.

"He is willing to help with everything but weeding," Dorothy says.

They use mushroom mulch. In the fall, she lets the stems die off without cutting back. In the spring, they have to be raked, but leaving them over winter strengthens the plant.

Near the daylily plot is an attractive gazebo, decorated with summer adornments and surrounded with ornamental basil. The gazebo is the location of a fridge full of refreshments for those hot hours of working in the garden.

Dorothy has turned her love for the flowers into a small business and sells



BLOOMING GARDEN: Dorothy Vensel stands in the garden of daylilies at Lilies of the Valley.

the roots both on Facebook at Dorothy Whitfield Vensel and at a garden party held each July. Folks can attend the party and select the varieties they would like to see in their own gardens. If you missed the party, she also has a catalogue suggesting possible daylily choices. Dorothy takes the orders, and then gets them ready for fall pickup. This year, she sold hundreds at her garden party and was surprised to have folks from out of state stop by to place orders.

Some daylilies can be transplanted while they are blooming, but she believes they do much better if planted in September. The Vensel garden is state-inspected and all plants are guaranteed to grow.

Always expanding her daylily assort-

COLORFUL FLOWERS: Different varieties of daylilies bloom at different times, which allows for a colorful plot throughout the summer.

ment, Dorothy made a recent trip to Tennessee and returned with her car so full of daylilies not one more could have fit.

Retired from the Bedford County Courthouse, Dorothy maintained a beautiful garden in front of the judges' office. Upon her retirement, the garden quickly went to seeds and weeds. She now volunteers to oversee juveniles on parole in maintaining this colorful plot, and it is returning to an attractive garden.

Since her high school days, Dorothy has enjoyed art and painting. She paints animals, scenes, landscapes and, most of all, flowers. Her daylilies have given her the ideal subject. In her garden are more than 250 varieties in every shade and hue of the Crayola crayon box. Her art has



ALSO AN ARTIST: Dorothy Vensel also paints, and daylilies are often featured in her artwork.

been expanded by weekly classes at the Foundry in Everett since 1978.

Taking pictures of her own daylilies and re-creating them in paintings is a fun task that keeps her busy in the winter months. 🌻



From the General Manager

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Star and LED options.

Efficient lighting does not necessarily mean more lights, but rather more versatile lighting. Dimmer switches create more flexible lighting options for existing lights. There are times when maximum illumination is required for tasks such as food preparation or clean-up. At other times, it makes more sense to turn down the lights to create a cozier ambiance. By placing different sets of lights on dimmer switches, you increase your options, minimize the energy used for lighting and thereby allow for greater energy efficiency. However, always make sure dimmer switches are compatible with LED lights.

Lighting accounts for up to 15 percent of a home's energy budget, and since the kitchen still remains the heart of the home and is a high-traffic hub, it makes good sense to focus here. For basic energy efficiency in the kitchen and elsewhere, sometimes small adjustments can make a big impact.

The simplest area to focus is on the light itself. LED lights use a fraction of the energy of CFL, halogen or traditional incandescent bulbs, and they are known for their longevity and efficiency. Energy Star-rated LED bulbs

typically are the most energy efficient.

At its best, a good kitchen lighting plan is functional, attractive and energy efficient. Whether your kitchen is large or small, old or new, one reliable recipe for energy savings is utilizing more efficient lighting in the heart of the home. 

EMERGENCY POWER NEEDS

As a service to our members, Bedford Rural Electric needs to be aware of situations where special needs exist. Please provide the following details: (Please print clearly)

Account: _____
 Name: _____
 Address: _____

 Home Phone: _____
 Cellphone: _____
 Email Address: _____
 Special Needs: Medical
 Farming/Livestock
 Other _____

Each year, our goal is to provide service with no outages. Unfortunately, that is not a realistic expectation. Outages do occur and during severe storms, service restoration may take several days or longer. Therefore, we strongly recommend our members with special needs install standby backup generation equipment. Please contact our office for more information on this type of equipment.



How to Clean Up a Broken Compact Fluorescent Lightbulb (CFL)

A CFL's glass tubing contains about 4 milligrams of mercury. While this isn't much (classic thermometers contained 500 milligrams) consumers should still take precautions if a CFL breaks.

- 1 Ventilate the room, then wait 5 to 10 minutes. 
- 2 Scoop up powder and glass fragments using stiff paper or cardboard. Seal in a plastic bag. 
- 3 Use duct tape to pick up any fragments or powder.
- 4 Immediately place all materials used to clean up and the plastic bag in an outdoor trash container. Remember to wash your hands. 
- 5 Not all recycling centers accept broken CFLs. Check with your local and/or state waste authority for disposal requirements, or visit Earth911.com.

To learn more visit epa.gov/cflcleanup. 
 Source: Electrical Safety Foundation, Environmental Protection Agency

OUTAGE REPORTING

In case of an outage...

- 1 Check your fuses or circuit breakers.
- 2 Check with your neighbors, if convenient, to see if they have been affected by the power failure.
- 3 Call the 24-hour number, 623-7568, OR call 800-808-2732* during office hours.

**(Please help us save money – only use this number if toll charges apply.)*

Please give the person receiving the call your name as it appears on your bill, your telephone number and your map number if known. Any specific information about the outage will also be helpful in pinpointing the problem.

**To report an outage call:
(814) 623-7568**

During widespread power outages, many members are calling to report power failures. You may receive a busy signal, or in certain cases your call may go unanswered. This occurs in after-hours outages when the office is not fully staffed. Please be patient, and try again in a few minutes.