

# Bedford Rural Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

**Bedford REC**

P.O. Box 335

Bedford, PA 15522

814-623-5101

Email: support@bedfordrec.com

Website: www.bedfordrec.com

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

## From the General Manager



# Understanding power surges and blinks

By Brooks Shoemaker

HAVE YOU ever noticed your lights blink during a thunderstorm? Or perhaps you have noticed a blinking clock when you arrive home. When this happens, you have likely experienced a brief disruption to your electric service, which could be the result of a power surge or blink. While the symptoms of surges and blinks can appear to be similar, what has happened behind the scenes can be quite different.

Power surges are brief overvoltage spikes or disturbances of a power flow that can damage or destroy electronic equipment in your home or business. Most electronics are designed to handle small variations in voltage; however, power surges can reach amplitudes of tens of thousands of volts — this can be extremely damaging to your electronic equipment.

Surges can be caused by internal sources, like HVAC systems with variable frequency drives, or external sources, like lightning and damage to power lines and transformers.

We encourage all members to install surge protection devices (such as surge protector power strips) to safeguard your sensitive electronics. If you are experiencing frequent surges in your home or business and you believe the cause is internal, contact a qualified electrician to inspect your electrical system.

Power blinks are also brief service interruptions, but they are typically caused by a fault (short circuit) on a power line or a protective device that is working in reaction to the fault. Faults can occur through a variety of instanc-

es, like squirrels, birds, snakes, or other animals contacting an energized power line, tree branches touching a power line, lightning, and other similar events.

Any of these events can cause your power to blink. When it does, you may experience a brief power interruption — a blink. These protective devices act like automated circuit breakers when they detect a fault. As annoying as they can be, these brief blinks are a good thing. They are usually caused by protective devices doing their jobs. When they sense a fault, they “open up,” which stops the power flow. Then, after a few seconds, they try to restore the power flow. If the fault has cleared, everything returns to normal. If the fault remains, the process repeats. After the third unsuccessful attempt to restore power, the line remains open, and an outage occurs until our lineworkers can respond and clear the fault. The next time you must reset all of your electronics, remember that you are doing so because our equipment prevented an outage.

### Don't fall victim to utility scams

Every day, millions of Americans are targeted by scammers through phone calls, emails, and text messages, online or in person. Scammers' tactics can change daily, which is why it's important for consumers to stay on top of the latest scam reports from local and national news outlets, as well as your local utility companies.

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# Phero Farm is a subsistence farm

By Linda Williams

BEDFORD COUNTY is a great place to live and raise a family, and no one knows this better than the Phero family. Nelson and Sarah Phero and their five children moved from Lancaster to a local farm seven years ago and never looked back.

Nelson describes the family as “subsistence farmers,” meaning they can provide for their family plus have a surplus to sell to the community.

“That’s not a common thing in today’s world,” Nelson says.

Their living is provided by working a 30-acre farm, known as Hospitality Spring Farm, located at 2406 Younts Road. Nelson says that while they could keep busy with their vegetable and fruit farming plus an assortment of farm animals, they like to give back to the area. Every spring and fall, they host an open house inviting the public to a day of farm education and entertainment.

Their animals include pigs, a couple of beef cattle, chickens of various sorts, ducks, goats and lambs. All of their produce, including meat, is sold through Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) boxes and a store on their property. Each CSA box provides assorted food to participants who sign up for a weekly or biweekly box. Cost is \$80 if ordered before March 1 and \$90 after March 1. The boxes contain many different items, including meat, vegetables, fruit and even fresh flowers. They can be ordered online at [Hospitalityspringfarm.com](http://Hospitalityspringfarm.com) or by calling 814-623-0642.

During the summer months, the Pheros have a farm market wagon at Fisher’s Country Store, and they have a year-round store on their property. With produce season about to go into full swing, it is an inviting place to find the latest in fresh vegetables and fruits.

The Pheros’ home-schooled children are always ready to help with the many stages of farm life. They also hire part-time workers.

Because they had always wanted a



THIS IS FUN: Ephraim and Tirzah Phero show where children can play in the haymow when attending a spring or fall event at Hospitality Spring Farm.



FAMILY STORE: Autumn is a beautiful time of the year at the Pheros’ store on the edge of the farm.





**WELCOME:** A sign greets those arriving and leaving Hospitality Spring Farm.



**BABIES:** Everyone loves to see the babies on the farm every spring.

front yard full of flowers, the Pheros began planting as soon as they settled in their house. Eventually, they had many admirers driving slowly by their brick farmhouse to see their garden.

“We decided to let others enjoy the fruits of our labor,” Nelson says.

In the spring, they hold an open house when their yard is abloom with daffodils, tulips and other early season flowers. At that time, they also have ducklings, piglets, lambs and kids, all newborns to be admired.

In the fall, they repeat the festival atmosphere while colorful autumn leaves surround their picturesque farm. The fall event features performers, games for the children and food stands. The store is open for purchases. Not only does the shop have Phero farm produce, it also sells handmade items by their local church friends and a few things made by the Phero children. The store is open six days a week from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, and from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Wednesday and Saturday.

Nelson says they have never regretted their move from Lancaster as



**FALL FUN:** Shoppers enjoy the abundance of fall harvest.



**SPRING FLOWERS:** Rosale and Tizah Phero pose in a garden of tulips at Hospitality Spring Farm.

they were able to purchase their entire farm for the cost of their former house that sat on less than an acre. A native of New Jersey, Nelson feels taxes are reasonable here.

Despite their knowledge of farming and country living, they never stop learning. Sarah is an avid reader and says she likes to read at least three or four books on any subject before

trying something new.

They invite the public to look for their notices regarding their hospitality during Fall Foliage Festival time and again in the spring when the flowers bloom.

Hospitality Spring Farm is also open to family reunions, weddings or other special events. More information is available on their website. 🌻

**From the General Manager**

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In the past month, several co-op members were targeted through different scams. Scammers have tried numerous tactics, including spoofing our phone number so the caller ID looks like the call is coming from the cooperative. Remember, Bedford Rural Electric will NEVER call you and demand immediate payment without notice.

We want you to be aware of two trending scam tactics. One is the overpayment trick, where a scammer contacts you and claims that you have overpaid your utility bill. The scammers will say they need your personal banking information to deposit the credit back to your checking account. Do not fall for this scam! If you make an overpayment on your energy bill, we will automatically apply the extra money to your account, which will carry over to next month's bill.

Another trending scam is "SMiShing" (short for SMS phishing). Many consumers know to watch out for suspicious emails, but we tend to trust text messages sent to our smartphones. Always question suspicious texts, especially from someone claiming to represent a utility. We do not communicate with our members via text. These are just a few examples of trending scams, so it's important to watch for any red flags.

Here are a few reminders on how to take control of the situation when you have been targeted by a scammer:

- ▶ **Take your time.** Utility scammers try to create a sense of urgency so that you'll act fast and hand over personal information, especially over the phone. Take a moment to think about the situation before acting.
- ▶ **Be suspicious.** Scammers typically request immediate payments through prepaid debit cards or third-party apps. Unusual requests like this should raise red flags. Remember, if the request seems strange and out of the ordinary, you are likely being targeted by a scammer.

- ▶ **Confirm before you act.** If you are contacted by someone claiming to represent the cooperative, but you are unsure if it is legitimate, hang up and call the cooperative directly. You can reach us at 814-623-5101 to verify the situation.

Together, we can help prevent our friends and neighbors from being victimized.

**Energy efficiency tip of the month**

During summer months, run large appliances that emit heat (like clothes dryers and dishwashers) during the evening when it's cooler. This will minimize indoor heat during the day when outdoor temperatures are highest. ☀

**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.*

**BE PREPARED BEFORE A STORM STRIKES**

In the event of a power outage, be prepared by keeping the following items in an easy-to-find emergency supply kit.

- **WATER**  
Three-day supply, one gallon per person per day.
- **TOOLS**  
Flashlight, extra batteries, manual can opener, battery-powered or hand-crank radio, NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert.
- **FIRST AID KIT AND PRESCRIPTIONS**  
First aid supplies, hand sanitizer and at least one week's supply of prescriptions and medications for the family.

Learn more at [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)

 AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

*Source: American Red Cross, Federal Emergency Management Agency.*