



The Energy Line

Energy information for the customers of Wellsboro Electric

From the President & CEO

Making Progress

On Feb. 11, a transmission line failure and subsequent repair work shut down our entire electric system for nearly five hours.

As you probably remember, the outage struck our system just after lunch time, when Penelec's 115-kilovolt line into the Niles Valley substation failed.

This high-voltage line provides 100 percent of the power to the Wellsboro system, so all 5,900 customers were left without electricity for about 45 minutes.

During repairs to its transmission line, Penelec crews discovered a malfunctioning switch on the circuit. At about 6 p.m. that Sunday evening, Penelec contacted our office to schedule a planned outage, during which the faulty switch was to be replaced.

Although Penelec had agreed to begin the planned outage at 10 p.m., it didn't take place until almost midnight. Repair work that was expected to take about one hour to complete took four hours.

Needless to say, our customers — many of whom had been informed of the planned outage times — were frustrated and upset by the situation. So were those of us who work at Wellsboro Electric. The transmission outage was handled by Penelec in a way that was totally unacceptable.

We have taken steps to help prevent a similar situation from occurring in the future. WECO representatives met with Penelec officials following the incident to discuss ways to improve communications during transmission-related outages, speed up Penelec's response time to transmission outages in our area, and improve the reliability of the Penelec high-voltage line that feeds the Wellsboro Electric system.

The talks were very positive, and I am confident we have made some headway. Since the Feb. 11 outage, Penelec has spent a significant amount of money upgrading components at its Niles Valley substation in an effort to improve reliability. And when additional repairs were made to Penelec's transmission line the week after the outage, Penelec hired an outside contractor to perform the repairs "hot" and avoid causing another outage for the WECO system. We appreciate the steps Penelec has taken since Feb. 11 to work with us and, in turn, improve services to our customers.

Equipment failure and power outages are unavoidable at times. However, I believe with the proper communications and procedures in place, transmission-related outage times can be minimized, and we will be able to provide our customers with more accurate information, allowing them to prepare appropriately for an outage situation.



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Right-of-way work begins
Call 8-1-1 before digging
Telephone numbers needed

Craig Eccher

It's your call

Following the system-wide power outage that occurred in February, a number of customers told us they experienced difficulties getting through to us via telephone.

We know this can be frustrating, but it is important that you notify us any time there is a power outage.

Our after-hours call center operates a 24-line telephone system. When all 24 lines are busy, callers receive a "fast busy" signal. If that occurs, please wait a few minutes and try calling us again.

When your call reaches an open line, you will be directed to a live operator, if one is available. If all operators are handling other calls, you will have the option of waiting to speak with a live operator or entering your outage into our automated system.

If you choose to speak with an operator, your call will be placed in queue and answered in the order it was received. If you chose to enter your outage automatically, you will be asked to key in your seven-digit telephone number. As long as we have your telephone number on file, our dispatchers will know your home's exact location.

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-trimming work under way

Work to trim trees and clear vegetation on Wellsboro Electric rights-of-way is under way.

Asplundh Tree Experts has been contracted to provide this year's right-of-way maintenance on the Wellsboro system. Asplundh crews will be trimming and re-clearing rights-of-way on the Stony Fork circuit for the next seven to eight months. This circuit encompasses the west end of Wellsboro Borough, Kelsey Street, Stony Fork, and Thumtstown areas.

The work focuses on trimming and clearing trees that have the potential to interfere with electric lines. The objective is to increase the reliability of our electric service by preventing trees from coming into contact with the lines.

Bob McCarthy, vice president of engineering and operations, said an Asplundh representative will attempt to personally visit owners

of properties where trimming work will take place. The representative, who will carry company identification, will explain what pruning work will be required and seek approval from the property owner to initiate the right-of-way maintenance work.

If customers have questions about the right-of-way program, they may call Bob McCarthy at the Wellsboro office. The telephone number is (570) 724-3516.

If you have a tree on your property that may be growing too close to one of our power lines, please notify the Wellsboro Electric office. We will send a company representative to assess the situation. If your tree is deemed to pose a potential hazard, we will make arrangements to have it removed.

For more information, contact Robert McCarthy at 570-724-3516.

Let budget billing even out payments

You can avoid monthly fluctuations in your electric bill by signing up for Wellsboro Electric's Budget Billing plan.

The program allows you to level out your monthly payments throughout the year. Your payment amount is calculated based on the average of your electric bills for the previous 12 months.

If you are interested in setting up a budget billing plan for your account, please contact our office.

Customers asked to verify contact info

Please be sure to verify that your telephone number and the 911 address that appears on your electric bill is correct. If either is incorrect, please write your correct number or address on the back of

your payment stub and return with payment. Please note that we use your phone number and 911 address when dispatching outages and to notify you about planned outages.

Tired of Writing Checks? Try Easy Pay

Your Wellsboro Electric bill can be deducted from your bank account each month — making your life a little easier. Easy Pay is our automatic bill-payment program.

By participating, you can avoid the hassle of searching for stamps, writing checks and worrying about whether your payment arrives on time.

Call our office or stop by to become an Easy Pay customer.