

THE ENERGY LINE



Energy information for the customers of Wellsboro Electric



Barney Farnsworth
President & CEO

A year of challenges and progress

With summer in full swing and COVID-19 in retreat, many folks are regaining some semblance of normalcy in their lives following a very difficult year for all of us.

This past year has challenged us like no other in my lifetime. The coronavirus pandemic has taken loved ones and livelihoods, made masking up, isolation and social distancing the norm, and disrupted

all facets of life, from commerce to the classroom.

While the region seems to be getting back to normal, we know some of our electric customers continue to face hardships due to loss of income caused by the pandemic. We want our customers experiencing financial challenges to know that we are here to help. If you are having trouble keeping up with your electric bill payments, please call the office so our customer service representatives can assist you in setting up payment arrangement plans or direct you to local resources that provide energy assistance grants to qualifying households.

Just like many of you, we at Wellsboro Electric had to adapt to the many changes required to operate during a pandemic. We expended a lot of time and effort to ensure a healthy workforce that could keep the power flowing to your homes and businesses and quickly respond to power outages when they occurred.

And, I am pleased to say, power outages, blinks and dips occur much less frequently for Wellsboro Electric customers these days as a result of all of the major system improvement work that has been completed over the past few years.

The new 115-kilovolt transmission line that Penelec constructed from Niles Valley to our Buena Vista Street

Substation has been in-service for over 9 months. This project, in conjunction with substation upgrades we completed last year and the borough voltage conversions we completed in 2019 and 2020, have significantly increased the reliability of our distribution system.

We continue working to improve reliability for customers living outside of the borough with initiatives that include replacing 200 to 250 poles annually, returning our tree-trimming cycle back to 5 years, and adding automatic reclosers throughout our rural circuits.

We have a number of system improvement projects planned for the next few years that will make steady improvements to reliability in the Middlebury and Stony Fork areas of our service territory.

We want your input on EVs, solar

There are changes certain to come to the energy business as a result of the rise in popularity of renewable power sources, battery technology and electric vehicles (EVs). We want to be in a position to adapt to those changes and incorporate them into our planning efforts. Our office is getting calls just about every day from customers with questions about electric vehicles, EV chargers, solar installations and battery technology, collectively referred to as distributed energy resources.

We are interested in hearing from the community to gauge local interest in EVs, charging units, battery installations and solar projects. We'll be sending out a notice asking customers to participate in a seven- to 10-question survey so we can get a feel for our customers' interest in these distributed energy resources and plan accordingly.

The survey will be conducted online through Survey Monkey and will be made available to customers this fall.

Until then, I hope you enjoy your summer and the ability to get together with friends and family once again.

Wellsboro Electric

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SmartHub offers account management at your fingertips

SmartHub lets you manage all aspects of your Wellsboro Electric account online or with your mobile device.



With SmartHub, you can:

- View bills online
- View your billing history
- Change account information
- Pay your bill online (*third party vendor fee applies*)
- Receive billing and high/low energy use notifications
- Sign up for Easy Pay, our automatic payment program
- Monitor daily electric use.
- Report outages

To create a SmartHub account, go to www.wellsboroelectric.com, click on the SmartHub link and follow the on-screen instructions. SmartHub also features a mobile application available for Android and iOS smartphones and tablets. Visit your app store for a free download.

Tired of mailing checks? Try Easy Pay

Want to eliminate the monthly chore of writing out a check for your electric bill and then worrying if your payment will arrive at our office by its due date?

Consider signing up for Easy Pay, our automatic bill payment program. With Easy Pay, your Wellsboro Electric bill is automatically deducted from your bank account on the due date each month. No check to write. No stamps to buy. No worries about postal delays and late fees.

Call our office or visit our website, wellsboroelectric.com, to enroll.

Tree-trimming, pole inspections underway

Work to trim trees and clear vegetation on Wellsboro Electric rights of way began in May and will continue into the fall.

Crews with our right-of-way contractor, Jaflo Inc., will be trimming and clearing about 75 miles of rights of way in Wellsboro Borough and Charleston Township this year. Crews will be primarily working along Route 6 and intersecting roads, from the eastern portion of the borough east to the Whitneyville area.

Right-of-way maintenance helps increase the reliability of your electric service by establishing a buffer between the trees and electric lines, a common source of power interruptions due to increasingly intense storms in recent years.

A Jaflo representative will be visiting property owners prior to beginning work to notify them of upcoming work to trim or treat rights of way with spray to control future vegetative growth.

Wellsboro Electric will also be utilizing a third-party contractor to inspect and test our poles during the month of July. We will provide additional information and notification about the pole-testing program on our website and Facebook page as it becomes available.

For more information about our right-of-way management program or pole-testing, contact Tyler Mead, WECO director of operations, at (570)724-3516.

Help a neighbor in need

Many families in our community struggle to pay their utility bills.

You can help those less fortunate by participating in Wellsboro Electric's Dollar Energy Fund.

By adding one dollar or more to your electric bill each month, you can help your neighbors in the Wellsboro area.

Your tax-deductible contribution to the Dollar Energy Fund is matched by Wellsboro Electric, and 100 percent of the contributions are used to provide energy assistance grants to families in WECO's territory.

To participate, please check the Dollar Energy Fund box on your electric bill, enter your contribution amount and return it to Wellsboro Electric.



Keep safe distance from downed electric lines

With the summer storm season at hand, high winds from thunderstorms can sometimes bring down electric lines.

If you encounter a downed line:

- Do not go near the line. Stay away from any downed or sagging wires. Never drive over downed wires.
- Call the local utility to report the downed wire. If you do not know the number, contact emergency services at 911.
- Warn others to stay away from downed wires until help arrives.