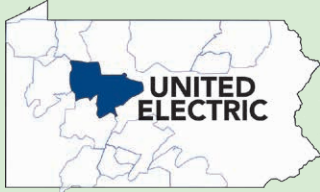




United Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

UNITED ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

P.O. Box 688
DuBois, PA 15801-0688
Customer Service: 888-581-8969
www.unitedpa.com
Outage: 800-262-8959
Office Hours: M - F 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairman

Stephen A. Marshall, District 5
1030 Donahue Rd.
Luthersburg, PA 15848
814-583-7320

Vice Chairman

Timothy D. Burkett, District 6
5059 Hamilton Markton Rd.
Punxsutawney, PA 15767
814-938-7991

Secretary/Treasurer

Eileen Pisaneschi, District 2
1964 River Hill Rd.
Frenchville, PA 16836
814-263-4491

DIRECTORS

Shanelle Hawk, District 1
502 Pine Run Rd.
Mayport, PA 16240
814-365-5646

Arden E. Owens, District 7
505 Trout Run Rd.
Shawville, PA 16873
814-765-6458

Richard Petrosky, District 3
P.O. Box 612
DuBois, PA 15801
814-371-8672

David W. Walker, District 4
631 Olanta Rd.
Olanta, PA 16863
814-236-3321

President & CEO
Brenda Swartzlander

Consumer Advocate
Lauren Gustafson, ext. 8501

Manager of Marketing & Member Services
Kristy Smith

More Options, More Convenience




BRENDA SWARTZLANDER

AFTER A LONG, CHILLY WINTER, we are all looking forward to the arrival of spring. The seasonal shift gives us the chance to take advantage of the longer daylight hours and brings a time for new beginnings. As president & CEO of United Electric, I am pleased to offer a new, automated payment feature that's been added to our phone system, making the payment process safer and more convenient for our members.

United Electric is moving to this new system to comply with the Payment Card Industry (PCI) Data Security Standards, which help companies prevent credit/debit card and banking fraud. Moving to this system ensures your privacy and safety from identity theft and fraud while allowing the cooperative to accept debit/credit card and check-by-phone payments.

The new phone payment system will launch **April 1**. Members will still be able to call the same office phone number (888-581-8969); however, a new prompt will be added, asking if you would like to make a payment. Our customer service representatives will still be available during normal business hours to discuss your billing needs and will be able to answer any questions you may have regarding the new payment system. For your protection, our customer service representatives will no longer be able to take your credit/debit card or checking account information, but they will help you reach the payment system, which is available anytime, day or night.

Paying your electric bill securely over the phone is just one more convenient way to pay your bill. Our SmartHub application and online login offer even more convenience for payments and make information available at your fingertips. United also allows automatic bank drafts as well as automatic credit/debit card payments. In addition, we still accept payments by mail and at our office via the night drop, drive-up window and front counter.

As technology is every-changing, United Electric will continue to have members' security and privacy at the forefront of our minds. Please call or visit at our office: 29 United Road, DuBois. We are always here to help. 

BRENDA SWARTZLANDER
PRESIDENT & CEO

PAY-BY-PHONE DIRECT

855-938-3632 OR

Dial United's Customer Service at 888-581-8969. Follow the prompt to make a payment by phone. You will be routed to the secure, automated payment system.

April 1, 2024



Main Menu	How to Make a Payment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 - to check your account status 2 - to make a payment 3 - to add a stored payment method 4 - to create or update your four-digit PIN 5 - to update your phone number 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press 2 to make a payment and follow the prompts. • If you have more than one account, you will be given the option to pay both. • A verification number will be given upon payment completion. • Stored payment methods require the use of a PIN (refer to the main menu, option 4).



Learning from Mistakes

GLENN SCHUCKERS

GARDENERS AND FARMERS PAY little attention to the calendar months that start the year. Even though few of us plow fields or spade gardens in March, we will be planning. Just thinking about corn or cucumbers makes us wish for what's ahead.

This month may be a little late to order seeds; many nurseries and seed companies start sending out catalogs in November and December. If I want to get the seeds or plants in a timely fashion, I know it is best to order early. But November, or even December, is too early since many gardeners are just finishing cleaning up last summer's garden leftovers. If it keeps going this way, maybe we will have to order seeds while we are still picking pumpkins

LESSONS LEARNED: After a lot of mistakes, I was able to grow these geraniums from seeds last year, but not without a lot of trial and error. Growing plants from seed takes patience – and maybe some luck – but the results can be rewarding.

and squash. I think we need to allow each season to have its own time.

So far, I have been lucky ordering seeds in January or even early February, as was the case this year. They arrived last month, and I was able to get all the seeds I wanted. I put them in a safe, dry place, but March is the time to get them into soil so they are ready to sprout.

March begins the march toward actually doing some work for the coming spring and summer. I usually think of the middle of May as the last frost or, to be a little on the safe side, the first of June. That means seeds that need to be planted six to eight weeks before the last frost should be in the ground before the end of March.

A friend of mine who used to teach biology had many students plant tomatoes, which grew into plants they could take home at the end of the school year. That was back in the last century when most of the parents, aunts,



uncles or next-door neighbors had small vegetable gardens. I have no idea how that would go over today; sadly, a lot of people — even in small towns — no longer have their own vegetable gardens. That’s too bad since kids may grow up never knowing the taste of freshly picked produce.

Mistakes happen

Growing a garden is usually a record of mistakes. People who don’t like making or admitting to having made a mistake should never plant a garden.

I recall one mistake I made just a year ago. I had installed some grow lights in the basement and decided I would get back to growing some of my own plants rather than buying them at a nursery. Our old house had a laundry room that faced south with one whole wall of windows, so it was a perfect place to grow tomatoes, peppers and other plants with a longer growing season. It was heated, and I had built a windowsill wide enough to hold 20-inch seed trays.

Our current home lacks that wall of windows, so I waited 12 years to put what I needed in the basement. I

had a table with a grow light over it that allowed me to extend the season of annual plants, which had at least survived if not thrived, through the winter. There was enough room for two or three trays of seedlings, so I was ready to grow my own plants.

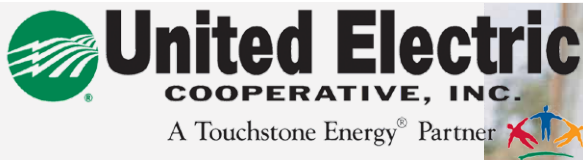
Or so I thought.

I planted a dozen or so pots of tomatoes and about as many peppers. After about a week of watching for the young seedlings to appear, I spotted two or three young tomato plants, and then a couple more, and finally 12. Success!

I kept looking at the pots with pepper seeds, but nothing appeared. I remembered it takes peppers much longer to germinate than tomatoes, but after almost six weeks, I gave up watching and decided that 1) I had some bad seed; 2) I had planted the seed too shallow (or deep); and/or 3) I had drowned the seed with water. Whatever the cause, I determined I would not have my own pepper plants that year.

At that point, I found the packet of seeds, read the directions printed on it and quickly realized what I had done

Continued on page 14D



DREAM.
SHINE.
ACHIEVE.

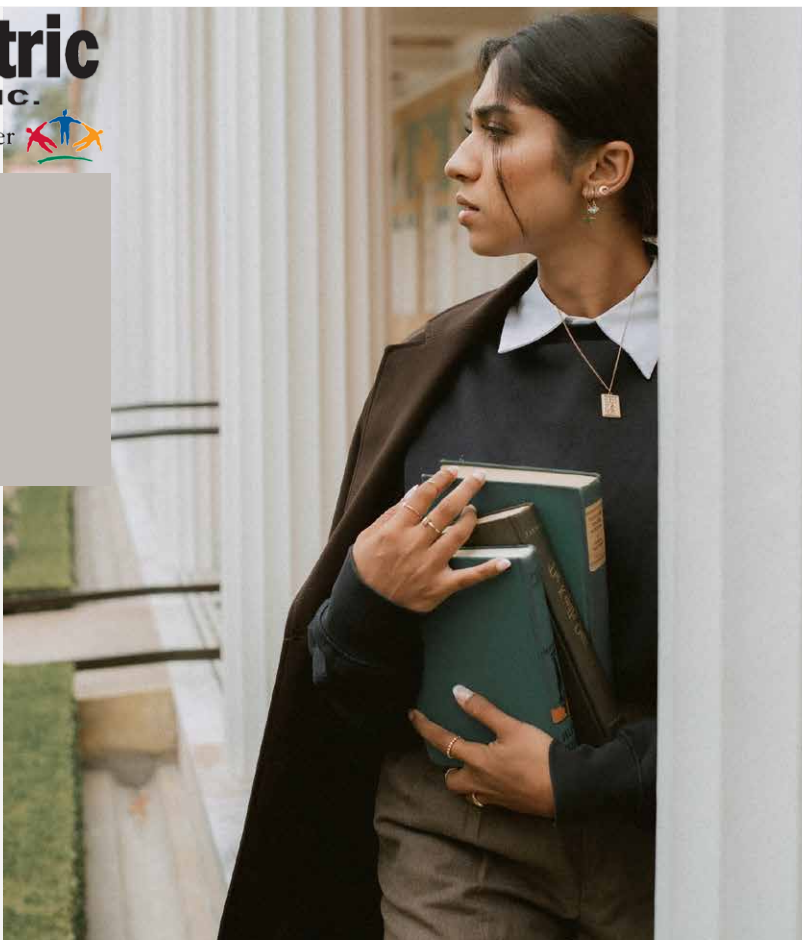
ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR THE SHINE THE LIGHT SCHOLARSHIP

All Students
Attending or
Planning to Attend
Higher Education*

Application
deadline is
April 15, 2024.

Contact **Kristy Smith:**
888-581-8969, ext. 8507
ksmith@unitedpa.com
www.unitedpa.com

*Must be a United Electric Cooperative member or dependent. Directors, employees and their families are ineligible to apply.



RUSTIC VIEWS

Continued from page 14C

wrong: “Pepper seeds need a soil temperature of 80 degrees to germinate,” it read.

In past years, I had always put an old heating pad under the trays of pepper seeds. Peppers need warm soil to germinate, and I had not done that. The basement is about room temperature, but nothing like the 80 degrees pepper seeds need. My mistake.

I will probably try growing pepper plants again this year, but this time I will warm the soil. There are a lot of expensive ways to warm the soil, like the greenhouses advertised for growing plants, but a heating pad with a thermometer will do just as well.

I am sure I will make some mistakes this year, but hopefully they will be new mistakes and not ones I have made in the past. That, after all, is how humans learn.

I think about that when I hear people say they have never made a mistake in their garden.

I envy them, but I also feel a little sorry for them. Never having made a mistake means they have never improved. As I said earlier: Growing a garden is usually a record of mistakes. I am sure I will make some mistakes this year, but I really want them to teach me something. No mistakes mean no progress. 🍷

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Washing windows and screens is a great way to practice energy efficiency during spring cleaning. Clean windows and screens make your home brighter by allowing more sunlight in, reducing the need for lamps and fixtures. Clean screens also allow more fresh air in the home when the windows are open to recycle indoor air. Natural light and clean air are energy savers, and they enhance overall health and productivity.

Source: [energy.gov](https://www.energy.gov)



STAYING SAFE DURING AN OUTAGE

We work hard to provide the most reliable service possible. Rest assured, if the power is out, we are on it!

The length of time it takes to restore your power depends on several factors, including the:



Extent of the storm's destruction



Severity of utility equipment damage



Number and extent of outages



Accessibility to damaged equipment

STAY SAFE UNTIL POWER IS RESTORED

- Stay far away and keep others away from downed power lines, which could be live and deadly.
- If you come across a downed line, immediately call 9-1-1 to report it.
- Never enter a flooded room; the water could be energized.
- If you are standing in water, do not turn on/off power or flip a switch.



Prepare for a storm by gathering these items:



Bottles of water



Non-perishable food



Prescriptions



Battery-operated radio

Flashlights



Extra batteries



Pet supplies

Blankets



Warm clothing



First-aid kit

Hand sanitizer

THANK YOU for your patience during outages. When the lights go off, we are working safely and efficiently to restore power. The safety of our employees, as well as those we serve, is our TOP priority.

Safe
Electricity.org®