



MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

Only **you** can stop distracted driving



Brian Hill
GENERAL MANAGER/CEO

At Guernsey-Muskingum Electric Cooperative, our first priority is always safety. Being safe isn't only about protective gear and proper work procedures. An important aspect of the safety of our community is safe driving and increasing awareness about the dangers of distracted driving. Distracted driving accidents pose a serious risk to our family members and neighbors and also to our cooperative line crews, who often must work in or alongside roads to maintain the infrastructure that brings electricity to your home.

What is distracted driving?

The top-of-mind answer is texting and driving. The term, however, encompasses much more than just texting. It could be any distraction that may take one's attention away from the road ahead: car conversations, kids in the back seat, eating, music, GPS, personal grooming, and more. It can seem perfectly safe to look away from the road for just a couple of seconds to reach into the glovebox or to pass a snack to a child, but in that couple of seconds, the route you're on could change drastically. Perhaps you come upon a slow-moving vehicle, a work zone, or a law enforcement officer pulled over on the side of the road. The couple of seconds your eyes were off the road is a couple seconds of reaction time you lost, and that may be all it takes to turn an innocent action into one with devastating consequences.

Distracted driving is more than a buzzword — it is one of Ohio's leading causes of preventable accidents, deaths, and power outages. Distracted driving is so prevalent that the phrase is an official cause code on accident reports, joining the ranks of drunk driving, speeding, seat belt usage, and pedestrians/bicyclists as an accident category.

Eyes up. Phone down. It can wait.

According to the Ohio State Highway Patrol, more than 100,000 distracted driving crashes have occurred in Ohio since 2013, causing more than 53,000 injuries.

From an electrical cooperative perspective, distracted drivers are a leading cause of downed power lines, broken poles, and electric outages. While these consequences pale in comparison to lives lost or irrevocably changed, they do contribute to hardships and increased costs for our members.

When one heart stops, many more are broken

Vehicles are a thousand or more pounds of cold steel, hurtling through space at high speeds. When a vehicle strikes the soft tissue of a person, it can be deadly. Losing one's life or mobility to a distracted driver causes damage, pain, and financial hardships that last forever.

Be safe and vigilant drivers out there.





Ray Crock

Get your ducts in a row

For most people, the inner workings of the HVAC system are out of sight, out of mind. The system is ignored until something goes wrong. Understanding the basics of how a heating and cooling system works will help you create a more

efficient, comfortable living space.

If you have a forced air system, you have ducts. A forced air system consists of the equipment that heats or cools the air and the ductwork that moves it around the home. Your furnace, or air handler, has a fan inside that pushes the heated or cooled air through the supply ducts into the rooms. The return ducts bring air back to the furnace to be heated or cooled again and sent back through the home.

This continuous loop of supply and return is susceptible to inefficient practices and leakage, but here are some steps you can take to keep your system running efficiently and maintain a comfortable living space.

Check your vent dampers

Make sure the air you paid to heat or cool is freely moving through the home. Closing registers does not save energy. It can cause your system to work harder, shortening its lifespan and increasing duct leakage.

Check that your supply register dampers are open and not blocked by furniture or rugs throughout your home. This is easy to do and costs nothing.

Seal your ducts

If your ductwork travels through an attic, crawl space or other unconditioned space, it could have holes, cracks, or gaps that cause duct leakage. This wastes energy and money by heating or cooling spaces you don't use.

The U.S. Department of Energy estimates 20% to 30% of air moved through duct systems is lost due to duct leakage. You could have the most efficient heating or cooling unit available, but if your ducts leak, you are wasting energy.

In addition to wasted energy, leaky ducts can cause air-quality issues. Leaks in the return ducts can pull air into the ducts from surrounding spaces, through the furnace, and then deliver it into the home. This can introduce dust, dirt, insulation particles, and other gross stuff that is in your attic, crawl space, or walls.

Sealing ducts can be difficult because they are hidden behind the walls, floor, and/or ceiling. Attics and crawl

spaces can be hard places to work. You can hire a professional to test your duct system for leakage with specialized equipment and seal your ducts.

If you seal ducts yourself, do not use duct tape. I know it is hard to believe, but duct tape dries out quickly and loses its adhesion. Seal with metal tape or duct mastic specifically designed for the job.

One relatively easy place to seal is where the duct meets the floor, wall, or ceiling. Remove the registers and look for cracks or gaps around the edges. Remember to wear gloves to protect your hands.

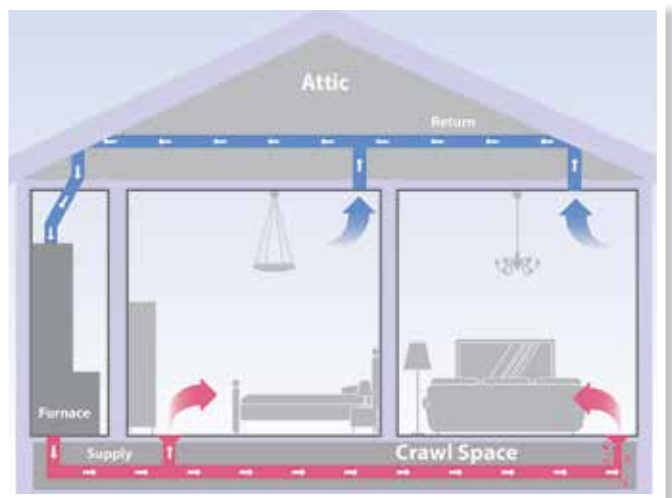
Change your filter

The filter is on the return side of the duct system. It could be in the return registers or in the furnace. Checking your system's filter regularly and replacing it when dirty can help you improve your heating and cooling efficiency.

When it comes to filters, one philosophy is to buy cheap and replace often. You may find you have a difficult time throwing away a \$20 filter instead of a \$5 filter. Save by buying filters in bulk or set up auto ship for every three months.

In most cases, filters are designed to protect the furnace, not improve air quality. If you are worried about your home's air quality, getting the ducts cleaned and sealed can help. Add an air purifier if you need additional air filtration.

Now that you know the inner workings of your HVAC system and what it needs to run efficiently, you can improve and maintain the comfort in your home year-round.



Save the date

Annual meeting of members

Saturday, April 9, 2022

Registration: 9:30 a.m.

Business meeting begins promptly at noon

Larry W. Miller Intermediate School

13125 John Glenn School Road, New Concord

GMEC will continually monitor local guidelines regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and will change plans accordingly if needed.

We want to hear from you!

Your thoughts and opinions about
Guernsey-Muskingum Electric Cooperative help us to serve you better.



In April, Guernsey-Muskingum Electric Cooperative will be working with NRECA Market Research Services to complete member satisfaction surveys.

The surveys will be both by phone and email, but not everyone will be contacted. If you are contacted, we would greatly appreciate a few minutes of your time to share your opinions of the cooperative.

We strive to provide all members with safe, affordable, reliable, and clean electric service. By participating in the survey, you will help us make decisions that benefit you, your family, and your neighbors.

Thank you!

All information is confidential.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Are you considering purchasing a new refrigerator, freezer, or central air conditioner? If so, make sure you buy an ENERGY STAR-rated unit. It will have the ENERGY STAR logo on the unit and on the yellow energy guide. ENERGY STAR appliances are at least 15% more efficient than base models. Also, Guernsey-Muskingum Electric Cooperative offers a \$100 energy credit for new refrigerators, freezers, and central air conditioners that have the ENERGY STAR rating.

Source: www.energy.gov



Is your name and account number here?

If it is, call the cooperative's office and receive a FREE home change-out to LED lightbulbs (limit six bulbs). Thanks for reading the local pages of *Ohio Cooperative Living* magazine.

#40-0614-08-00.....Rodney B Carpenter	#18-0549-09-01.....Sara J Mock
#51-0964-45-03.....Shery Lynn Eynon	#50-0280-13-02.....Andrew Pumphrey
#48-0437-27-00.....Joe Duvall	
#16-0101-30-02.....Victoria L Alexander	



GUERNSEY-MUSKINGUM ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

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OFFICE

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OFFICE HOURS

Monday–Friday, 7:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

ELECTRIC RATES

Farm and Home Service rate schedule R-1*
Service Availability Charge — \$24/mo.
First 500 kWh/month — 13.169¢/kWh
Over 500 kWh/month — 11.845¢/kWh

Net Billing Residential R-1 NB* and
Net Metering Residential R-1 NM*
Service Availability Charge — \$42/mo.
First 2,000 kWh/mo. — 11.645¢/kWh
Over 2,000 kWh/mo. — 11.845¢/kWh

Seasonal Residential Service
rate schedule S-1*

Service Availability Charge — \$384/yr.
First 800 kWh/yr. — 20.769¢/kWh
800 to 6,000 kWh/yr. — 11.645¢/kWh
Over 6,000 kWh/yr. — 11.845¢/kWh
(Minimum annual charge — \$384/yr.
for service between March 1, 2021,
and Feb. 28, 2022)

Commercial Service rate schedule C-1*
Service Availability Charge — \$26/mo.
First 1,500 kWh/mo. — 13.569¢/kWh
Over 1,500 kWh/mo. — 11.845¢/kWh

*Rider T — Kilowatt-Hour Tax applies to all rate schedules and must be added to the rates shown.

First 2,000 kWh/mo. — 0.465¢/kWh
Next 13,000 kWh/mo. — 0.419¢/kWh
Over 15,000 kWh/mo. — 0.363¢/kWh

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