

REA Energy Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

REA ENERGY COOPERATIVE, INC.

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Indiana Office: 7 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

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Monday, Wednesday and Friday
Closed Tuesday and Thursday

New EPA Power Plant Rules May Affect Grid Reliability



CHAD CARRICK

ON APRIL 25, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released four major new regulations for the electric industry, including a much-anticipated rule to cut emissions from power plants, a sweeping move that will increase reliability concerns for electric cooperatives and other utilities nationwide.

“The path outlined by the EPA is unlawful, unrealistic and unachievable,” said Jim Matheson, CEO of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. “It undermines electric reliability and poses grave consequences for an already stressed electric grid.”


The power plant rule constrains existing coal and new natural gas plants by requiring them to install carbon capture and storage (CCS) technology that is not yet reliable or commercially available.

“The new EPA rules ignore our nation’s ongoing electric reliability challenges and are the wrong approach at a critical time for our nation’s energy future,” Matheson said.

The power plant rule will force the early closure of electric generation sources that are available 24/7 and will impede the construction of new natural gas plants. The timing of these sweeping new rules is particularly troubling as electric utilities face a surge in demand for electricity from factors like transportation electrification and the rapid expansion of data centers to support artificial intelligence, e-commerce, and cryptocurrency.

Under the new rule, existing coal-fired power plants that plan to operate past the start of 2039 must install CCS to capture 90% of emissions by 2032. The rule requires the same of new natural gas plants that operate more than 40% of the time. These standards and their reliance on unproven technology will undermine electric reliability.

Electric cooperatives understand the need to keep the lights on at a cost local families and businesses can afford. Clean energy technologies must be balanced with generation sources that are always available to ensure a reliable electric grid.

Nationwide, electric cooperatives like REA Energy deliver power to 42 million Americans. Our top priority is meeting our members’ energy needs, and we must have reliable electricity available to do that. 

CHAD CARRICK, MBA, CFPC
PRESIDENT AND CEO

Something's Abuzz in Cambria County

KAYLA KING, MARKETING AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST

THE BEE'S KNEES. Busy as a bee. A bee in your bonnet. Float like a butterfly, sting like a bee. The queen bee.

Why are there are so many phrases involving bees? A recent trip to Dysart, Pa., to meet with REA Energy Cooperative member Ken Hoover of Shadetree Apiary has helped to shed some light on these invaluable hard workers.

Honeybees have been around for a long time, first appearing approximately 100 million years ago. Flowering plants also first made their appearance around the same time. Scientists believe pollinating bees evolved from hunting wasps that acquired a taste for nectar. They further evolved to the genus *Apis* bees, which were discovered in fossils from approximately 25 million years ago, and they have been busy ever since.

The keeping of bees by humans, mainly for honey production, began approximately 10,000 years ago. Ceramic jars have been discovered in Egypt containing honey roughly 4,500 years old. The ancient Greeks learned to calm bees with smoke and used rudimentary honey extractors. Early human-made hives were constructed

from logs, wooden boxes, pottery vessels and woven straw baskets.

Modern-day hives are constructed with the comfort of the bees in mind. The hives consist of stackable boxes with open tops and bottoms so bees can traverse the entire hive. In the bottom portions of the box, bees house the brood and store honey. If there is excess honey, the bees will store it in shorter boxes at the top of the hive, which beekeepers draw from for sales and consumption.

Making more than honey

Bees and beekeeping have come a long way from those early days — devices like those manufactured by Brood-Minder can monitor the hive's temperature and humidity levels, which can be accessed on a smartphone — but, according to Ken, beekeeping all comes down to understanding the needs and wants of these hard workers.

"One of the biggest challenges we face as beekeepers is the amount of foraging the bees need to conduct to maintain a healthy hive," Ken says about the difficulties of modern-day beekeeping. "Evolving agricultural practices have reduced the amount of nectar-producing plants available to the bees, and parasitic mites can compromise their health."

Honeybees can travel up to 3 miles each day to collect nectar from plants. Nectar and pollen are the bees' sole food source and are stored in the foraging bees' honey crop until they return to the hive. Once back in the hive, the uncured honey is passed off to a younger bee, which will move it between cells to evaporate the moisture content. At this point, it is considered cured honey. Worker bees then store it in the comb cells and cover it with a wax cap to secure the honey for later use. The beekeeper then extracts the honey from the combs and bottles it for consumption. In addition to honey, bees also produce beeswax, bee pollen, bee bread, propolis and royal jelly while they're buzzing the day away. Each product plays a specific role in the bees' lives.

Another neat fact about honeybees is that they each have a job to do, and their roles and duties are imprinted into their DNA. The only way to create queen bees is to feed them royal jelly during the larvae phase. Queen bees have about a three-year productive lifespan, during which they can produce up to 2,000 eggs every day. There are nurse bees who care for the brood (the eggs, larvae and pupae of honeybees). There are forager bees who collect



POLLINATOR PAL: Ken Hoover, an REA Energy member, holds up a piece of one of his honeybee hives at Shadetree Apiary.

nectar for the hive. There are janitors, guards and even undertaker bees. Beekeepers like Ken have important jobs to do, too. Their job is to protect the hives and help the bees thrive.

A special relationship

Growing up in Dysart, Ken has been a Cambria County resident his entire life. He spent his formative years in the military and working as a truck driver, but found his passion in beekeeping and bee education.

His business, Shadetree Apiary, was born in 2019 in his hometown. Ken was a state apiary inspector and president of the 2 Cs and a Bee Beekeeping Association. He has multiple hives and hopes to expand the colonies across a recently acquired farmstead with plans to plant enough clover, aster, and other types of plants that produce nectar.

The interactions between Ken and his bees are nothing short of awe-inspiring. While tending to a hive, Ken will gently brush a bee aside with his bare fingers with only denim and a bee veil to protect him. Even while handling a swarm from one of the hives, he simply uses a bucket on a metal pole to coerce the bees into a new hive.

Ken is never in a hurry when tending to his bees. One can even hear him talking to the bees in a soft, kind manner. You'll often hear him refer to the bees as "the girls" since nearly all bees in a hive are female.

"You never want to rush when working with the bees, and you can't force them to do anything that goes against their nature," Ken explains. "You can only hope to persuade the hive into doing something different."

Ken conducts educational courses on beekeeping and has a network of fellow beekeepers to help maintain the honeybee population. He treats his bees with the utmost respect for their honey and beeswax production. If the bees haven't produced excess honey, Ken does not harvest from the brood boxes. What he does harvest, he leaves raw, giving the honey medicinal-like properties. Ken strives to keep the bees happy and healthy and is willing to educate anyone interested in them.

You do not need to be a beekeeper to help the bee population. Planting bee-friendly plants or creating a pollinator habitat in your yard can give the local bee population a place to collect nectar. Avoiding the use of pesticides or insecticides can also be a tremendous help. You can also support local beekeepers by purchasing honey or beeswax products, or if you have a swarm in your yard, contact them to harvest the bees.

Remember: Without pollinators like honeybees, 75% to 95% of the Earth's plants could not reproduce, resulting in a catastrophic disruption to our food supply. These busy little bees are a cornerstone of our world and food chain. 🐝



KAYLA KING

MORE THE MERRIER: Ken Hoover of Shadetree Apiary collects a swarm of honeybees.

KAYLA KING



BUSY BEES: Honeybees emerge from their hive at Shadetree Apiary in Dysart, Pa.

VIRTUAL TOWNHALL MEETING

We would like to cordially invite you to our next online Town Hall Meeting, where we will discuss coordinated efforts between REA Energy and In The Stix Broadband for broadband and infrastructure deployment and answer questions from the community.



TUESDAY, JULY 16



STARTS AT 1:30 P.M.

LIVE AND ONLINE QUESTIONS WILL BE ANSWERED REGARDING BROADBAND AND INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATES.

STAY TUNED FOR LIVESTREAM LINKS AND INFORMATION ON WWW.REAENERGY.COM



SUBMIT YOUR QUESTIONS BY EMAILING
reaenergy@reaenergy.com

REA energy
Cooperative Inc.



REMINDER:
REA Energy Cooperative
offices will be closed
Thursday, July 4,
in observance of
Independence Day.
Power outages can
be reported by calling
844-920-3395.

Right-of-Way Management/Facility Construction News

REA Energy contractors from Penn Line Tree Service will be trimming the rights of way of the Parkway and Clyde substation areas in addition to emergency maintenance areas in July.

Members in the affected areas will be notified. Contractors will perform all right-of-way work per REA Energy specifications. All contractors will carry employee identification cards, and their vehicles will display their company name. If you have any questions, call 724-349-4800 or view the specifications at reaenergy.com.

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