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# RG&E AND consumer news

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## Electrical Outages

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Evaluations of our electric system reliability have shown that our customers have electric service over 99.98% of the time. In the unlikely event that you should suffer an electric outage, one of your first questions might be, "How long will it last?" Let's follow through from the time you call to report no electricity until the power comes on. I'll explain what RG&E does in an outage caused by a storm or other natural causes, and why some outages last longer than others.

When you first call RG&E at 546-1100, the more information you can give like the location of a tree on a wire, the quicker the problem can be found. Your call is put on a priority list, with safety problems such as fallen wires, outages affecting large numbers of people and critical facilities like hospitals at the top of the list. The call is dispatched to a crew which will investigate and correct the problem. The large inventory of materials on the trucks should enable them to fix the problem with equipment at hand.

The kind of trouble affects the time needed for repair. Most problems involve either overhead wires or underground cables. The quickest response to an outage would come during the daytime when a crew doing routine repair work could be dispatched immediately to correct the problem. A crew could remove a tree limb from an overhead wire, replace a fuse, and the total time without electricity could be as little as 20 minutes. But every case is not so ideal. At night, for example, fewer crews are on duty with more territory to cover so their travel time could be longer. If they are already working on an emergency, that will delay them too.

Note: When crews must clear broken trees and limbs from wires to restore power, we are not responsible for removing them from your premises. However, when we request permission to trim trees to prevent an outage, we do remove the debris.

Unlike underground lines, overhead lines can be damaged by winds, but they can also be repaired more quickly and easily. Sur-

prisingly, direct lightning strikes can knock out underground lines as well as overhead lines even though there are lightning protectors on the system. While underground outages do not happen as frequently, they take much longer to repair, up to four times as long. The bad part of the underground cable cannot be seen immediately like overhead can, but must be located with test equipment, then

an outage, the Company might be able to give you an idea of its duration if it is an isolated one. If a large area is affected and your electricity is off for more than three hours, call back. You could be in a small area within a large area with the small area being out for a different reason than the large area.

If a storm has caused the outage it would not be feasible to tell you what the



RG&E crews at work restoring electric service.

de-energized and repaired. Storms are especially troublesome for everyone concerned, and the goal is to get the electricity on as soon as possible. As many as 50 trained crews can be called from other RG&E jobs and dispatched for storm repair work. In severe storms like the recent ones, the crew members work up to 16 hours straight to get the work done. As you can see, many factors influence the length of time it takes to find and correct outages. The average outage lasts 1-1/2 hours, but they could be shorter or occasionally much longer.

When you call to report

problem is, because there would be many outages and only the crews would know the extent of the problem once they get there. Nevertheless, if you are still out six hours later, call back.

Some safety precautions are important. Never touch a downed wire, rather call RG&E immediately at 546-1100. Children should never climb poles and touch wires, and should not open transformer boxes. Electricity is dangerous if mishandled.

If you would like more information, please fill out and send in the coupon below.

## Visit RG&E's Brookwood Science Information Center

### Learn About the Generation of Electricity

RG&E's Brookwood Science Information Center is located 16 miles east of the City of Rochester on Lake Road in Ontario, New York. The Center is open Sunday through Thursday from 10 AM to 4 PM.

At Brookwood visitors of all ages (from many parts of the state and country) learn about the generation of electricity through animated displays, films

and live slide presentations and have the opportunity to ask questions on any aspect of the utility industry.

Many methods of producing electricity are depicted, although the Center concentrates on the production of electricity by nuclear energy. Brookwood is located next to RG&E's Ginna Plant, which uses the method of nuclear fission in the generation of electricity.

Come out to Brookwood soon and visit us.

## Join the Budget Billing Bunch!

Before the onset of cold weather, and higher heating bills, why not apply for Budget Billing? This is a no charge service from RG&E — no interest or carrying charges — to even out variations in your monthly bills due to space heating use. Through Budget Billing, you can more accurately estimate the amount due RG&E each month and budget yourself accordingly.

Here is how it works: The gas or electric part of your bill (whichever you heat with) is estimated from prior annual consumption. You will be billed each month during the ten months from September through June an amount equal to one-tenth of the total of such estimated bills. Any difference

between the total amount you have paid in this ten month period and the amount for actual consumption will be charged or credited no later than the July and/or August bills for service.

If you pay for both gas and electricity, your bill may still fluctuate a bit because Budget Billing applies only to the fuel you use for heating. The amount due for other service is added to the budget billing amount. However, the major portion of "guesswork" each month is eliminated and calculating your budget is made that much easier.

It's not too late to join the "Budget Billing Bunch" — call RG&E, 546-1111, to apply.

Featured at this month's Consumer Center . . .

## The Insulation Booklet for "Do-it-yourselfers"

RG&E offers information for the "do-it-yourselfer" in a booklet entitled "If You're Under-insulated, You're Over-spending on Fuel."

The booklet offers suggestions on where and how to insulate your home, types of insulation available, (and how to install them), explanation of the "R" value, how storm windows and doors weather stripping, and caulking help save energy, and furnace maintenance.

The booklet is available to you and at no charge. To get your copy, fill out and return the coupon on the bottom of the page or come and visit our Consumer Information Center on the Main Floor at 89 East Avenue where copies are on display.

While you're at the Center, you can learn a lot about insulation. You can even talk to one of our Residential Representatives who can answer questions you might have on insulation.

The Center is open Mondays through Fridays from 8 AM to 5 PM. Come in, we'd like to see you.

### Used Furniture and Appliances Needed

Call the Home Economics Division of the Monroe County Social Services Department at . . .

442-4580

FILL OUT AND RETURN THIS COUPON TO: CJ30  
Dept. 34 Rochester Gas and Electric  
89 East Avenue, Rochester, N.Y. 14649  
546-2700

I would like more information on the following items:

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