



JANUARY 2007

Mr. Tom's Neighborhood— *Make a New Plan Stan*

Special points of interest:

- *Talkin' with Tom- Strategic Planning*
- *Winter Energy Saving tips*
- *Recycling computers*

Quick links:

- Harlannet.com-local links and a place to start for HMU web-sites
- HMU-Harlan.com Information on Electric, Gas and Water. Track your utility use and previous charges on line.
- Har-tel.com Information on telephone, Cable TV and Internet services. Have a question on telecom services? Start here.

This month finds me borrowing a line from Paul Simon's hit *Fifty Ways to Leave Your Lover* as I write about our annual strategic planning session.

Once a year, the Board of Trustees, the management team and I meet to discuss short and long term goals for HMU. We talk in one, five and ten year increments. Many of the projects in place now were spawned by strategic planning sessions years ago.

Electric— The current rebuild and overhead to underground conversion project is scheduled to continue in 2007 and beyond. The time frame for some of the scheduled phases may be increased but timing is contingent on availability of crews and especially materials.

As the benefits of some of the lines that have already been placed underground become apparent, there is a feeling we need to move quicker than originally planned to get the rest of the lines buried.

In the short term, we'll stay on schedule and in the long term,

the commitment to the project continues.

You will also see an increase in our Energy Efficiency efforts during 2007.

Natural Gas— No major changes are seen in the Gas department operations and we will continue to look for long term contracts that benefit our customers.

Water— Over the last 10 years, we've upgraded the storage system and enacted necessary plant repairs and upgrades to meet demand and water quality standards. However, the HMU water plant is almost 30 years old and coming to the end of its useful life. It's now time to start thinking about building a new plant out of the flood plain or determining how to further protect and improve the plant we have. Neither option is inexpensive but it is required. We also have to start investigating locations for new wells to meet future demand.

Telecom— I'm still very concerned about our critical telecommunications equipment being in a flood plain. Plus, as we add and expand services, we're running out

of room to add more equipment.

We continue to look for cost effective ways to provide digital and HDTV service. I will have a recommendation to the Board by May 10th.

Moving the HMU office and facilities— One question that must be answered with all of the above is "Can we effectively and efficiently serve our customers from our current location?" It is also time to determine if we need to relocate part of our operations; especially the water plant and telecom equipment. A Board sub committee has been asked to make recommendations.

The current office building has been, literally, pieced together over the last 50 years, is energy inefficient and requires constant repair. The flood of '93 showed us what the consequences are of remaining where we sit.

I believe we have forged a good plan toward reaching our goal of being Harlan's Premier Provider.

Next Board meeting- January 25th

405 Chatburn
Harlan, IA 51537
Telephone: 755-5182
Website:
HarlanNet.com



Harlan's Premier Provider

Winter energy savings tips

Easy to implement energy saving habits along with a little common sense can help lower your winter energy use and therefore your bill.

You can save as much as 10 percent on your heating bill simply by turning back the thermostat 10-15 percent for eight hours a day. One way to do this is with a programmable thermostat. A thermostat that can be programmed to your lifestyle means you can automatically turn down the heat when you go to bed or to work and the house will be warm when you get up or come home.

HMU does offer a rebate of up to \$25 for the purchase and installation for programmable thermostats. Talk with your heating and air conditioning professional for recommendations on which thermostat works best for your system and lifestyle.

Replacing furnace filters on a monthly basis means your forced air furnace doesn't have to work as hard to circulate the air so it runs less and uses less electricity. Replacing filters during the winter is especially important for homeowners with fur bearing pets.

Keeping both heat and cold air vents clean and free from

blockage ensures air will circulate.

Check the seals around doors and windows to prevent cold air from coming in. Over time, the seals can dry out and become brittle and broken. Many easy to install window and door seals are available at local hardware stores.

Use kitchen and bathroom ventilation fans only as long as needed. Extended use pulls out warm air too.

For long term savings:

- Install high efficiency furnaces.
- Install energy efficient doors and windows.
- Increase attic and wall insulation to retain heat in the winter and keep the home cooler in summer.
- Check and seal foundations as well as cracks in any masonry exposed to the elements. Cold air could be coming from areas you haven't found yet.

For more energy saving tips, visit harlannet.com

Sign up for HMU telephone service today and receive 120 minutes per month in free domestic long distance

Computers—*In with the new and recycle the old*

Computers are made with a variety of elements, like plastics, glass, steel, gold, lead, mercury, cadmium and fire retardants that can be recaptured through recycling and used again. If thrown away, these computers can release toxins to the environment, potentially polluting the groundwater we drink and the air that we breathe. Recycling the resources in computers also eliminates the need to obtain these elements from nature, decreasing production impact on the environment.

Maybe you or your family received a new computer or equipment over the holidays. Learn more about recycling computers or other electronic devices by visiting earth911.org or harlannet.com

Copies of programs produced and aired on HCTV Ch25 or HGTV Ch26 are available on DVD or VHS tape for \$10 each. Contact Amy Barrett direct at 733-8064 or 755-5182 or via e-mail at: barretta@harlannet.com



FEBRUARY 2007

Special points of interest:

- *Mr. Tom's Neighborhood-*
- *Winter Utility Tips*
- *Commercial lighting rebate*
- *Customer Service notice*

Quick links:

- Harlannet.com-local links and a place to start for HMU web-sites
- Hmu-Harlan.com Information on Electric, Gas and Water. Track your utility use and previous charges on line.
- Har-tel.com Information on telephone, Cable TV and Internet services. Have a question on telecom services? Start here.

Mr. Tom's Neighborhood– *Baby it's cold outside*

Today: Partly cloudy with a high near 11 degrees. Wind chill between -5 and -13.

Tonight: Low around 3 below. Wind chill values between -13 and -23.

Tomorrow: Mostly cloudy with a low around -3. Wind chill values between -13 and -23...

was the forecast on KNOD as I sat down February 2nd to write my column.

Bitterly cold weather brings its own concerns to utility services. The most obvious is heating costs. January '07 natural gas use was up over 33% compared to January '06 and we've delivered over 4% more gas for this fiscal year. Fortunately, we purchased most of our natural gas for this year's heating season several years ago at a low price. Localized warmer weather across the US has kept any additional gas, what we call 'swing gas', we need to purchase to meet demand at a reasonably low price. The price com-

bined with consumer energy saving measures means heating bills can be kept in check.

One of my concerns this time of year is a local or regional ice storm. Ice build up on power lines combined with high winds can cause the lines to start galloping placing undue stress on the line, poles or connections. Tree limbs can snap under the additional weight of ice and fall into power or telecom lines causing an outage. Regional transmission lines brought down by ice cause wide spread power outages.

Our aggressive tree trimming program coupled with placing most distribution lines underground are designed to decrease the likelihood of storm related outages.

Water main breaks are more likely in cold weather as freezing causes the ground to shift placing pressure on the pipes.

Cold weather means

additional safety concerns for employees. The obvious issue is exposure and frostbite from working in dangerously cold temperatures and wind chills. Electric linemen or telecom repair crews up in a bucket are exposed to the elements. Water crews repairing a main break have getting wet added to the cold. Meter readers slog through snow while facing 40 MPH gusts of wind. Heavy clothing to protect against the cold means limited mobility and added weight.

Weather takes its toll on equipment too. Hydraulics used to run the line trucks work slower. The small amount of moisture present in natural gas can freeze meter regulators. Water meters in confined spaces can freeze.

Tips to help prevent cold weather outages are on the back. If your service goes out for any reason, please call us at 755-5182.

Next Board meeting- February 22nd

405 Chatburn
Harlan, IA 51537
Telephone: 755-5182
Website:
HarlanNet.com



Harlan's Premier Provider

Winter utility tips

- Please do not pile snow on or near gas meters, electric or telecom boxes.
- Watch for boxes, gas meters and fire hydrants when using bobcats, tractors or snow plows.
- Please keep areas around meters clear for HMU meter readers.
- Please report any damaged utility boxes, meters or equipment.
- Please report any tree limbs that may come in contact with power or telecom lines.
- Allow warm air to circulate around water meters.
- Keep sidewalks and paths near HMU equipment clear of ice and snow. We may need quick access to equipment.
- Watch HMU Ch12 or visit HarlanNet.com for school closing or snow emergency notices.

Commercial Lighting Energy Efficiency

Business owners can lower energy costs by replacing inefficient fluorescent lighting with modern ballasts and bulbs. Effective March 1, 2007, the rebate for installing electronic ballasts increases from \$4 per ballast to \$8.

Which businesses save the most with new lighting? Those with a large number of inefficient fluorescent or incandescent lights that run those lights a long time each day. Total energy costs are a function of 'how much and how long.' Using less electricity means saving money without making your business dark and gloomy.

Better lighting means a more productive and safer workplace for employees. Plus, lower wattage bulbs generate less heat making the work area cooler in the summer.

Talk with a qualified lighting contractor or your facilities manager to see if installing new energy efficient lighting makes sense for your business.

Call HMU at 755-5182 for lighting rebate details.

Bundle up

Save with telephone, cable TV and Internet packages from HMU. See us for details or on the web at har-tel.com

Customer Service

The Harlan Municipal Utilities will always do its best to see that your utility service works efficiently at all times. However, if you do have questions or complaints about the service, you can contact an HMU utility representative at the following address and phone number:

Harlan Municipal Utilities
405 Chatburn Avenue.
Harlan, IA 51537
712 755-5182

HMU representatives are available to help you Monday through Friday between 7:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

If your complaint is related to service disconnection, safety, or renewable energy, and we do not resolve it, you may request assistance from:

Utilities Division
Department of Commerce
Lucas State Office Building
Des Moines, IA 50319
515 281-5979



MARCH 2007

Mr. Tom's Neighborhood— *Digging out; looking ahead*

Special points of interest:

- *Talkin' with Tom— Digging out; Looking ahead.*
- *Digital TV: Part 1.*
- *Gas lines after the meter.*
- *Lifeline and Linkup notice.*

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Last month when I wrote my column, we had record cold temperatures. This month we're still digging out after over 17 inches of snow.

I'm pleased to report HMU had no significant weather related outages or interruption of services like those experienced in eastern Iowa. We can attribute this to several reasons: the moisture came in the form of snow and not ice. Ice is the bane of power lines. It adds weight to the lines beyond design capabilities. Couple this additional weight with high winds and the lines begin to 'gallop' causing even more stress on line connection points. At some point, the lines and poles can't take the additional forces and fail.

Our proactive tree trimming program helps keep the lights on. HMU and City of Harlan crews trim tree limbs from around power lines. Removing the limbs before they're weighed down by snow and ice keeps them out of the power lines

should they break.

One benefit to our system upgrade project is decreasing outages by placing distribution lines underground. Overhead and underground lines each have their advantages but underground lines cannot be hit by falling tree limbs.

I must, once again, offer my congratulations to our City of Harlan brethren for a job well done in cleaning up after the snow. I know they put in many early and long hours first plowing and then removing the snow from city streets. It's comforting to know that should HMU crews have to respond to outages, they will have a clear path.

I also want to acknowledge the work HMU employees do to make sure you have clear and safe access to our facilities. When the snow falls, everyone pitches in to remove snow from the parking lots and sidewalks.

March came in like a lion. Let's hope it goes

out like a lamb and we have a beautiful Iowa spring.

Once the weather clears and the snow melts, crews can resume work on this year's conversion project. Our goal is to have the next phase (Generally north of Cyclone Avenue) done by the fall of 2007. Watch and listen for project updates on local media and in this newsletter.

In less than two years, TV stations will switch from an analog to a digital signal. How will this affect you? Starting with this issue, we'll offer updates on the transition and what it means to consumers.

There are still many of you I've never had the pleasure to meet. Please stop by our booth at the Home Show on March 24th and 25th and say hello.

Next Board meeting— March 22nd

405 Chatburn
Harlan, IA 51537
Telephone: 755-5182
Website:
HarlanNet.com



Harlan's Premier Provider

Digital TV— Part 1

What is the Digital TV transition?

The switch from analog TV (the traditional TV system using magnetic waves to transmit TV pictures and sound) to digital television (the new TV system using information transmitted as "data bits" -- like a computer -- to display movie-quality pictures and sound), is referred to as the digital TV (DTV) transition.

In 1996, Congress authorized the distribution of an additional broadcast channel to each TV broadcaster so that they could introduce DTV service while simultaneously continuing their analog TV broadcasts.

In addition to improved picture and sound quality, an important benefit of DTV is that it will free up parts of the broadcast spectrum for public safety as well as other valuable uses. This is possible because the modern technology of DTV is more efficient than analog TV technology. DTV allows the same number of stations to broadcast using fewer total channels or less of the broadcast spectrum.

For more information on DTV, visit our website: HarlanTel.com

Information taken from www.dtv.gov

Underground Gas Pipe Maintenance Notice

If you have a natural gas line that runs underground, for example to a heater in a garage, this line is after the gas meter. Here is a safety recommendation:

We operate our gas system with an emphasis on safety. We're required to design, operate and maintain our underground natural gas pipeline system according to prescribed federal standards.

HMU does not maintain any gas piping that occurs AFTER the meter. This is the responsibility of the customer who owns the pipe. If a buried pipe is not properly maintained it may be subject to corrosion or leakage.

To ensure continued safe and reliable operation, these lines should be checked periodically. You, or the building owner if you live in rental property, are advised to contact a licensed plumber or heating contractor to assist you in locating and inspecting your buried gas lines. If any unsafe condition is discovered, repairs should be made immediately.

If we can answer any questions, please call us at 755-5182. As always, call Iowa One Call before digging!

Low-Income Telephone Assistance Available

Lifeline is a plan sponsored by telephone providers that assists qualified low-income lowans by providing a monthly credit on their telephone bill. HMU Lifeline telephone customers receive a credit of \$8.25 each month.

To be eligible for *Lifeline*, an applicant must participate in at least one of the following:

- Medicaid
- Food Stamps
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance
- Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

Stop by our offices to see if you qualify for or to add *Lifeline* credit to your telephone service.

This program is not affiliated with Lifeline medical alert systems



APRIL 2007

Mr. Tom's Neighborhood— *Continuing the vision*

Special points of interest:

- *Mr. Tom's Neighborhood—Continuing the Vision*
- *Digital TV: Part 2.*
- *Shortcuts*
- *Call before you dig: Iowa One Call*

Quick links:

- Harlannet.com-local links and a place to start for HMU websites
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Some major changes, now completed, have been made in Harlan's municipal electric system over the past several months, which should result in better service to the community.

News of the recent rebuild project splashes across the front page of the Harlan newspaper and touts modernizing the distribution system to meet the increasing demand of a growing town. Sound familiar?

Yet this news is not from one of our recent projects but from **1957**. Fifty years ago, Harlan saw a significant electrical system upgrade in order to take advantage of lower cost power from the federal hydroelectric plants in South Dakota and to meet the demand of consumers adding post war modern electrical appliances to their homes.

The 1957 rebuild was a significant financial undertaking. The cost at the time was listed as \$283,000. The equivalent to 2007 is just over

\$2 million dollars.

The core tenet of providing electricity hasn't changed in over 100 years: provide reliable service and continually meet the growing demand of the population you serve. I imagine this was the vision in 1891 when electricity came to Harlan, it's what the Harlan Light and Water department, as it was known in 1957, was striving for and it's still our goal today. If someone uncovers this column 50 years from now, I'll speculate that improvements in technology and materials have changed how service is provided but the basic premise has not.

There is an effort to bring the American Veterans Traveling Tribute to Harlan this August. As a Vietnam War Marine combat veteran and a business leader, I believe events and displays like this are important to our country and communities.

I asked HMU employ-

ees to do what we can as an organization to support this effort. HMU in conjunction with Ruthanne Grimsley of Ragtime Productions in Harlan launched a website, BringTheWall.com, as a way to increase awareness of the display and the activities surrounding its appearance. Please visit the website for more information on the traveling tribute and see ways how you can help Bring the Wall.

I call upon my fellow business leaders to join HMU's efforts to support this project and encourage your employees to get involved.

Thanks go out to our customers that took me up on my offer to stop by our booth at the Home Show and introduce yourselves. It was nice to meet you. I hope to meet more of you during our annual celebration picnic on June 19th.

Next Board meetings— April 12th and 26th

405 Chatburn
Harlan, IA 51537
Telephone: 755-5182
Website:
HarlanNet.com



Harlan's Premier Provider

Digital TV— Part 2 of a series

What is the DTV deadline date?

Congress passed a law on February 1, 2006, setting a final deadline for the DTV transition of February 17, 2009. Most television stations will continue broadcasting both analog and digital programming until February 17, 2009, when all analog broadcasting will stop.

Analog TVs receiving over-the-air programming will still work after that date, but owners of these TVs that receive the signal over the air, and not through a cable or satellite provider, will need to buy converter boxes to change digital broadcasts into analog format. Converter boxes will be available from consumer electronic products retailers at that time.

For more information on DTV, visit our website: Har-tel.com

Information taken from www.dtv.gov

Short cuts

One purpose of the Internet is to access a large amount of information very quickly. You can shorten browsing time even more by using keyboard shortcuts.

For example, if you use Internet Explorer (IE) as your browser, pressing F11 toggles you back and forth between a full screen view of the page and the normal view.

Typing in the URL address of a site and hitting "Control" and "Enter" at the same time adds WWW and .com after the address and takes you to the site.

Browsers besides IE also have short cuts. Links to pages showing various short cuts by browser are posted on harlannet.com.

Here's an example of a short cut. Open your browser, type har-tel (remember the hyphen between "Har" and "Tel") into the address line and hit "Control" and "Enter". This takes you right to our website. Scroll down and you'll see links to sites showing short cuts for IE, Firefox, and Macintosh users.

Call Before You Dig

Many electric, gas, water and telecommunications lines are buried. You can be severely injured or killed if you strike an underground line while tilling, digging, or installing posts.

Call Iowa One Call

1-800-292-8989

before you dig!

Iowa One Call must be notified anytime an excavation or digging is made in excess of 12 inches.

- Call Iowa One Call toll free
- They will notify all affected utilities
- A trained locator will mark all underground utility lines

Calls to Iowa One Call are monitored. An immediate response can be coordinated for emergency requests.

Non-emergencies require a minimum 48 hour prior notification.

Iowa One Call is a free service.

Plan Ahead - Be Safe!



MAY 2007

Special points of interest:

- *National Electric Safety Month*
- *Annual Celebration*
- *Digital TV— Part Three*
- *Call 811 to locate underground lines*

Quick links:

- Harlannet.com-local links and a place to start for HMU web-sites
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National Electric Safety Month

It's invisible, silent, odorless, tasteless and powerful. It's our greatest friend or a dangerous enemy. Electricity. May is National Electric Safety Month. It's a good time to look around your home and eliminate potentially deadly electric hazards.

Start with your wiring. Homes over 40 years old may not be wired to handle a modern electric load. Today's house may draw more electricity due to an increased number of electrical devices. A complete electrical inspection may be in order to ensure your wiring and fuse box can handle the desired load.



Check outlets. Older homes may still have two prong outlets. Adapters or 'cheater' plugs that convert three prong cords to two

prong outlets are a temporary fix. Replace outlets with modern three prong receptacles and keep things safe. Cover unused outlets accessible to children. Replace missing, broken or cracked wall plates.



Check power cords. Make sure all power cords are in good condition not frayed, cracked, cut or chewed by pets. Have a qualified person replace the cord if necessary. Never remove the ground pin (the third prong). Change the outlet to accommodate the plug. A polarized plug has one large or wide prong and one narrow one to make sure the plug is inserted into the outlet correctly. Never force a polarized plug into a non-polarized outlet or trim the wide prong to fit. Again, change the receptacle if necessary for a permanent, safe solution.

Extension cords. Another temporary fix. If power is

needed in an area that doesn't have an outlet, install one instead of permanently using an extension cord. Continual use, especially those cords carrying a heavy electrical load, can degrade insulation. Use properly rated cords and never overload the cord's rated capacity.



Outdoor Safety. When painting, cleaning gutters or doing work requiring a ladder, always look up for overhead power lines. Of course, never fly a kite near power lines or climb a tree that has power lines nearby.

SUMMER FUN!

Join us 5-7PM at Veterans Auditorium Tuesday, June 19th for our annual Municipal Celebration.

Enclosed with this newsletter is your RSVP post card. If you plan on attending, please fill out the card and drop it in the mail.

HMU Board meetings- May 10th and 24th

405 Chatburn
Harlan, IA 51537
Telephone: 755-5182
Website:
HarlanNet.com



Harlan's Premier Provider

Digital TV- Part 3 of a series

How will digital television (DTV) be different than the current analog television?

DTV allows a number of new and better services. With HDTV, broadcasters can offer far higher resolution and picture quality than exists with analog technology. Or, they can offer several different TV programs at the same time, with pictures and sound quality equal to or better than what is generally available today. In addition, broadcasters can simultaneously transmit a variety of other information through a data bit-stream to both enhance the TV programming and to provide entirely new services.

For more information, visit: www.Har-tel.com

Information taken from www.dtv.gov

Dial 811 for safety

There's a new national "Call Before You Dig" number: 811.

The number was created to eliminate confusion of multiple national "Call before you Dig" phone centers. It's easy to use and remember.



The new number makes it easier for you to call before attempting any digging project, whether it be something small like planting a tree or installing a mailbox or a larger project like building an addition or deck. This quick and efficient one call service notifies the appropriate local utilities, which then send locators or locate technicians to the requested site to mark the approximate location of underground lines.

Unfortunately, the current statistics on One Call Centers show that the majority of Americans are not using this service. According to a recent study, 46 percent of Americans are active dig-

gers who have done or plan to do a digging project at home, but only 33 percent of do-it-yourselfers plan on calling before they dig. That means they are taking a huge risk each time their shovel disturbs the dirt.

The traditional Iowa One Call toll free number can be used but calls to 811 will connect you to the same call center with fewer numbers.

It's simple...**always call 811** before you dig!

For more information, visit call811.com



In honor of Memorial Day,
HMU office closed
Monday, May 28th.

Emergency calls taken at
755-5182



JUNE 2007

Mr. Tom's Neighborhood— *Singin' in The Rain*

Special points of interest:

- *Mr. Tom's Neighborhood— Singin' in the Rain*
- *Telephone Dispute Resolution*
- *Gas Leak Survey*

Quick links:

- Harlanet.com-local links and a place to start for HMU websites
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Okay, so Gene Kelly I'm not and my wife for the past 39 years will be happy to verify that fact. "Light on his feet" is not a comment I've heard often. So, why the reference to dancing and moisture? Alas, it's just another amateurish and shameless effort to segue into this month's topic.

I was mowing my lawn (again!) and searching for a topic for this month's column. Little did I realize it was right in front of me. After six years of drought we are having a banner spring when it comes to moisture. Interestingly, the topic of our newsletter in August 2006 was; "Drought and Change in the Heartland".

On the good news side, lawns are fresh and green, flowers are in full bloom, and temperatures have been moderate. The water utility has benefited from this blessing as test wells are up $3\frac{1}{2}$ to $6\frac{1}{2}$ feet. Even our Electric Utility's overhead to underground conversion project is progressing nicely. The ground is just moist enough to make boring easier. But, there are

new challenges to consider with the abundant rain, and that's where being light on one's feet comes in to play. (I warned you of my shameless use of the segue.)

At 6:30 a.m. Sunday May 6th, I received a call from the Harlan Police Department. The West Nishnabotna River was at 19 feet and rising rapidly. HMU employees, along with city workers and three citizen volunteers, spent seven hours moving equipment to higher ground, hoisting water plant motors and pumps off the floor, and sandbagging two areas of the berm protecting the HMU compound. Memories of the 1993 flood, when mud and water, up to four feet deep in the water plant, covered our grounds and penetrated our buildings, returned. Fortunately, the additional five inches of rain predicted that day did not fall and the river crested at 26 feet.

We were fortunate the integrity of the berm was not tested, but the question remains; will it do the job? As CEO one of my responsibilities is to provide the Board of Trustees with informa-

tion necessary to make policy decisions. Admittedly, a berm was not in place in '93. We did not have hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of telecommunications equipment in our office either. We also did not have over \$500,000 worth of diesel generators on site, and one does not simply pull an electric cord out of a socket and tow them to higher ground. And then there's the water treatment plant to consider. We will likely need to upgrade or build a new plant in four years. Do we leave it here or move to higher ground?

The Board has asked me to provide options on whether or not we construct a new operations center. And, if the decision is made to proceed, at what level of protection do we wish to be in the case of severe weather? There has been much said about global warming recently, and one needs to think "green" when it comes to construction. But, one also needs to consider the severity of Midwest weather.

(Continued on back)

HMU Board meetings- June 14th and 28th

405 Chatburn
Harlan, IA 51537
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Harlan's Premier Provider

Mr. Tom's Neighborhood - con't

Would we build a facility to withstand a worst case scenario like that experienced in Greenburg, Kansas when the entire town was leveled? Having all of our office equipment plus gas, electric, water, and telecommunications vehicles in a "hardened" facility enables us to better provide critical services following a disaster. But, the cost to construct such a facility is higher than a less resilient building.

During the past few months we have been running articles about the coming digital/HDTV world. When we make our conversion would we install the equipment here, or in a facility that is less susceptible to weather related damage?

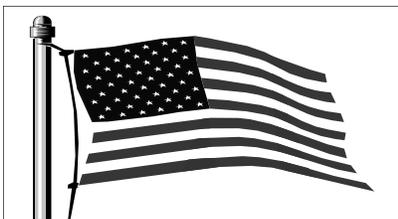
The recommendation I will take to the board regarding options for a new HMU operations center will be thoroughly researched and unbiased. One thing we can't do is dance around the decision.

HMU ANNUAL CELEBRATION
TUESDAY, JUNE 19TH
5 TO 7 PM
VETERAN'S
AUDITORIUM -HARLAN

Dispute Resolution Notice-Telephone service

If you have any dispute or complaint regarding your HMU local telephone service, please contact us for assistance. Normal office hours are 7:30 AM - 4:30 PM Monday through Friday. Or you may write to us or stop at 405 Chatburn, Harlan, Iowa 51537. We can be reached by calling 755-5182.

If HMU does not resolve your complaint, you may request assistance from the Utilities Division, 350 Maple Street, Des Moines Iowa 50319 or call toll free (877)565-4450



HMU office closed
Wednesday July 4th.
Emergency Calls
taken
at 755-5182

Gas survey

HMU performs a system wide gas leak survey every five years. All of the main distribution and service lines are checked in order to comply with federal guidelines, HMU's own Operation and Maintenance plan and ensure public safety.

The survey is planned for the week of July 9th. Assisting HMU employees this year will be two members of the Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities. You may see someone patrolling the gas line routes that run under the street on a small quad runner equipped with leak detection devices.

Lines that run under right of ways and lawns will be checked by someone on foot using a hand held device.

It takes very little time to check the lines in your area or property for leaks. In the unlikely event we find a gas leak, it will be repaired. If you have any questions regarding the survey, call us at 755-5182.



JULY 2007

Special points of interest:

- *Mr. Tom's Neighborhood*
- *Utility Dispute Resolution*
- *Project Share*
- *Energy Saving tips*

Quick links:

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- Har-tel.com Information on telephone, Cable TV and Internet services. Have a question on telecom services? Start here.

Mr. Tom's Neighborhood— 400 Franks and a 1,000 thanks

Thank you for the tremendous turnout at our annual Municipal Celebration held June 19th. Each year, we strive to make the Celebration better and this edition was by far the most successful during my tenure.

I like seeing some familiar faces and talking with customers I haven't had the opportunity to meet. On behalf of the Board and Employees, thank you for attending.

My special thanks go to the HMU employees for their willingness to do what is necessary to make the celebration successful. It takes a lot of planning and coordination before the event and the day of the celebration is always a little hectic but somehow the details fall into place and they manage to pull it off before the doors open.

Here we are into July already. It doesn't seem like it was long ago we were shaking off the effects of the March blizzard. A recent story in the Des Moines Register recapped the emer-

gency response to the storm. Included in the article was a section on the widespread electric and telephone outages caused by downed power lines. This is precisely one reason why the Board and I are eager to continue with our overhead to underground conversion project. We want to get as many electric and telecom lines as possible out of the air and underground to decrease the likelihood of storm related outages.

The American Veteran's Traveling Tribute will visit Shelby County August 8-13th.

HMU has been a major corporate sponsor since the beginning because we believe it is a fitting tribute to veterans and a worthwhile event for our community and area. I'm asking business owners and leaders that have not signed on as sponsors to join HMU and other firms across Shelby County to support this display with either a financial contribution or to volunteer to help while the display is here. Please contact Bill

Sorenson at 755-3907 to contribute or volunteer.

If you'd like to know more about the display, please visit Bring-theWall.com.

It's official: the Big Ten Network (BTN) will join the HMU cable TV line up on August 30th. Hawkeye fans will be able to watch more games on the network dedicated to Big 10 conference sports. Also joining the line up in late August or early September will be Lifetime Movie Network (LMN). BTN will be on channel 65 and LMN on Channel 70. Watch for more information on both networks in August.



Sign up for telephone, Cable TV and Internet from HMU

120 minutes per month in free domestic long distance

Community and local government channels

Surf the web faster with HMU Internet

Package discounts

HMU Board meetings- July 12th and 26th

405 Chatburn
Harlan, IA 51537
Telephone: 755-5182
Website:
HarlanNet.com



Harlan's Premier Provider

Project Share

Project Share is a plan created by HMU to assist needy households in paying energy bills and make home improvements to reduce future energy bills.

You can help by adding a regular Project Share contribution to your monthly utility payment or by making a direct donation to Project Share. Your contribution is voluntary, flexible, and tax-deductible. People qualifying for help will be carefully identified by an area social service agency and the entire program is overseen by a local committee.

Fill out this coupon and return it to the Harlan Municipal Utilities, 405 Chatburn Ave., Harlan, IA 51537 to participate.

Dear Harlan Municipal Utilities,
I'd like to help a neighbor in need with a contribution to Project Share.

Name

Address

I will contribute \$_____ per month to Project Share. I understand this amount will be added to my bill.

I have enclosed a one time \$_____ donation to Project Share.

Dispute Resolution Notice

The Harlan Municipal Utilities will always do its best to see that your utility service works efficiently at all times. However, if you do have questions or complaints about the service, you can contact an HMU utility representative at the following address and phone number:

**Harlan Municipal Utilities
405 Chatburn Avenue
Harlan, IA 51537
712 755-5182**

HMU representatives are available Monday through Friday between 7:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. If your complaint is related to service disconnection, safety, or renewable energy, and we do not resolve it, you may request assistance from:

**Utilities Division
Department of Commerce
Lucas State Office
Building
Des Moines, IA 50319
515 281-5979**

Energy Saving Tips

Here are some easy energy and tips for hot weather

- Set air conditioners at 78 degrees unless you have an elderly or young family member that needs it cooler for health reasons.
- Draw shades and blinds.
- Check and change you're A/C system filters regularly. Systems with clean filters use less electricity.
- Have a qualified service person check your central air system, including filters and ducts, to ensure efficient operation.
- Use fans to circulate air.
- Turn off lights and appliances not in use.
- Install a high efficiency A/C unit. HMU offers rebates for energy saving systems. See us for details.



AUG 2007

Mr. Tom's Neighborhood— Making the grade

Special points of interest:

- *Mr. Tom's Neighborhood-Making the Grade*
- *New Channels on Cable TV*
- *Changes to Channels 25 and 26*
- *Fall sports on HMU cable*

Quick links:

- Harlanet.com-local links and a place to start for HMU websites
- HMU-Harlan.com Information on Electric, Gas and Water. Track your utility use and previous charges on line.
- Har-tel.com Information on telephone, Cable TV and Internet services. Have a question on telecom services? Start here.

School may start this month but our annual report cards were sent with July statements. Thank you to those that took the time to complete and return them. The annual survey allows you to grade us on our performance and offer your thoughts and suggestions on what we're doing right and how we can improve. The cards and comments are shared with employees so they can see how you, the customer, feel about the HMU Board, management, employees and our service.

"Basic utilities run smoothly." "Working well together." "Very helpful when we call with questions." "Doing an excellent job." "Service with a smile." "Your television is great!" "Everyone extremely helpful and service prompt." "Good community involvement and support." "Eliminating overhead service." "Putting lines underground."

These are some of the comments about what we're doing right. Providing reliable electric, gas, water and telecom service with responsive customer service is why municipal utilities are formed and what you

should expect of us. It's good to see we still meet and exceed your expectations.

"You must get HDTV." "More Cable Channels." "Add _____ Channel to your line up." "Stop getting all those extra channels." "Remove home shopping channels and add others."— We receive more comments on how to improve cable TV service than all other services combined. You can see from the comments some people want enhanced TV service, such as High Definition television and additional channels, while others like our current line up.

More than any other factor, the fees we pay to cable channels determine cable TV rates. The fee for every channel goes up a certain amount each year and every time we add a new channel, costs go up.

We do consider the impact on cable rates before adding channels. We also try to balance our TV line up so there is something for everyone to watch. We need to add channels as viewer taste and preference change.

HMU continues to explore financially

prudent ways to offer HDTV.

"Rates too high.", "Lower rates.", "Charge less."— The HMU Board is mindful of rates and balances cost verses meeting HMU's financial obligations and responsibility to replace, maintain and upgrade the electric, gas, water and telecom infrastructure and facilities as needed.

Electric service rates have remained the same since 2004 and two recommended rate increases have been deferred. Gas service rates have not changed since 2001. Water rates have been in place since 2004.

What has changed that affects your bill are third party charges such as the cost to transport electricity or gas to Harlan. The market price for electricity to meet your demand on hot summer days as well as additional gas on cold winter days has increased. These fluctuating costs are indicated in your monthly fuel adjustment charges.

The costs for regulatory and mandated compliance requirements are increasing also.

HMU Board meeting- August 9th and 23rd

405 Chatburn
Harlan, IA 51537
Telephone: 755-5182
Website:
HarlanNet.com



Harlan's Premier Provider

New Channel on HMU Cable TV

The Big Ten Network joins the HMU Cable TV line up on August 30th. It's the nation's first major college sports network dedicated to covering Big Ten Conference athletics and enable fans to see their favorite Big Ten Conference teams year round.

Here is a partial list of programming:

- 35+ football games per season
- 160+ regular-season basketball games
- 170+ additional Big Ten Conference sporting events
- Big Ten Conference championship events
- Archived Big Ten Conference events

The Big 10 Network will air on channel 65.

Also coming to HMU Cable TV on Channel 70 is Lifetime Movie Network.

More to watch on Channels 25 and 26

HMU Cable TV customers have seen changes on Channels 25 and 26. Here's what you can expect:

- Less time between programs. New programs start in minutes instead of hours.
- Programs run at all times meaning it's easier to catch what you want to watch.
- New on screen program guide. The next 10 programs and start times are listed.
- New web based program guide. You can see an entire day's or week's programs by clicking on a link.
- Church services play more often. If you miss a service on Sunday, you can watch it at other times.

Fall sports on HCTV-CH25

Watch replays of Cyclone sports on HCTV-Channel 25 again this year. Pete Green, Tony Vis and Bruce Pfannkuch cover all football games while Chad Swanson handles play by play for select volleyball matches.

Still don't have HMU Cable TV? Now's a great time to sign up and watch HCHS sports.

Labor★★★
★★★**Day**

HMU Office Closed
Monday, September 3rd
in observance of

Labor Day.

Emergency calls taken at
755-5182



SEPT 2007

Mr. Tom's Neighborhood— *From there to here,*

Special points of interest:

- *Mr. Tom's Neighborhood— From Here to There*
- *Digital TV-*
- *Gas Safety*
- *Project Share*

Quick links:

- Harlanet.com-local links and a place to start for HMU web-sites
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and here to there, funny things are everywhere — (Theodor Suess Geisel aka Dr. Seuss 1904-1991)

Dr. Seuss' legacy is that he was able to distill complex issues into rhyme. September finds me doing a lot of traveling from 'here to there' to try and distill an incredibly complex issue, the unbundling of electric transmission, into something that's easy to understand and has minimal impact on HMU and ultimately you, our customer.

In simplistic terms, electricity is generated at a power plant and sent over high voltage cross country transmission lines to substations where it is distributed among providers such as HMU. We then step it down a little more for local area distribution and then once more for block by block distribution. We need to get the electricity from 'there to here' in a reliable and cost effective way. Part of your monthly charge pays for getting your electricity to Harlan.

In the past, transmission rates have been regulated with in-

tense oversight. There is a movement to modify the regulations with the belief that an open market will encourage competition and rates will go down. In theory, new cross country lines would be built or current lines would be upgraded to handle additional capacity resulting in greater reliability of the electric grid and lower costs to consumers.

Experience and watching transmission deregulation in other areas of the country make me concerned this will not be the case. Numerous entities own all or part of the transmission lines to varying degrees and each has a vested interest in how any deregulation will affect them positively or negatively. Initiatives like this have caused consumer rates to go up, and I expect that to happen to some degree. My concern is how fast and how high transmission rates will go and what the effect will be on us to get electricity from 'there to here' without anything 'funny' along the way.

In a slightly lighter vein, the other 'there to here and here to there' issue we face is

not only the transition of broadcast TV stations from analog to digital (getting the signal from there to here) but how to offer enhanced cable TV service, like HDTV, to customers (here to there).

As a viewer, I too would like to watch my favorite shows in sparkling HD but as CEO at HMU, it is my duty to find a financially viable way to provide the service. Providing HDTV service and a digital tier of programming will require significant expenditures for equipment, training and programming.

There are several technical options now available yet other ways to deliver programming to customers are emerging. Before I can make a recommendation to the Board on how to proceed, I must be confident the technology we choose will not become obsolete in 4-5 years and require additional costs to upgrade.

What we hear from you is you want enhanced programming but for us to keep our costs as low as possible. My job is to find a balance for all customers.

Next HMU Board meeting- September 27th

405 Chatburn
Harlan, IA 51537
Telephone: 755-5182
Website:
HarlanNet.com



Harlan's Premier Provider

Digital TV- Part 4 of a series

What is high definition TV (HDTV) and how is it different from analog television?

HDTV is a name given to two of the digital television (DTV) formats. A current analog TV picture is made up of horizontal lines on the picture screen; an HDTV picture can have more than twice as many lines, allowing for stunning picture detail.

HDTV uses a format called Widescreen. This refers to an image's aspect ratio, which is a comparison of screen width to screen height. Analog television has an aspect ratio of 4 by 3, which means the screen is 4 units wide by 3 units high. The aspect ratio of HDTV is 16 by 9, similar to a movie theater screen. HDTV programs can include Dolby Digital surround sound, the same digital sound system used in many movie theaters and video discs.

HDTV uses the same amount of bandwidth (the size of the communications channel) as the current analog system, but with HDTV, about six times more information is transmitted. This capability translates to much better quality in picture and sound.

For more information, visit:
www.Har-tel.com

Information taken from
www.dtv.gov

Natural Gas Safety

Operating a safe gas system is our highest priority. Enclosed with the newsletter is a brochure on natural gas safety. Please take the time to read it and share it with family members.

- ALWAYS call before you dig to make sure there are no gas lines in the way.
- Insist others performing work for you call before they dig.
- Learn how to recognize a gas leak and what to do should one occur.
- Keep our number by your phone and call us anytime of day if you suspect a gas leak.



Project Share assists needy households in paying energy bills and making home improvements to reduce future energy bills.

You may add a regular Project Share contribution to your monthly utility payment or by making a direct donation. Your contribution is voluntary, flexible, and tax-deductible. People qualifying for help are carefully identified by an area social service agency and the entire program overseen by a local committee. Contact HMU for more details.

Dear Harlan Municipal Utilities,
I'd like to help a neighbor in need with a contribution to Project Share.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

I will contribute \$_____ per month. I understand this amount will be added to my bill.

I have enclosed a one time \$_____ donation to Project Share.



OCTOBER 2007

Special points of interest:

- *Mr. Tom's Neighborhood— What's in a name?*
- *Digital TV— part Five*
- *Bottled water and tap water*

Quick links:

- Harlannet.com-local links and a place to start for HMU web-sites
- Hmu-Harlan.com Information on Electric, Gas and Water. Track your utility use and previous charges on line.
- Har-tel.com Information on telephone, Cable TV and Internet services. Have a question on telecom services? Start here.

Mr. Tom's Neighborhood— "What's in a name?"...

queried Romeo in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. While a rose by any other name may still smell as sweet, a CEO's (Chief Executive Officer's) world is filled with contracts and contracts are filled with not so sweet acronyms. I've noticed what an abbreviated society we've become and the number of abbreviations seems to grow as we become a society more reliant on technology and through the use of text messaging. One Internet site says there are over 600,000 acronyms in use. Supposedly, this saves time in reading and is a faster way to communicate information but it takes me longer to remember all of the acronyms than it would if they were written out.

After hours of wading through contracts sent to me by IAMU (Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities) filled with terms like RFP (Request for Proposal) from companies like TEA (The Energy Agency) so

we can determine how HMU (Harlan Municipal Utilities) will be affected by the new MISO (Midwest Independent [transmission] Systems Operator) agreement as required by FERC (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission) guidelines and how the agreement impacts our current contracts with WAPA (Western Area Power Administration), MEC (MidAmerican Energy Company), LGS (Louisiana Generation Station) and NIPCO (Northwest Iowa Power Company)...well you can see just by this paragraph how tedious it becomes sifting through this alphabet soup.

Telecom seems to lend itself to acronyms too. We have VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol), SDV, (Switched Digital Video), POTS (Plain old telephone service) C-LECs, I-LECs, AFC, ADC, and more. And of course, all of our work and reporting has to be in compliance with any IUB (Iowa Utilities Board) or FCC

(Federal Communications Commission) guidelines.

After absorbing all these abbreviations, maybe I should talk with HR (Human Resources) PDQ (Pretty darn quick) about taking some PTO (Paid time off) for a little R&R (Rest and relaxation).

Whether we've referred to it as Phase III of the Overhead to Underground conversion project or the 2006-2007 rebuild project, construction work in north Harlan is nearing an end. Regardless of the name, what you will see in the end is increased reliability of service as power lines and critical communication services are no longer exposed to storm, animal or accident damage.



Next HMU Board meeting- November 8th

405 Chatburn
Harlan, IA 51537
Telephone: 755-5182
Website:
HarlanNet.com



Harlan's Premier Provider

Digital TV- Part 5 of a series

Once broadcasters transition from analog to digital, will analog televisions will be obsolete?

No. Set-top boxes which convert over the air digital signals to analog signals are available now and will continue to be available at lower prices to consumers as the transition progresses. You will only need to purchase a converter box if you receive your television via antenna.

If you receive your television service from a cable or satellite provider, you do not need to do anything. Your providers will make sure you continue to receive service.

However, to enjoy the full benefits of Digital TV, including superior sound and clarity, you must own a Digital TV set. An analog television, with the addition of a set-top box, will still allow viewers to enjoy all of the programming they have always enjoyed.

For more information, visit:
www.Har-tel.com

Information taken from
www.dtv.gov

\$5.00 a gallon water.

Did you know that the bottled water people purchase at a rate that equals \$5-\$10 per gallon may be the same water that flows out of their kitchen sink? Approximately 25% to 40% of the bottled water sold in the United States comes from a municipal water source. Consumers are therefore paying hundreds to thousands of times more for repackaged municipal water that costs them only pennies per gallon out of their tap.

The bottled water industry is regulated as a food by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) while the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulates municipal water. The FDA's standards apply only to interstate sales, which amount to 30 - 40% of bottled water sold in the United States. Water packaged and sold in the same state are subject to that state's requirements, which may or may not be as strict as the FDA's standards. Drinking water is regulated federally with primacy given to the IDNR to enforce and enact the EPA's standards. Some differences between municipal water versus bottled water regulations are:

Tap Water Regulated by EPA	Bottled Water Regulated by FDA
Cannot have confirmed E. coli or Fecal coliform bacteria	A certain amount of any bacteria is allowed
Filtered and/or disinfected	No federal filtration or disinfection requirements
Drinking water standard violations are enforced	Bottled water in violation of standards can still be sold
Water must be tested by certified labs	Bottlers not required to have certified lab testing
Tap water results must be reported to state officials	No tap water reporting requirements
Water operators must be certified	Bottled water plants do not have to be certified
Must provide consumers with annual water quality report	No public right to know requirements. Not required to disclose water source or treatment methods
Cost pennies a day	Cost can vary from \$0.80 to \$10 per gallon.
Must maintain chlorine residual in water to prevent bacteria growth.	No disinfectant to kill bacteria in bottles required.

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For more information on municipal and tap water visit:

<http://www.nrdc.org/water/drinking/bw/bwinx.asp> or
www.bottledwater.org.



NOVEMBER 2007

Mr. Tom's Neighborhood— *From the White House to your house*

Special points of interest:

- *Mr. Tom's Neighborhood— From the White House to your house*
- *Digital TV— part Six*
- *Mike Jones joins HMU Board*
- *Telephone account information*

Quick links:

- Harlanet.com-local links and a place to start for HMU websites
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The November 6th Des Moines Register had an article on the Democratic presidential candidate's positions on a national energy policy. It's said that all politics are local and the same can be said for energy policies. Any national policy would be implemented and regulated at a regional, state and local level.

If I was asked to offer a position on HMU's current energy policy, it would look like this:

Electric— the cost to generate electricity at the federal hydroelectric dam in South Dakota and the Louisa coal generation plant are going up due to drought, coal costs, rail transportation costs, emissions regulation costs and general operations and administrative costs. WAPA, our main power supplier, has indicated a wholesale power price increase is coming.

Getting the power to Harlan will be affected by the changes

in how electricity is carried via cross country transmission lines. With the formation of MISO, an organization designed to oversee transmission, how we interact with transmission companies will change. While noble in concept, the devil is in the details and how the formation of MISO will affect HMU is unknown as I write this column. For a better understanding of the potential impact of MISO on HMU, I'd encourage you to watch my November 8th presentation to the Board on HGTV channel 26, on the web at HMU-Harlan.com or request a copy to view at home.

Natural Gas— the wholesale cost of natural gas has doubled in the last four years due to increased demand for a cleaner burning fuel to generate electricity and heating. HMU signed contracts several years ago that have slowed the growth rate of natural gas prices but those contracts are coming to an end. We antici-

pate the cost for wholesale gas will be higher in the future.

So what is our policy as a provider to help you as a consumer keep energy costs down?

1) Strive to obtain wholesale electric and gas contracts at the lowest price possible.

2) Maximize efficiency in our distribution systems with technology, equipment and operations. Modernizing our electric distribution system through recent rebuilds increases efficiency.

3) Promote and encourage customer awareness of energy efficiency through education and incentives. More than ever, it is cost effective to purchase and install energy efficient appliances and lighting. Enacting energy saving policies at the most local of all levels...your home and business...does make a difference in how you, HMU and America view and use energy in the future.

Next HMU Board meeting- December 13th

405 Chatburn
Harlan, IA 51537
Telephone: 755-5182
Website:
HarlanNet.com



Harlan's Premier Provider

Digital TV– Part 6 of a series

What about my VCR, DVD player, camcorder, and gaming console? Will I be able to use them with a digital television set?

Yes. Digital television sets are “backward compatible,” meaning existing analog equipment (VCRs, DVD players, camcorders, video games, etc.) will work on digital TV sets. However, their video will only be displayed in the maximum resolution that is available with each analog product. Manufacturers are producing a number of different connectors to hook equipment together and improve picture and sound quality when DTVs are used with existing analog equipment. Check with your retailer to determine the types of connectors that will work with your equipment.

Visit www.Har-Tel.com for more information

Information taken from www.dtv.gov

Mike Jones joins HMU Board of trustees

Mike Jones replaces Craig Kroger on the HMU Board of Trustee's effective November 22nd. Craig served on the HMU Board for fourteen years serving two years of the position vacated by Ron Holm and two 6 year terms, the maximum consecutive terms allowed.

HMU has seen many changes since Craig joined the board in 1993, mostly notably the improvements to the HMU premises after the 1993 flood, the launch of telecommunications services in the mid to late 1990's and the electric rebuild projects of the last several years.

Please join us in thanking Craig for his service and welcoming Mike to the HMU board.

Fox pulls signal

KDSM Channel 17, Des Moines and HMU cable Ch. 2, has notified HMU we will no longer be able to carry their signal after November 24, 2007. A news release is posted on our website www.harlanet.com

Telephone Account Security

HMU telephone customers have received a notice that FCC rules regarding customer privacy are changing December 8, 2007. Customer Service Representatives need to authenticate a person's identity before discussing details of the account.

- **This change applies to telephone service only.**
- The easiest way to ensure convenient access to your account is to set up a password.
- If you as an HMU telephone customer do not want to set up a password, you may visit us in person during normal business hours and present a government issued ID or the CSR can call you back at the phone number of record to discuss your account.
- You have until December 7th to set up a password for your account. If you have any questions regarding this change, please call us at 755-5182 during normal business hours.



Special points of interest:

- *Mr. Tom's Neighborhood— End of year review*
- *Digital TV— part Seven*
- *WAPA rate notification*

Quick links:

- Harlanet.com-local links and a place to start for HMU websites
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Mr. Tom's Neighborhood— 2007 fini

Can it be that I have flipped a page on my 2007 calendar for the last time? A quick count shows that yes, eleven months are gone with part of one to go.

December is a time to review what happened at HMU during the last 12 months.

We completed another phase of our electric system upgrade and rebuild in the north part of Harlan. Many distribution lines that wove through the area are now underground. The system capacity was brought up to contemporary standards.

Our Energy Efficiency rebate program grew due to the number of customers installing energy efficient appliances and commercial lighting. Rebates for energy efficient furnaces were added to the program. We participated in a compact florescent lighting rebate program for the second year.

Cross country transmission came to the

forefront and a considerable amount of staff and administrative time was spent on MISO during 2007.

HMU employees and volunteers were called to action on May 6th when rising flood waters threatened the HMU offices. The potential for water damage to buildings and telecom equipment caused the Board to ask me to look into building a new facility. Any decisions regarding a new HMU building are on hold as of November.

June saw us performing a system wide survey to ensure the integrity and safety of the gas system. We also held our annual Municipal Celebration.

August brought The Big Ten Network and Lifetime Movie Network to the HMU cable system as well as the American Veteran's Traveling Tribute to Harlan. HMU was a major sponsor and supporter of the Tribute and contributed significant re-

sources toward a successful visit.

December saw the launch of broadcast HD channels on the HMU cable system.

A review of 2007 would not be complete without mentioning Josh Underwood, an HMU employee, who died this past year. All of us at HMU thought highly of Josh. We miss his smile and fishing stories. Long time employee and Operations Manager Scott Jensen retired.

We welcomed new employees Chris Cote and Bryan Wehr to HMU in the water plant and Gas/Meter department. Mike Jones replaced Craig Kroger on the HMU Board of Trustees.

As we reflect on 2007, my thoughts and wishes are for you and yours to have a great 2008. From all of us at HMU, have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Next HMU Board meeting- December 13th

405 Chatburn
Harlan, IA 51537
Telephone: 755-5182
Website:
HarlanNet.com



Harlan's Premier Provider

Digital TV- Part 7 of a series

Do cable TV networks, like CNN, TNT, ESPN, etc., have to switch to digital broadcasting as well?

No. The current requirement to switch from analog to digital only applies to full-power broadcast TV stations, which use the public airwaves to provide free over-the-air programming.

What about my portable, battery-powered analog TV? Will I be able to use it to watch broadcast TV after February 17, 2009?

Portable, battery-powered analog TVs may be able to receive over-the-air programming after February 17, 2009 if they have the necessary plugs to allow them to be connected to a digital-to-analog converter box. Because it is not anticipated that battery powered digital-to-analog converter boxes will be produced, an external power source would also be required.

Visit www.Har-Tel.com for more information

Information taken from www.dtv.gov

WAPA rate notification

For the past seven years drought has plagued the Missouri River Basin. The affect on Harlan Municipal Utilities Electricity Supply, like the proverbial chicken, has come home to roost.

As has been often noted in this newsletter, we receive two-thirds of our wholesale electric power from the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) by way of the hydroelectric generating stations along the Missouri River. Our relationship with WAPA goes back to June 1954, and we have been the beneficiary, as have some 300 other electric entities, from the inexpensive and abundant supply of electricity from the Missouri.

Unfortunately lack of water in the river, from less than normal rain fall and mountain snow melt, means the hydroelectric facilities cannot generate enough electricity to meet all of WAPA's needs. So, WAPA has to enter the electricity marketplace and procure the

necessary energy, which is significantly more expensive than electricity produced by hydro facilities.

We have seen some increases in our WAPA power costs each of the past three years. But, now the drought impact has become so severe that WAPA is forced to increase our wholesale electric rates again. On November 26th we received a letter from WAPA that there would be a rate increase effective January 1, 2008. Volume 72, No. 219 of the Federal Register notes that the Composite Rate increase will be 25.3%. That means our costs will go up around \$215,000 a year. This "drought adder" also can be reduced, or increased, if the costs move the equivalent of 2 mills/kWh in either direction.

WAPA power is still our cheapest source of electricity, and although increases are never welcome, it is better than the alternatives.



Happy Holidays from all of us at HMU!

The HMU office will close Monday, December 24th
and Monday, December 31st at 11:30.

We will be closed December 25th and January 1, 2008
Emergency calls taken at 755-5182