

EAST MISSISSIPPI ELECTRIC POWER ASSOCIATION

CLIMATE ISSUES

Balance is crucial in climate change legislation

It is hard to escape the media coverage and the controversy surrounding climate change and environmental policy. Many Americans believe there is a need to reduce greenhouse gases, but no one seems to be clear on how this should be accomplished; who should be responsible; what the overall impact will be; and how much the effort will cost. There must be balance

between maintaining a healthy environment and assuring reliable resources for electric generation for the both the near and distant future.

“We wish there was similar media coverage about energy policy, because the decisions made about environmental policy will surely affect all of our energy prices.

“Despite perceptions to the con-

trary, there is still much uncertainty about the actual effect of human activity upon climate change. What is certain is that the discussions about further regulating the electric industry have the potential to increase your electric bills considerably,” General Manager Wayne Henson said.

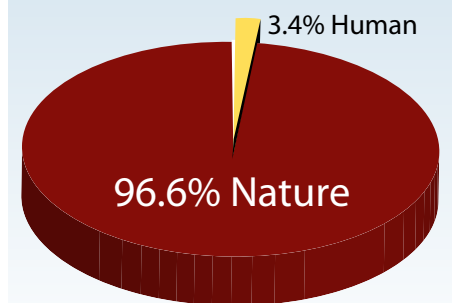
The electric power industry faces significant challenges in the years ahead. Because electricity is so vital, a reliable supply of electric energy must be studied, planned and constructed to meet an ever-growing demand. There are discussions that energy efficiency measures and renewable energy sources can meet the demand, but that is simply not true. These efforts can offset some need for generation. The reality is demand is ever-increasing and power plants must be built if Americans want to continue the lifestyle they currently enjoy.

Pressure is mounting in Congress to do something about climate change. Those debates, which might seem far away, have the potential to greatly impact individuals in east Mississippi. There has to be a realistic look at climate change with a clear understanding of the effects of any legislation.

“As your electric cooperative, it is vital for us to be part of the discussion, trying to bring facts and clarity to an emotional and complex issue,” Henson added.

For example, did you know that carbon dioxide (CO₂) makes up less than 0.05 percent of the Earth’s atmosphere, and that man-made CO₂ is about 3 percent of that total? American power plants must be both environmentally and economically sound, but there needs to be intense discussion about current proposals in Congress. Proposed

Humans contribute approximately 3.4% of the CO₂ in Earth’s atmosphere



Global Warming Primer
National Center for Policy Analysis

So where does the CO₂ come from?

It is naturally occurring

The oceans – predominately
As temperatures rise, most likely through solar radiation, the oceans release carbon dioxide through water vapor

Volcanoes

Decaying plants and animals

Make safety a priority at your home

May is Electrical Safety Month and a time for everyone to be reminded of the importance of safety at all times. At EMEPA, we practice safety every day and encourage you to make safety a priority.

Always be careful when using or working around electricity.

After spending long winter days indoors, most folks love to get outside in spring, even if it’s just to do chores. However, EMEPA officials remind members that outdoor chores can bring electrical hazards.

For example, ladders contacting power lines cause 9 percent of electrocution-related deaths each year, according to recent data from the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Landscaping, gardening and farming equipment cause another 7 percent. To avoid electrical hazards, make sure you and your family follow these simple tips:

In general

- Teach children to stay away from electric transformers and substations, and explain what posted warning signs mean.
- Avoid damp conditions when using electricity. Keep all electrical devices and cords away from water.
- Place waterproof covers on all outdoor outlets and install ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) in outlets where water may be present.

- Only use extension cords marked for outdoor use; match power needs of an electric tool or appliance to the cord’s label information.

- Dial 8-1-1, the national “Call Before You Dig” phone number, at least 72 hours before engaging in any type of excavation work. Local utilities will be notified to mark the approximate location of any underground lines. Always call before digging.

Power Tools

- Inspect power tools and appliances for frayed cords, broken plugs, and cracked or broken housing, and repair or replace damaged items.
- Store power tools indoors.
- Unplug outdoor tools when not in use and do not carry power tools by the cord.

Ladders

- Use only a fiberglass or wooden ladder if you must work near overhead wires.
- Never touch a person or an object that has made contact with a power line.

Source: Electrical Safety Foundation International; CPSC

legislation has the potential to double your monthly electric bill while providing limited, if any, real benefits.

“We pledge to do all we can to protect your interests, including providing as much information as possible in the coming months. We will be calling upon our elected officials to be leaders in framing the debate about these issues in realistic terms. We ask all of you to stay informed and please let us know if you have questions,” Henson added.

If you would like more information about climate change, a representative from EMEPA will speak at your community, civic or church meeting. Also, EMEPA will be including articles in each edition of the *Today in Mississippi*, keeping you informed of this issue.