

A monthly newsletter for the members of

Egyptian Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy Cooperative 

February 2016

www.eeca.coop
800-606-1505

Why Egyptian Electric Cooperative?

Normally, this space is reserved for the Executive Vice President/General Manager of the Cooperative but I asked Mr. Riddle if he would allow me the opportunity this month and he agreed. You, see, this is my final center section for the Illinois Country Living as I've decided to move to the next phase of my career, retirement.

It was not an easy decision. I started at Egyptian Electric Cooperative on November 17, 1980 just over 35 years ago. While it's not the only place I've worked over my 45 year career, it is the one that I've spent the most time at, and have come to love the most.

Coming to work at the Cooperative was not a career goal of mine back then. In fact, while I grew up less than half a mile away, I really didn't know what in the world Egyptian Electric did or what it was. I came to the Cooperative purely by chance. I had gotten to know a couple of people from my prior career by assisting them with some purchases. One was a director, the other two were the General Manager and the System Engineer who would become the General Manager in a few years. They were looking for someone to eventually become the District Manager in Murphysboro.

At the time, I didn't understand why they had selected me as their replacement. After meeting with

them one evening and listening to what they had planned for me, I sure didn't look that gift horse in the mouth. I said yes.

Thirty five years later, I think I finally figured out what they saw. And, I don't believe it had anything to do with any special skills or talents they saw in me. While I had been in sales for ten years, I've always said I never sold anyone anything. I just tried to figure out what they needed and then tried to fill that need with something we had. And that was what they saw.

You see, those folks had many years with Egyptian Electric and other cooperatives. They knew what cooperatives were about and what was important in the employees they selected was a willingness to serve.

That's what cooperative's do. We don't try to sell you anything you really don't have need for. The founding fathers of Egyptian Electric Cooperative saw the need for electricity in rural southern Illinois. When the investor owned utilities wouldn't build distribution lines into rural areas at a reasonable cost, they took it upon themselves to get it done. It just so happened that the Rural Electric Administration (REA) had seen the same scenario in other parts of the country and had the tools and templates available to assist local people in the formation of not-for-profit electric cooperatives. On August 25,

1938, Egyptian Electric Cooperative Association was born.

Years later when the investor owned utilities tried to hold the area distribution cooperatives in southern Illinois hostage with wholesale power costs, they stepped up and formed Sothern Illinois Power Cooperative (SIPC) so they had access to a reliable source of electric generation. On October 3, 1963, SIPC energized its first transmission lines.

Cooperatives are not interested in generating profits. They are about serving the needs of their members. That's why the Egyptian Electric Board of Directors formed the Egyptian Water Company a number of years ago. There was a need for potable water in parts of the northern service territory. We have since spun Egyptian Water Company over to Washington County Water

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Bryce Cramer
District Office and
Member Services Manager

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as that is their primary business and was better able to serve those members. But Egyptian saw the need and made sure it got done.

I am and will be eternally grateful to those three men, to the Board of Directors, the four general managers I've worked for, to my fellow employees, and to you, the members,

for having given me the pleasure of serving you. Danny Thomas said "All of us are born for a reason, but all of us don't discover why. Success in life has nothing to do with what you gain in life or accomplish for yourself. It's what you do for others."

As I transition to the next phase, I leave this parting thought from

Ralph Waldo Emerson to my fellow employees. "It is one of the most beautiful compensations of this life that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself." I urge them to be stingy. Help yourself by serving our members. You won't regret it.

EPA Clean Power Plan

I am sure most of you have heard or read something during the past few months concerning the EPA's Clean Power Plan rule. Don Gulley, CEO of Southern Illinois Power Cooperative (SIPC), has penned a short article to help the membership of Egyptian Electric Cooperative better understand the potential impacts of their future power bill. Below is that article.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has issued a new rule called the "Clean Power Plan" to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from America's coal-fired power

plants. The rule will be negligible in its overall global impact as the targeted reduction requirement will be more than offset by coal-fired plants built in China. The rule targets plant emissions beginning in 2022, requiring states to meet targets by 2030 through a state developed State Implementation Plan. Absent a state plan, the EPA will likely impose a more stringent Federal Implementation Plan (FIP). Costs will go up – replacing lower cost energy resources with higher cost resources (less reliable solar and wind) and paying for stranded investment at the same time.

Southern Illinois Power Cooperative (SIPC), the Generation & Transmission Cooperative that supplies power to Egyptian Electric Cooperative, has invested in state-of-the-art environmental control technology to meet and exceed current EPA requirements. Technology to control and capture carbon dioxide is not



economically feasible. The potential for stranded investment and higher costs for replacement power is a serious threat to SIPC Member Owners which will also have a significant negative economic impact on southern Illinois. SIPC supports and is working closely with the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association to challenge the rule and is also working with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency to protect the interests of Member Owners in development of the State Implementation Plan.

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What to do during an outage

Your Cooperative works extremely hard to prevent power outages. We clear our rights of way on a planned and regular basis, we inspect poles and lines and budget for system improvements and upgrades on an annual basis. Yet with all of that planning and work, outages still happen. Ice and snow storms can weigh tree limbs to the point of breaking, ice and wind can cause electric conductors to gallop like a jump rope, cars leave the road and strike poles and animals climb where they shouldn't. Here are some tips for when your power does go out.

1. Make sure it is an outage on the distribution system and not your service. All of our meters now have digital displays. If you can see the numbers on your meter, most likely you have a breaker that has tripped. Reset a tripped breaker by moving it all of the way to the off position, then turn it back on.

2. Report your outage. Call the after-hours toll free number, 800-606-1505 to report your outage. If you've previously signed up for reporting outages via a text message, you can report your outage by texting 'outage' to 55050 (only do this if you've signed up for this service). In the event you are routed to the automated phone system instead of a live person, your outage will be registered with the dispatch service and reported to us.

To assist with outage reporting, make sure we have updated phone numbers associated with your account. The phone numbers we have on record for your account are printed each month on the portion of the bill you return with your payment. If these are incorrect, please mark through them and record the correct number. You can also check and change your phone numbers through the SmartHub online portal.

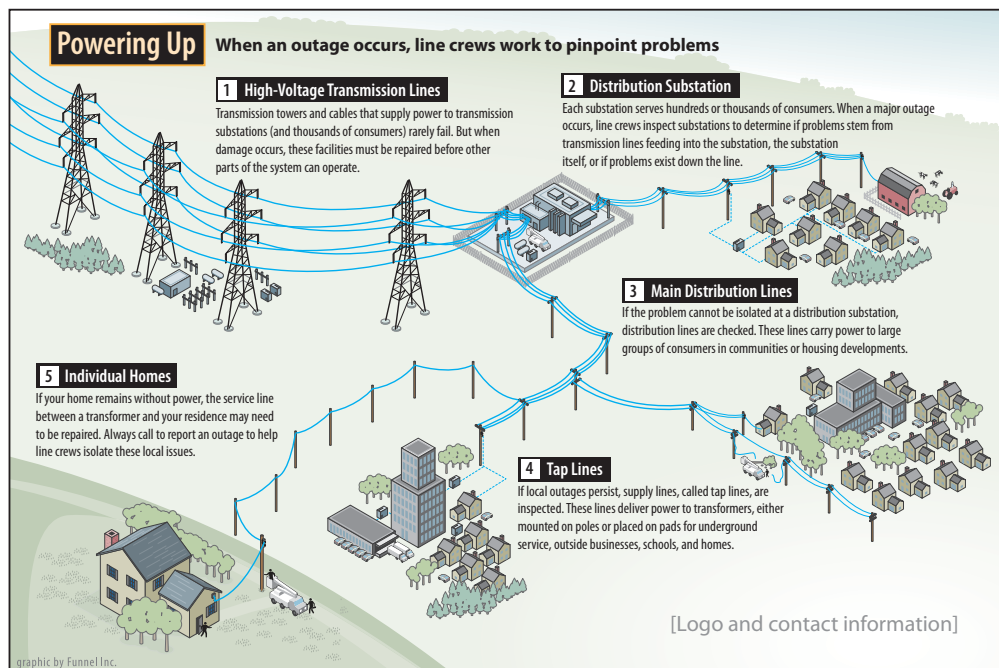
Do not report your outage through Facebook or Twitter as these outlets are not monitored on a regular basis.

3. Be patient. While the outage management system is predicting the extent and severity of the outage, the dispatch center is already assembling crews. If the outage is after hours, keep in mind the linemen will have to stop what they are doing at home, change clothes (they are required to wear fire retardant clothing anytime they work), drive

to the office, and gather vehicles and material before heading to the outage location. Once in the field, they may have to trouble shoot the outage cause by driving the line to find the problem, refuse over-current devices or possibly walk private rights of way to find the problem. You may not be able to see them out your window as the problem could be miles away from your home. If a storm has rolled through the area, there may other outages as well.

4. Check our communication sources. If the outage is fairly large, we'll post updates on our website and Facebook page. You can also view a live outage map on our website at www.eeca.coop.

If you do experience an outage, rest assured our linemen are working as hard as safely possible to get your power back on. The faster they can restore your power, the sooner they get back to their homes and family.



When electricity goes out, most of us expect power will be restored within a few hours. But when a major storm causes widespread damage, longer outages may result. Co-op line crews work long, hard hours to restore service safely to the greatest number of consumers in the shortest time possible. Here's what's going on if you find yourself in the dark.

Youth Tour

What do 1,500 high school students, our nation's capital and electric cooperatives have in common? The Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, of course!

Youth Tour was established with one thought in mind – to inspire our next generation of leaders. Since 1964, more than 50,000 young Americans have taken advantage of this special opportunity offered by their electric cooperative. Egyptian Electric Cooperative alone has sent over 100 students since 1989.

It all takes place in June, when hundreds of electric co-ops across the country send participants to Washington, D.C. for a chance to learn about the cooperative business model and a full week of sightseeing.

While in D.C., participants have a chance to meet with their elected officials and discuss the issues that are important back home. Without a doubt, Youth Tour has grown into an invaluable program that gives young Americans an experience that will stay with them for the rest of their lives.

Egyptian Electric Cooperative is accepting applications through March 1 to select local students to attend Youth Tour 2016. If you are a high school sophomore or junior interested in traveling to Washington, D.C. to experience the trip of a lifetime, consider completing an



application that can be found on our website.

Perhaps you know of an exceptional student who would be a great candidate for the program. If you do, please share this article with them.

Youth Tour is so much more than a sightseeing trip. Students have repeatedly shared that this experience has helped them grow into successful professionals. It has also benefited our local communities. Youth Tour participants return home with a deeper understanding and skillset of what it takes to be leader, and as a result, they put these skills to use right here in our community.



Help us find the next generation of leaders by sharing the Youth Tour experience with a promising student. For more information about Egyptian Electric Cooperative's Youth Tour program, call 800-606-1505 or visit www.eeca.coop.

Pay your bill online

Don't forget you can pay your bill online with a credit card or electronic check, as well as view your historic use at www.eeca.coop. Just click on the Pay Online button.

If it's your first visit, you'll need to create an account and password.

If you wish to make an online payment without establishing an account, you can do so by going to the SmartHub Online Payment link under My Billing and using the Pay Now option. All you will need is the account number on your bill.



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Call before you dig.**



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