

Members attend annual meeting

It was a hot day, but that didn't stop the members of Egyptian Electric Cooperative from attending their 78th Annual Meeting of the Members on the evening of Thursday July 21, 2016 at the Steeleville American Legion. Approximately 915 guests, including the 560 registered members, were served a hot dog dinner and the young and old alike enjoyed the night's entertainment. Bucket truck rides were given by the linemen of Egyptian Electric and the Swamp Tigers performed in the main hall. In 2015, there had been 388 registered members, with approximately 640 attendees, making 2016 a record attendance and a successful meeting.

During the business meeting, members re-elected Allen Haake of Murphysboro, Ken Jarrett of Jacob, and Kevin Liefer of Red Bud, to new three-year terms on the board of directors. Steven Prest, Egyptian Electric Cooperative (EECA) Board Secretary-Treasurer, reported that 2015 wholesale power costs from Southern Illinois Power Cooperative (SIPC), EECA's generation and transmission cooperative, amounted to more than 28 million dollars, or about 71 percent of operating expenses. In addition, other operating expenses totaled about 11 million dollars. The bottom line for 2015 showed the cooperative had a margin of \$790 thousand, which has been allocated as capital credits to members.

EECA Board President Randall Campbell encouraged members to exercise their constitutional right to vote and go to the

polls in November. He also brought members up-to-date on the status of a possible new headquarters. He reported that the co-op was waiting until the middle of August for construction bids to be evaluated and if favorable, would begin construction in late summer or early fall. He opened the floor to questions, but overall noted that the board of directors is taking the process very seriously and looking for ways to least impact member's rates.

General Manager Jim Riddle reported on Egyptian Electric rates and how they are affected by SIPC. He explained that a cost of service study is being conducted, and that he does anticipate a rate increase this year or next. He additionally added that in 2015, EECA had the fourth overall lowest rates of Illinois electric co-ops, but the greatest concerns for the cooperative continues to be environmental legislation, regulation and the cost of fuel.



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Randall Campbell

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Left to Right: is Brooke Guthman of Egyptian Electric, Cody Jacobsen, Jaclyn Colvis, Kylie Grubbs, Dustin Smith, Trevor Atwood, and Randall Campbell, Board President.

Fifty-two scholarship applicants were present for the five \$1,000 Annual Meeting Scholarship drawings. The winners were:

- Trevor Atwood, 2016 graduate of Carbondale High School, attending John A. Logan College
- Jaclyn Colvis, 2016 graduate of Chester High School, attending University of Missouri
- Kylie Grubbs, 2016 graduate of Carbondale High School, attending McKendree University
- Cody Jacobsen, 2016 graduate of Sparta High School, attending SIUE
- Dustin Smith, 2016 graduate of Murphysboro High School, attending University of Tennessee-Martin

Following the meeting, the board of directors reorganized and elected Ken Jarrett as Board President, Steven Prest as Vice President and Paul Hicks as Secretary-Treasurer.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Periodically inspect your dryer vent to ensure it is not blocked. This will save energy and may prevent fire. Manufacturers recommend using a rigid venting material - not plastic vents that may collapse and cause blockages

Source: Energy.gov



**Offices will be closed on
Monday, September 5th in
observance of Labor Day.**

The value of electricity

Electricity is considered a necessity of life — a service that most of us can't live without. It powers our homes, our businesses, our lives. And while it may not seem like it when you get your bill, electricity is also a great value. It's a commodity that Egyptian Electric Cooperative provides 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and we work hard to ensure that it's always available when you need it.

Each month, you use different amounts of kilowatts, which is calculated using several factors such as the outside temperature and weather conditions, the way you use electricity each day, how your home is insulated, your thermostat setting and more. Most people don't think about the value of their electricity until the power goes out.

A national organization, the Edison Electric Institute, provides perspective about the value of electricity and its prevalence in our lives. Its research shows that the typical American household owns an average of 25 consumer electronic products, 99 percent of which have to be plugged in or recharged.

What role does electricity play in your life? Electricity is:

- The cold milk or drinks that comes from your refrigerator
- The email you send on your computer
- The lights you use to read at night
- The music playing from your personal listening device
- Your favorite drama or comedy on television
- The cool air that comes from your air conditioner on hot days
- The phone that connects you to friends and family

According to Bureau of Labor and Statistics, the average price per kilowatt hour was about \$0.13 in March 2016. Egyptian Electric's current rate per kilowatt hour is less than that, it is \$0.103 per kilowatt hour, and is made up of both the energy charge and wholesale power charge.

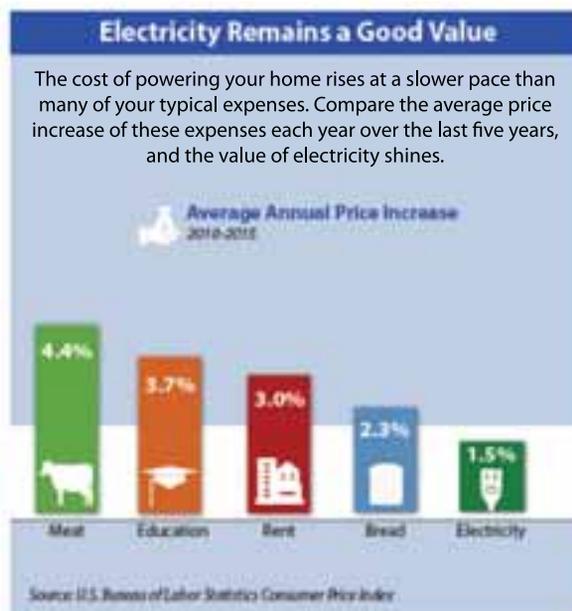
Like most everything else, the cost of electricity has gone up over the last 30 years. Specifically, it has increased by approximately \$0.06 a kilowatt hour, or 62.5 percent. That sounds like a lot, but compared to other expenses such as a pound of ground chuck, 100 percent beef, the price has increased by the same percentage in just the last 10 years. In 2006, the cost was \$2.56 and in 2016 it increased to \$3.93. Looking back 30 years, the cost of beef increased by 137 percent per pound!

Another example is the cost increase of a dozen grade A large eggs. In 2006, the cost was \$1.30 and now it's \$2.08, an increase of 60 percent. Looking back 30 years, eggs were only \$.89 (134 percent cheaper). White bread, per pound was a little over a dollar in 2006. Today, you will find it available in

stores for an average price of \$1.42. In just 10 years, the cost of bread has increased by 37 percent. In 1986, or 30 years ago, bread was a mere \$0.56. That's a 154 percent increase!

We are all familiar with the fluctuating price of regular gasoline. For example, in April 2012, a gallon of gas cost an average of \$3.93, that's a 342 percent increase from April 1986 (30 years) when it was only \$0.89.

Even though the demand for electricity has greatly increased over the last 30 years, the cost to purchase it has been growing much slower than other common items.



The differences between overhead and underground power lines

By Tom Tate

There are two methods of installing the power lines that carry electricity to your home, overhead and underground. Egyptian Electric Cooperative members sometimes ask why we use one versus the other, or more to the point, why all power lines are not installed using the underground construction method. Isn't one method better than the other? These are great questions, and the answer is that each method has its place.

Overhead line construction starts with the setting of utility poles. Poles can be set in nearly any type of terrain, even rocky. In the case of heavy rock, special equipment is used to auger out the hole. If placement occurs in boggy or wet terrain, many techniques are available to set poles securely. Once the poles are in place, wires can be strung and then equipment—like transformers, fuses and reclosers—are installed. Power can now flow.

Underground line construction requires digging a trench that is deep enough to keep the lines well away from surface activities. Where the terrain is extremely rocky, underground lines may not be an option. Next, wires are laid in the trench directly or placed in conduits for protection. The trench is filled in, and the surface is restored to its original condition. Padmount transformers and additional equipment are installed as needed, now the system is ready to deliver electricity.

Determining if power lines should be overhead or underground boils down to what is best for the situation. Underground lines might be ideal in situations where there is a desire to keep the poles and wires out of sight, such as a residential neighborhood, park or historical area. There are many cities and towns that construct only underground lines for a variety of reasons.

Overhead systems work well when appearance is not a major concern. Examples include extremely long line distances across country, where the voltages are higher than the limitations set for underground lines.

The ultimate mix of underground and overhead construction used by Egyptian Electric Cooperative provides you, our members, with the highest possible quality of service at the lowest possible price. Cost, appearance, reliability, maintenance and future upgrades will drive which is the better approach, overhead or underground.



OVERHEAD & UNDERGROUND POWER LINES
The Pros and Cons

OVERHEAD

PROS

- Lower cost
- Quicker construction
- Easier to spot damage and faults
- Less expensive to repair and upgrade
- Can be built in any terrain
- Any voltage can be placed overhead

CONS

- Susceptible to wind, ice and snow
- More vulnerable to damage from trees and vegetation, which requires right of way trimming
- Vulnerable to links when animals and branches contact lines
- Susceptible to damage from vehicle collisions
- Less attractive

UNDERGROUND

PROS

- Not vulnerable to damage from tree branches
- Does not interfere with views
- No right of way (tree trimming) required
- Less susceptible to damage from vehicle collisions
- Not impacted by wind, ice and snow
- Less vulnerable to links when animals and branches contact lines

CONS

- More expensive to build
- Susceptible to flooding
- Difficult to locate faults
- Expensive to repair
- Fed by overhead lines at some point, making the lines vulnerable to outages and interruptions
- Limitations on voltages that can be buried underground
- Can be vulnerable to dig-ins