



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

# HOMEPAGE

www.enerstar.com | A monthly newsletter for co-op members of EnerStar Electric Cooperative

## EnerStar launches new Outage Management System

When power outages occur, EnerStar's main goal is to get power back on as quickly as possible. In January, the co-op began using a new outage management system (OMS). The enhanced system is integrated into the cooperative's current customer information and billing software.

While cooperative members will not directly see the benefits of the new program, it changes how the cooperative manages its power outages and improves outage restoration efforts.

Regardless of the size of the power outage, gathering accurate information and prioritizing that information is essential. The new OMS looks at all the power outages and groups them by sections. From that information, it predicts where the problem is occurring. Obviously an employee still needs to visually inspect the electrical system, but this gives them a good starting point to determine what is causing the power outage.

The OMS system creates a detailed outage history for use in analysis later on. It assists the cooperative in finding trouble areas on the electrical system that may be experiencing a higher average of power outages than other parts of the system. It also gives the cooperative accurate benchmarks to track how the cooperative is performing.

The OMS is just one more investment in technology that is aimed at

providing reliable electric service for you, our cooperative members.



Part of the new outage management system includes an outage map that will be incorporated into the co-op's website. Members will have the option to view the map by township or by substation feeder to see the number of outages by selection.

#### COOPERATIVE HEADQUARTERS

EnerStar Electric Cooperative  
11597 Illinois Highway 1  
Paris, IL 61944

#### TELEPHONE

800-635-4145  
PAY BY PHONE  
888-999-4201

#### OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday  
7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

#### Serving the Illinois

counties of Edgar,  
Clark, Vermillion,  
Douglas and Coles.

## Lessons learned from Polar Vortex 2014

At the time of publication, the cooperative was knee deep in the effects of Polar Vortex 2014. Here are a few thoughts and lessons learned:

It is critical that we have your correct telephone number. Many members are dropping their land line telephone. Please look at your billing statement to see if we have your correct number and if not, please contact the cooperative office.

Power outages will occur. If you or someone in your family rely on medical equipment, it is imperative that you have battery backup and a plan in advance.

Normally the cooperative restores power in the most efficient manner possible, meaning we restore power to the greatest number of members first and work our way down to individual outages. This storm was a bit different in the fact that due to weather conditions, we had to factor in road conditions.

We have publicized this for some time, but it is important that members call 800-635-4145 to report power outages. If the office or local dispatch phone lines are busy, calls



Ron Martin clears 5 foot snow drifts on his farm south of Paris.

made to this number are directed to a cooperatively-owned answering service. They have the ability for greater call volume and are tied directly to our outage management system. But all this needs to be done on the 800-number. Calling the local number in a high volume power outage greatly increases your chances of getting a busy sig-

nal while calling the 800-number greatly reduces the chances.

In two days, EnerStar's Facebook page went from 297 followers to 580 followers. It is great for general information and a look "behind the scenes." But do remember, this is not a communication method to report power outages. If you are on Facebook, we encourage you to follow us!

## When reporting power outages, help EnerStar help you!

Update your phone number and e-mail address

There are times when we need to contact cooperative members about service issues, billing questions or safety concerns. But over the years, contact numbers can become obsolete, especially with many people disconnecting their land line phones. And all too often, we find out about it when it is too late.

Many members use EnerStar's automated outage notification system to report a power outage. But if we have an incorrect number, it will not be able to find your account. You can still report a power outage, but you will need to know your electric account number.

If we currently have a telephone number in our member records, it will appear on your monthly billing statement listed under "Location Phone." This number is tied to EnerStar's auto-

ANY UNPAID BALANCE FORWARD MAY SUBJECT YOUR ACCOUNT TO PENALTY				CONNECTION	
ACCOUNT NUMBER	METER NUMBER	LOCATION PHONE			
SERVICE ADDRESS	MAP NUMBER	CELL PHONE			
ACTIVITY SINCE LAST BILL		\$ AMOUNT	LOCATION PHONE		
BILLING PERIOD DATES		RATE	\$ AMOUNT		
# OF DAYS IN BILLING PERIOD		BILL TYPE	LOCATION PHONE		
METER NBR	OWN METER READING FROM	MULT.	USAGE	USAGE 1 YEAR AGO	LOCATION PHONE
Due Date		Net Due			
Past Due After		Amount With Penalty			

ated outage notification system. Directly below is the cell phone number we may have on file for you.

We can serve you better by hav-

ing your correct telephone number. And just for your reassurance, we do NOT and will NOT share personal information with other organizations.

# Board Elections-Know How to Vote

The cooperative's annual meeting is an excellent opportunity to take part in the business of your member-owned cooperative. It is the democratic control that affords you, the member, the privilege of attending the annual meeting and participating in the director elections. A director is a member just like you. He or she represents your district and is your voice in the cooperative.

The EnerStar service territory is divided into nine Representative Districts. Representative districts are then assigned to one of three Voting Districts. Although the Representative Districts range in size, they contain approximately equal numbers of members.

Via first-class mail in mid-February members will receive an envelope containing all necessary voting documentation for the EnerStar board elections. The following items will be included: Official Notice, Voting Ballot, Ballot Envelope and a Return Envelope.

**OFFICIAL NOTICE** – This is the official announcement of the meeting as required by our bylaws. The notice includes the meeting date, time, and location. It also contains election information and voting instructions. Members should carefully read these instructions to ensure their ballot is completed correctly. The notice will also include a brief candidate biography. The candidates are solely responsible for the content provided in the biography.

**VOTING BALLOT** – To properly complete a ballot, members should mark an "X" in the box. **The two lines of the "X" must cross inside the box.** Members must not color in the box or use a check mark when voting. The Election Inspectors are required to void any ballot incorrectly completed. You will put your completed ballot inside the Ballot Envelope and seal it.

**BALLOT ENVELOPE** – This envelope is smaller than the return envelope with the words "Ballot Envelope" clearly stated on the front. Completed ballots should be sealed inside this envelope. The ballot envelope should be placed in the return envelope and sealed.

**SIGN THIS BALLOT!**

**INSERT THE SECRET BALLOT ENVELOPE INTO THIS RETURN ENVELOPE**

Return envelopes with ballots enclosed can be mailed or hand-delivered to the EnerStar office and must be received by Friday, March 14, 2014.

Return envelopes may also be brought to the Annual Meeting on Saturday, March 15, 2014, at Crestwood School, 15601 US Hwy 150, Paris, Illinois.

**CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that as a member of EnerStar Electric Cooperative I have personally voted the enclosed ballot for the 2014 Director Election.

**FROM:** \_\_\_\_\_

(Void if not signed by member, or at least one member if a shared membership is held.)

*Your voting preference will remain anonymous.*

**DO NOT INCLUDE PAYMENTS OR OTHER CORRESPONDENCE IN THIS ENVELOPE.**

**Do not forget to sign the back of the return envelope where indicated.**

**RETURN ENVELOPE** – The return envelope is the larger of the two envelopes. For the convenience of our members, the return envelope will be stamped and self-addressed to the attention of the Election Inspectors. **Members are required to sign the back of the return envelope where indicated.** This certification verifies that the member personally voted the enclosed ballot. If the account is a joint membership, only one member is required to certify the ballot.

Members may return their ballots one of two ways. Return envelopes with ballots enclosed can

be mailed or hand-delivered to the EnerStar office by Friday, March 14, 2014. Ballots received in the office after that date will be null and void. Return envelopes with ballots may also be brought to the Annual Meeting on Saturday, March 15, 2014.

Election Inspectors, chosen by the cooperative legal counsel, open the ballot envelopes and count the ballots at the Annual Meeting. Members' voting preferences will remain anonymous. Election results will be announced at the close of the meeting after all business properly brought before the meeting has concluded.

<b>VOTING</b>		
<div style="text-align: center; border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto 10px auto;"></div> <p><b>Voting District A - Representative District 1</b></p> <p><b>Currently served by Jeff Zimmerman, Oakland</b></p> <p><i>The Townships of Newman, Bowdre, and Sargent in Douglas County, Illinois; the Townships of East Oakland and Ashmore in Coles County, Illinois; the Township of Embarrass in Edgar County, Illinois; and all that portion of the Township of Shiloh lying south of the 1800th Road in Edgar County, Illinois</i></p> <p><b>3 year term</b></p>	<div style="text-align: center; border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto 10px auto;"></div> <p><b>Voting District B - Representative District 5</b></p> <p><b>Currently served by Mark Comer, Paris</b></p> <p><i>The Township of Elbridge in Edgar County, Illinois; all that portion of the Township of Symmes lying north of the 400th Road and west of Illinois Highway 1 in Edgar County, Illinois; and all that portion of the Township of Symmes lying north of the 300th Road and east of Illinois Highway 1 in Edgar County, Illinois</i></p> <p><b>3 year term</b></p>	<div style="text-align: center; border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto 10px auto;"></div> <p><b>Voting District C - Representative District 9</b></p> <p><b>Currently served by Danny Gard Jr.</b></p> <p><i>The Townships of Anderson, Darwin, Melrose, and York in Clark County, Illinois; and all that portion of the Township of Marshall lying south of Interstate Highway 70 in Clark County, Illinois</i></p> <p><b>3 year term</b></p>

## Voting Qualifications: Who Can Vote

Because there are certain rules regarding voting procedures for the Annual Meeting of Members, it is important to remind members of their voting rights and responsibilities. The following points explain who can and cannot vote in the annual director election. By knowing these points, you can be assured your vote counts at the meeting.

- If only one person signed the original membership application, then only that person is allowed to vote. This is known as a Single Membership. With this membership, only one name is printed on the billing statement.
- If a husband and wife both signed the membership application, then one of them may cast one vote for that membership. This is known as a Joint Membership. Both names are printed on the billing statement. Sometimes, a membership was taken out before the member was married. In that case, the

new spouse may not vote for the membership. A single membership can easily be converted to a Joint Membership. If you would like to make this change, contact the EnerStar office prior to February 1, 2014, for details.

- If you pay your landlord for the electrical usage at a location and the landlord's name is on the bill, you are not able to vote for that location. The membership belongs to the landlord, who would vote the membership.
- If you have power of attorney for a member, you may vote that membership as long as the form is on file at the cooperative office.

If you have any further questions regarding your membership status, please contact the EnerStar office at 800-635-4145 during normal business hours. We will be more than happy to assist you with any questions you may have regarding your account.

Remember, members can vote by mail, but ballots must be received in our office no later than Friday, March 14, 2014! Otherwise, **bring your voting ballot with you to the Annual Meeting of Members on Saturday, March 15, 2014.**

**Mark Your Calendar**  
**Saturday March 15, 2014** ✓

**Crestwood School • 15601 US Hwy 150 I • Paris, Illinois**

*Member Breakfast 7:30-9:00 a.m. • Member Registration 7:30-9:30 a.m.  
Meeting Begins 9:30 a.m.*



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- Set up helpful account notifications such as payment reminders or high usage alerts
- Quick Pay (no registration required)
- Report power outages
- Connect to EnerStar's social media feeds

To download the free mobile apps, search "smarthub" in the app store.



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