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## EnerStar members celebrate 75th anniversary

**E**nerStar Electric Cooperative members celebrated their 75th anniversary during the cooperative's 74th Annual Meeting of Members at Crestwood School on March 16. Those gathered enjoyed the traditional pancake breakfast, served by cooperative employees, and an anniversary video featuring former co-op employees and long-time members of the cooperative.

During the meeting President and CEO Peter Kollinger addressed the members about what to expect in 2013 and improvements that were made in 2012.

### Our Electric Cooperative Founded in 1938

Kollinger started the meeting with recognition of the cooperative's anniversary. "It was 75 years ago when men, women and even a few children gathered together, under the guidance of the Edgar County Farm Bureau, and

voted 'yes' to an REA project to bring electricity to the rural areas ... Just like years ago, your cooperative is still committed to serving the membership and the communities we serve. That mission has not changed, nor will it."

*Your cooperative has worked hard to keep expenses down. That is why we are able to have a modest rate increase that represents less than a 1% increase per year for the last six years.*

### Rate Restructuring and Increase Discussed

Each year, Kollinger spends a considerable amount of time discussing where electric rates are headed. He explained that EnerStar's power is generated from Wabash Valley Power and said due to rising wholesale electricity rates and increases in material costs, the cooperative would establish a rate restructuring and increase with the April 2013 billing statements.

"EnerStar's current rate structure was implemented six years ago, May 2007," Kollinger stated. "During that time the cooperative has been able to hold the line on expenses, which increase about 3 percent per year. Cutting

costs and using new technologies has allowed the cooperative to avoid rate increases during that time period. The only increase was in the Power Cost Adjustment, which is directly related to fluctuating power costs from the power provider."

"This year, in order to maintain the cooperative's financial stability, a rate increase is necessary," Kollinger said. A Cost of Service analysis was done to evaluate the current rates. The cooperative will implement a rate of \$44 per month for the monthly distribution charge, representing the true fixed cost as determined from the study. At the same time, the cost per kilowatt hour will decrease to a flat rate.

Kollinger explained that the average residential account uses about 1000 kilowatt hours per month. In this situation, these members will see a monthly increase of about 4.5% or about \$7.03.

"Rate increases are never easy, but keep in mind, we have not had a rate increase in six years," Kollinger said. "We have worked hard to keep our expenses down for the last six years, which is why we are able to have a modest rate increase. This rate increase represents less than a 1% increase per year for the last six years. We will continue to focus on keeping our expenses down, as well as maintaining our focus on service and reliability."



*Employees gather in front of the new cooperative headquarters in 1952*

# Time matters.



**Register for Power Shift by May 15 and earn up to \$117.**

The time of day that you use power changes how much that power costs. It's like going to a movie: Evening shows cost more because that's when more people want to see movies. Use power when everyone else is, like when the afternoon is hottest, and that power costs more for everyone.

**Power Shift** helps everyone save by shifting energy usage to off-peak times.

Have us install a switch on your air conditioner, electric water heater, or pool pump that may be activated when demand is up—typically in the afternoons, and for no longer than 15 minutes an hour on your air conditioner. We won't activate the switch on weekends or holidays, and most people don't even notice the difference.

You'll stay cool (and keep your water hot) while you save energy and help out your community. That's time well spent.

Call **EnerStar Electric Cooperative** at (217) 463-4145 or mail in the form to sign up today.



**POWER MOVES**

## Residential Single Phase

*Approximate increase per month*

<b>500 Kilowatts</b>	<b>\$6.27</b>	<b>6.4%</b>
<b>1000 Kilowatts</b>	<b>\$7.03</b>	<b>4.5%</b>
<b>1500 Kilowatts</b>	<b>\$12.80</b>	<b>6.1%</b>

beginning April 2013  
 Facility Charge \$44.00  
 .1195 cents per kilowatt hour

### Power Shift, bill credits available

What started as a pilot program last year will be fully implemented this year. Power Shift, a load control program, will help the cooperative lower its power costs during peak times and offers a monetary benefit to members who participate in the program. Under the voluntary program, load control switches can be installed on air conditioners, electric water heaters and pool pumps. Members receive an annual bill credit of \$27 for electric water heaters and \$45 for air conditioners and pool pumps. Members who are interested in this program can call the office to sign up before May 15 as the switches need to be installed by an EnerStar representative before June 1.

### System improvements, better reliability

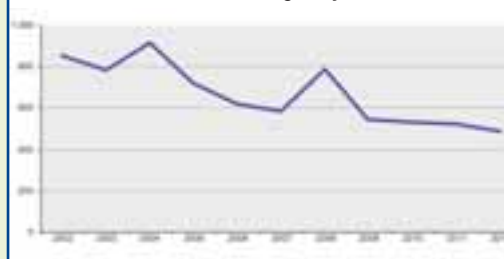
Kollinger explained to the membership that the cooperative averages about \$1.5 million in system improvements each year. In 2013, some of the scheduled improvements include replacing sections of old copper wire throughout the system, refurbishing the West Union substation, testing electric poles and the continuation of the successful forestry and vegetation management program.

"These efforts are part of our improvements to our electric system, which means better reliability for you" he said. "In addition, we have had a dramatic decrease in outage occurrences since 2002. It is due in large part, to activities like tree trimming, vegetation management, animal guards, replacing old conductor and pole testing."

### Service Reliability

*Outages trending downward*

EnerStar - Outages by Year



*Because of improvements made to the electric system, power outages have significantly decreased since 2002, as shown on the graph. Please note the graph has been adjusted for the ice storm of 2011 which is considered an "extreme and unusual" situation. The spike in 2008 was due to events like straight line winds and flooding, that increased outages that particular year.*

### Outage communications

In the last two years, Kollinger stated that the cooperative has been improving outage communications and will continue with these efforts.

For reporting power outages afterhours, the cooperative uses a local dispatch service along with a larger regional cooperative-owned call center. By using a call center, the cooperative dramatically increases the incoming call volume. Kollinger emphasized however that members need to use the toll-free number





of 800-635-4145 to report their outage. He added that members should call this number always regardless of their calling location or if calling from a cell phone.

Many members have signed up for a cooperative service known as PowerText. This service allows members to receive text alert notifications during major power outages. To sign up, members can visit [www.enerstar.com](http://www.enerstar.com) to sign up or call the co-op office.

The cooperative is transitioning to an updated 'Outage Management System' that will allow them to quickly assess the extent of the outage location as calls come in. In the future, members will be able to report outages and receive outage communications via phone, email and text.

Member service options are continuing to be improved as well. EnerStar launched "PrePaid Advantage," a pre-pay electric service, and "Pay by Phone" which is a 24-hour pay by phone system.

Later in 2013, EnerStar will introduce "Smart Hub." This is an enhanced online billing system. The new program will give members more information on their accounts, such as past usage consumption tied to weather history and enhancements for the smart phone user.



**Director election results**

Since the cooperative is democratically controlled, the Annual Meeting offers EnerStar members an opportunity to vote on candidates to represent them. Three incumbents were re-elected to serve. They are Dale English, pictured top right, from Paris representing District 3; David Sprigg, pictured bottom left, from Marshall representing District 6; and Tom Jones, pictured bottom right, from Marshall representing District 8. Also included in the photo is EnerStar CEO Peter E. Kollinger.

**We're here to serve you**

Kollinger closed the meeting telling members: "We are here to serve you. We appreciate hearing from our members, because our focus is you, the membership. With your input we can always find ways to improve."

*Thank You*

*EnerStar would like to thank the following vendors who donated door prizes to the 75th Annual Meeting of Members*

***Your support is greatly appreciated!*** ★

<p><i>Benjamin's Office Connection</i></p> <p><i>Brownstown Electric</i></p> <p><i>Clear Talk Communications</i></p> <p><i>Dueco, Inc.</i></p> <p><i>Edgar County Bank &amp; Trust</i></p> <p><i>Farm Credit Services</i></p> <p><i>Faulk Garage</i></p> <p><i>First Bank &amp; Trust</i></p> <p><i>First Farmers Bank</i></p> <p><i>First Neighbor Bank, NA</i></p> <p><i>Fletcher-Reinhardt Co.</i></p>	<p><i>Fred Biggs Supply Company</i></p> <p><i>HD Supply</i></p> <p><i>Henigman Oil</i></p> <p><i>Illini FS</i></p> <p><i>Power Line Supply</i></p> <p><i>Rachel's Red Barn</i></p> <p><i>State Farm - Terry Elston</i></p> <p><i>T &amp; R Electric</i></p> <p><i>United Utility Supply</i></p> <p><i>Vadas Car Quest</i></p>
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*EnerStar's office will be closed Monday, May 27, 2013, in observance of Memorial Day.*

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*Regardless of your calling location...  
Regardless of time of day...*

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1-800-635-4145**

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