



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

# HOMEPAGE

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

## EnerStar Transitioning to LED Outdoor Lighting

When night falls, it can get pretty dark in the countryside. Outdoor lighting, often referred to as security lights, brighten up walkways, sheds and backyards, at even the most remote homesteads.

In 2005, federal legislation banned the sale of traditional outdoor mercury-vapor (MV) lights.

Prior to that, the cooperative had added high pressure sodium (HPS) lights. While the lumens, a measurement of the amount of light emitted, was virtually

the same for these two lights, some members did not like the orange hue of the HPS lights and felt it was not as bright.

Fast forward to today when EnerStar has different options from which to choose. Over the next few months, EnerStar will be implementing new technologies that will improve outdoor lighting. It will save energy and reduce costs for our cooperative.

Finally, LED lights are available at a reasonable price.

There are many environmental benefits to using LED technology in outdoor lighting. The biggest is the energy savings. LEDs use 2.5 times less energy than an HPS and 4 times less energy than a MV. "That is significant energy savings," said EnerStar's Mike Clark, Manager of Operations. He added that LEDs do not include any mercury or other known disposal hazards, so there are no special disposal issues as with a CFL bulb.

There are other benefits as well. LED lighting is fully illuminated when turned on and does not take time to "warm up." They are not sensitive to humidity or low temperatures. The life span of the LED is expected to last 12-14 years.

"Members will be pleased that the LED is a brighter white light," said Clark. "They are not an orange light like the sodium vapor lights." The illumination can be directed so that light pollution is minimized.

EnerStar has chosen LED lights with a "smart design." Like traditional lighting, a photocell triggers the bulb to turn on and off. But eventually, the LED light "learns" its geographical location and remembers it. So if, or we should say when, the photocell malfunctions, the light continues to operate properly.

"We often have to roll a truck, almost on a daily basis, to replace bad photocells and bulbs," said Clark. "So this technology will reduce fleet operating costs."

Clark added that eventually LED lighting will be controlled remotely. "If a new tenant moves into a rental house and does not want the security light, we will just shut it off from the office instead of physically visiting the location to disconnect the light," said Clark.

"We have been waiting for the right time to offer LED outdoor lighting," said Clark. "We weren't willing to install them on the system until we had personally tested the lights and verified the manufacturer's claims. I am very pleased with the ones we have selected."

Clark concluded by saying, "Overall, it is a green program whether that is energy efficiency or less windshield time on our trucks. I expect many benefits for the cooperative and our members."



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*Serving the Illinois  
counties of Edgar,  
Clark, Vermilion,  
Douglas and Coles.*

# Commitment to Improving System Reliability Continues

For the past couple of years, we have dedicated much of this magazine to showcase EnerStar's continuing commitment to improving our electric system. These efforts have increased service reliability and reduced power outages. They help our cooperative keep electric bills affordable by improving efficiencies. We are proud to once again showcase system improvements and update the membership on our progress.

## Commitment to Infrastructure

Over the last five years, EnerStar has invested \$7.9 million dollars to upgrade our electric system. These projects include digital meters, a new Martinsville substation, over 26 miles of tie-line, wildlife protection and more. Improvements to our electric system benefit our current cooperative members now but also prepare the system for the next generation of members.

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*EnerStar line crews perform maintenance on the Kansas substation which was built in 1959.*



## Kansas Substation Refurbished

Built in 1959, EnerStar's Kansas substation, located southeast of Kansas, Illinois, was recently refurbished. EnerStar crews treated the steel structure for any rust and then painted and sealed

it. New lightning arrestors, regulators and switches, including the high-side switches, were installed. The substation is now nearly 100% wildlife protected to reduce the number of animal-related outages.

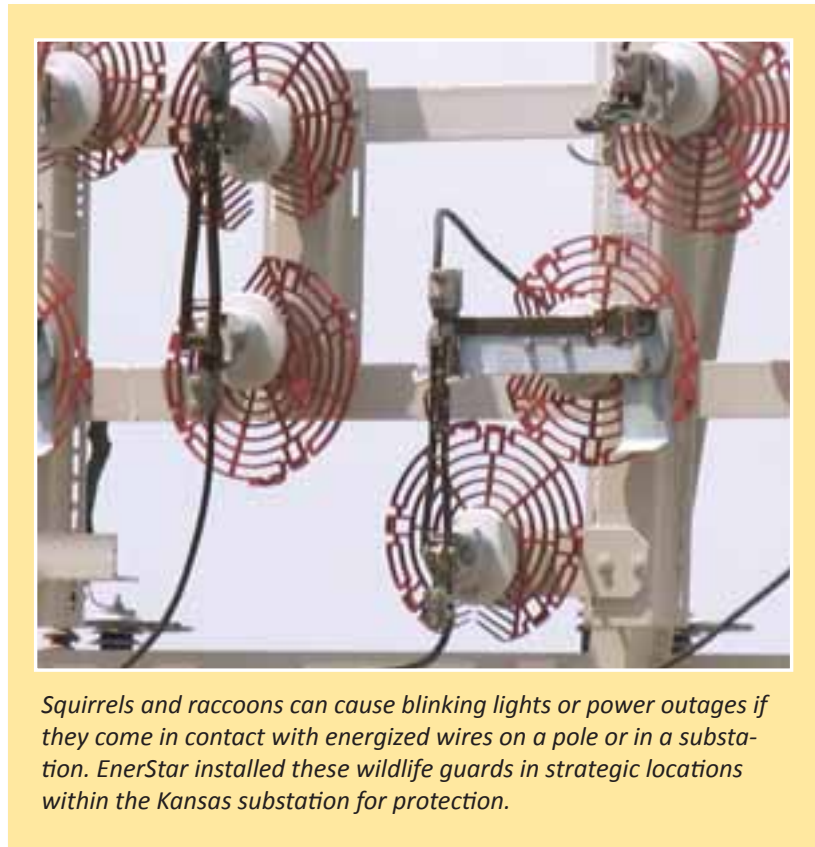
### All "Older Substations" Updated

In the last 6 years, the cooperative performed similar upgrades at four other "older" substations. Those substations that have been renovated include: Chrisman, built in 1949; Marshall, built in 1948; Brocton, built in 1960; and Paris, built in 1948.

In addition, new transformers were installed at the Baldwin and Kansas substations while other transformers were relocated at the Ferrell substation to more efficiently handle electric load growth in those areas.

### Other System Maintenance

Since the Ice Storm in February 2011, fifty miles of old copper single-phase wire have been replaced. The cooperative anticipates replacing another 50 miles over the next 3 years. As that work



*Squirrels and raccoons can cause blinking lights or power outages if they come in contact with energized wires on a pole or in a substation. EnerStar installed these wildlife guards in strategic locations within the Kansas substation for protection.*

is completed, the cooperative will begin replacing older 3-phase wires with larger wire.

Also in 2013, our pole in-

spection program continued. As a result, the cooperative replaced 410 poles, which is twice that of a normal year.

## Get that old deadbeat out of your home.



Get rid of that old refrigerator or freezer before it swipes any more electricity. Not only will we haul it away free, we'll give you **\$35\*** for the honor.

To get more details—or to schedule your free pickup—call **877-395-5535** or visit **PowerMoves.com/HaulFree**.



\*Some conditions and restrictions apply.

# POWER MOVES

*The more you save,  
the more you save.*



# Portable Generator Safety

Portable generators may come in handy during long-term power outages, but recent studies show that an overwhelming percentage may be installed incorrectly. Take heed of these precautions:

- Read and follow all manufacturer operating instructions to properly ground the generator. Be sure you understand them before hooking up the generator.
- Maintain adequate ventilation. Generators emit carbon monoxide. It is against fire code to operate a generator in your home, garage or other enclosed building. Place the generator in a dry location outdoors.
- Never plug a portable electric generator into a wall outlet or connect directly to a home's wiring. This can energize utility power lines and injure you or others working nearby. Electrical back feed can also damage the generator and home electrical equipment.
- Turn off the generator and allow cooling before refueling. Gasoline and its vapors may ignite if they come in contact with hot components or an electrical spark. Store fuel in a properly designed container in a secure location away from the generator or other fuel-burning appliances, such as water heaters. Always have a fully charged, approved fire extinguisher located nearby.
- Protect your appliances. Turn off or disconnect all appliances and lights before you begin operating the portable generator. Once the generator is running, turn your appliances and lights on one at a time to avoid overloading the unit. Remember,

generators are for temporary use, prioritize your needs.

- Generators pose electrical risks especially when operated in wet conditions. Protect the generator by operating it under an open, canopy-like structure on a dry surface where water cannot form puddles or drain under it. Always ensure that your hands are dry before touching the generator.
- Keep children and pets away from portable generators at all times. Many generator components are hot enough to burn you during operation.
- Use proper extension cords. Use only safety-tested, shop-type electrical cords designed and rated for heavier, outdoor use to connect appliances. Many generators are equipped with twist-lock connects to reduce

the chance of accidental disconnections due to vibrations.

- Shut down the generator properly. Before shutting down a generator, turn off and unplug all appliances and equipment being powered by the generator.
- Remember maintenance between uses. Drain the gasoline from the generator while it is being stored. It's also a good idea to inspect the fuel and oil filters, spark plug, oil level and fuel quality and start the generator on a regular basis before an emergency situation happens.

Got questions on your generator? Call EnerStar's Mike Clark at 1-800-635-4145 or email him at [mclark@enerstar.com](mailto:mclark@enerstar.com).

## How to Operate A Portable Generator Safely



You can use a portable generator to supply electricity to your appliances if an emergency exists during a power outage. But if used improperly, they can kill you and the people who are restoring power to your building. They also can damage the appliances you connect. Generator sizes vary. Common units can be from 8 to 14 horsepower and capable of handling from 4,000 to 8,400 watts (including starting surge requirements). Prices may range from \$800 to \$3,000. Connecting a generator to the main electrical supply for your house requires the services of a qualified, qualified electrician. Installing the connection and switch (as explained inside) can cost \$600 to \$1,000. Before connecting the generator to your household circuit, notify your electric cooperative.

## Generator safety brochure available

*These tips will keep your family and linemen safe*

EnerStar Electric Cooperative has brochures available on how to operate a portable generator safely. Be sure to pick one up at our office or call us at 800-635-4145 and we will mail one to you.

For additional electrical generator and safety information, visit [www.SafeElectricity.org](http://www.SafeElectricity.org).

***Our office will be closed on July 4th in observance of Independence Day***