



HOMEPAGE

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

Power of co-op membership

Ask yourself this—What does it mean to be a member of EnerStar Electric Cooperative?

As a member of EnerStar, you have the power, a voice and control in how your electric co-op is run; in what's best for the community; in the decisions that allow us to provide electricity for your home. This October, we're celebrating National Co-op Month, and we're recognizing the most important part of our co-op — you, our members!

Members are the reason cooperatives exist. Membership represents a vested interest—everyone is more engaged and attentive to

something they feel a responsibility for. As a member of the Touchstone Energy cooperative network, our co-op believes in working to engage our members in all the issues surrounding the co-op. When members embrace the idea that they have more than a passing interest in their co-op, and that they actually are the owners, with an ability to help guide it, which is the power of co-op membership.

In today's world, electric co-ops are doing more than just saving money for their members. EnerStar believes that being a member of an electric cooperative a truly unique

experience. That is why we offer energy saving programs, CFL bulb rebates and recycling and used refrigerator pickup and recycling, just to name a few.

The power of co-op membership is the cooperative difference, and our business 'bottom line' is the empowerment of you, our member-owners. Because of this, EnerStar actively engages with the communities we serve.

The best part about being an EnerStar member and part of the Touchstone Energy cooperatives: It's YOUR electric cooperative. Power to the people, for the people, from the people.

COOPERATIVE HEADQUARTERS

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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.*

Principles in action

There are Seven Cooperative Principles that give all co-ops guidance.

October is National Co-op Month. The time of year when the 29,000 plus co-ops in the U.S. take a few moments to ensure their employees, members and the general public truly understand the value of the cooperative business they own.

Cooperatives around the world, including EnerStar Electric Cooperative, operate according to the same core principles and values, adopted by the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA). Cooperatives trace the roots of these principles to the first modern cooperative founded in Rochdale, England in 1844.

All cooperative businesses have at their foundation these seven cooperative principles to follow:

1. **Voluntary and Open Membership**
2. **Democratic Member Control**
3. **Members' Economic Participation**

4. **Autonomy and Independence**
5. **Education, Training and Information**
6. **Cooperation Among Cooperatives**
7. **Concern for Community**

One of the ways co-ops demonstrate that they are different from investor-owned businesses is by actually living the principles.

Principle 6: Cooperation Among Cooperatives, is our focus this month, and there are many examples that demonstrate how co-ops do this every day. In theory this sounds so simple, answering the question, "Can't we all just get along?" As it turns out, it's easier to get along when we focus on what our personal or organizational self-interest is - and find others who have a similar self-interest.

This is how Edgar Electric Cooperative, the predecessor of EnerStar

Electric Cooperative got started 75 years. Ordinary folks, with the guidance of the Edgar County Farm Bureau, realized they would be better off working together if they wanted to bring electricity to their community. Once the co-op network was established, early co-op pioneers soon realized that if they work with "sister co-ops," they could gain control of their power supply. That is why cooperatives across the country formed over 60 generation and transmission cooperatives such as Wabash Valley Power Association, your local generation and transmission cooperative.

So while we take special note of the value of our cooperative in October, we are delighted to be a part of our community delivering vital services to you all year long.

Seven Cooperative Principles

1 VOLUNTARY AND OPEN MEMBERSHIP

Cooperatives are voluntary organizations open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

2 DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. The elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary cooperatives, members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote) and cooperatives at other levels are organized in a democratic manner.

3 MEMBERS' ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. At least part of that capital remains the common property of the cooperative. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing the cooperative; setting up reserves; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the cooperative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

4 AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE

Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control as well as their unique identity.

5 EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND INFORMATION

Education and training for members, elected representatives (directors/trustees), CEOs, and employees help them effectively contribute to the development of their cooperatives. Communications about the nature and benefits of cooperatives, particularly with the general public and opinion leaders, helps boost cooperative understanding.

6 COOPERATION AMONG COOPERATIVES

By working together through local, national, regional, and international structures, cooperatives improve services, bolster local economies, and deal more effectively with social and community needs.

7 CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY

Cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies supported by the membership.

The power of using energy wisely

Because we're all different, each of us has different learning styles and crave different levels of information. And because you're a member of an electric cooperative, you also have the unique advantage since your co-op belongs to Touchstone Energy®.

Touchstone Energy has developed two different tools on its TogetherWeSave.com website that you can utilize to help you use energy more wisely. If you're looking for simple, small things you can do around your home, consider visiting the Home Tour. If you're more interested in projects that can help you save energy, visit the Home Energy Analysis Tool.

Home Tour

Flipping a switch. Changing the air filter. Unplugging electronics. Making small changes and using energy wisely can help you save energy and money, and the interactive home tour, brought to you by EnerStar and the other Touchstone Energy Cooperatives, can show you how.



Another option for co-op members on the TogetherWeSave.com website is the Home Efficiency Analysis Tool. Provide some details about your current home and you can find the energy-efficiency projects that make the most sense for your home. You can also keep track of those projects.

Travel from room to room to identify ways you can save energy like turning off lights, choosing ENERGY STAR® appliances instead of standard appliances and recycling your old, inefficient refrigerator in the basement. Those changes can add up and save you energy and money.

While you're touring the home, finding ways to save energy, you can also watch videos on each topic and read blogs as well.

Home Energy Analysis Tool

You don't need a private tutor to turn your home into a smarter, more efficient version of itself. You just need an effective tool for finding the opportunities within your home. And now we have one.

The great minds at Touchstone Energy Cooperatives have built a thorough, easy-to-use website for finding the projects that make the most sense for your home. Enter some basic information about your home and how you use it into the Home Efficiency Analysis Tool and you're well on your way to smarter solutions for energy use.

With detailed energy-efficient solutions for every part of your home and a project tracker to keep your progress in view (in addition to the progress you'll see in your energy bills), the site offers the support you need to leap ahead in efficiency. In other words, it helps you make your home smarter. And a smarter home is a less expensive home.

With a tool like this, your home can become the Leonardo da Vinci of efficiency, the Aristotle of savings — which will make you look pretty darned smart yourself.

I bet you're wondering how you can find these awesome tools? Just visit PowerMoves.com/TEtools to start saving energy and money now!



Touchstone Energy Cooperatives' TogetherWeSave.com website provides options for cooperative members who are looking to use energy more wisely. One option is the Home Tour where you can travel room-to-room and find ways to save energy.

Member telephone survey to begin this fall

You're not just a customer, you're a member-owner. As a member of EnerStar Electric Cooperative, you are provided many opportunities to be an active part of the organization. You could attend your annual meeting, participate in our recycling programs or earn rebates through the POWER MOVES® program.

Beginning in September, you'll have yet another opportunity for your voice to count as a co-op member. Electric cooperatives, like EnerStar, that are a part of Wabash Valley Power, will be conducting a survey of residential members. The telephone survey is conducted

every two years, and helps our power supplier determine how much power we'll need in the near future. All calls are expected to be completed by the end of December.

The survey will be conducted by Oppenheim Research, a Tallahassee, Fla., firm with experience in a wide variety of research methods as well as a strong history of satisfied customers. Co-op members will be randomly selected, and 300 completed surveys will be done for each co-op. The survey is designed to last approximately 10-12 minutes and will primarily focus on the appliances and items

in and around your home that consume electricity. The survey will also ask questions about things like computer, Internet and smart phone use in order to best serve members.

The calls will take place Monday through Friday, beginning mid-afternoon and running until about 9 p.m. If you are called and don't wish to participate, you will not be pressured to do so.

We greatly appreciate those who take the time to help us better plan for your future!



YOU'D BE SURPRISED HOW MUCH MONEY CAN SQUEEZE THROUGH A CRAWLSPACE.

I know I was. But once I insulated the crawlspace under my house, my budget became much more comfortable. About \$155 a year more comfortable. What can you do? Find out how the little changes add up at TogetherWeSave.com.



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