

Providing Internet

Internet technician John Heaton checks to see if he is able to get signal at a residence.

For more than fifteen years, the co-op has provided Internet service to members. We understand the value of this service, and to keep up with the everyday changes in technology, our staff and outside contractors work together to ensure a system that is up-to-date and efficient.

Providing Internet service has been an opportunity to improve the quality of life for our members—not only does it enable people to work from home, take online classes, and stay connected with friends and family, but it creates another reliable mode of communication for our members living in rural areas. Before we offered Internet service, many parts of our service territory had no Internet access.

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Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative

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www.e-co-op.com
1-800-468-4732

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

Working to improve the quality of life in the communities we serve since 1936.

With subcontractors who install and take Internet service calls in our territory, members benefit from this being a local service. We are able to meet a member's needs quickly thanks to our subcontractors, who are trained and knowledgeable in assisting with any issues that may arise. We know the importance of your connection, and work hard to ensure it is up and running smoothly when you need it most.

If you would like to see if you are able to receive our Internet service at your residence, give us a call at 1-800-468-4732 or visit our website at www.e-co-op.com.



Heather Seifert seen above filling out work orders. Heather handles scheduling and over-the-phone tech support.



New Service Trucks

Recently, two servicemen had their service trucks retired replaced with new ones. As these trucks are used by on-call servicemen 365 days a year, the wear and mileage adds up quickly. Our servicemen need dependable transportation, so we began the research process to find replacement vehicles.

These new trucks will provide the reliable transportation necessary to maintaining service. After cross-referencing with several other co-ops and finding a highly recommended model, the new Dodge trucks were purchased, as the Chevrolet models are no longer manufactured.

For servicemen, these vehicles are more than just a mode of transportation. They also serve as their mobile workplace. With the laptop in their truck, they are able to view maps and the outage management software, check e-mail, and maintain communication with the main office. These new trucks will help ensure high-quality service to our members.



Area serviceman Bob Moss seen up above with his new service truck.

Protecting Against Power Surges

Power surges are responsible for millions of dollars of property damage each year, and, over time, they can cause cumulative damage while decreasing the lifespan of TVs, computers, stereo equipment, and anything else plugged into a wall outlet. Being educated is the key to choosing the best surge protection for your home.

How does a power surge cause damage?

First, what is a surge?

“A surge is a boost in the electrical charge over a power line,” explains engineer-in-training Justin Gumbel. “This can be caused by lightning, but it’s more commonly caused by motor-driven electrical devices, such as air conditioners and refrigerators, that require a lot of energy for starting and stopping compressors. Some surges can also be caused by faulty wiring.”

Frequent, small power surges tend to shorten the life of home appliances and electronics. “Power surges come in all shapes and sizes—the most extreme case being a lightning strike because it can destroy equipment and sometimes set your house on fire,” comments Alan Shedd, director of residential & commercial energy programs for Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives, the national brand for America’s electric cooperatives. “But less severe power surges are rooted in hundreds of different causes.”

He continues: “The severity of a surge depends not only on the voltage and current involved but how long the event lasts. Most surges are very short in duration. It’s important for people to realize that surges can happen through any connection on your equipment. If there is a wire connected to your equipment, then it provides a path for a surge.”

How can I protect my property?

A surge protection device mounted at your home’s main electrical panel or the base of your electric meter protects equipment inside your house or business from surges coming through “ports of entry,” such as an outside electric, telephone, and cable TV or satellite dish line.

Point-of-use surge protection devices do not suppress or arrest a surge but divert it to ground. They’re designed to protect your sensitive electronic appliances, like a computer, and resemble a regular plug strip. However, don’t assume your plug strip offers surge protection unless it specifically says so. You can also install special electrical outlets that offer surge protection, which can be helpful in places like kitchen countertops.

“My computer is plugged into an uninterruptible power supply with surge protection,” Shedd notes. “We had a lightning strike, and a surge came in over the phone line. But the surge protector stopped it.”

One of the most effective ways to protect your property is a two-tiered approach. A service entrance surge protection device reduces power surges to a lower level that protects large appliances, such as your stove or clothes dryer, while point-of-use surge protectors defend your sensitive electronics.

Remember to be cautious when shopping for surge protection equipment. “Some items claim that they can save energy, and these claims are generally false,” Shedd concludes. “Surge protection is a valuable tool for protecting your home or business but not for saving energy.”

Source: Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives

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