

# Norris Electric *News*

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 



## Youth Tour Visits Springfield

Sen. Dale Righter and Rep. David Reis met with students representing Norris Electric Cooperative during the Illinois Electric and Telephone Cooperatives Youth Day on Wednesday, April 2 in Springfield. More than 200 students from downstate Illinois had an opportunity to visit the State Capitol, view state government in action and question their legislators on key issues. They also were invited into the office of Secretary of State Jesse White.

During breakfast, Lieutenant Governor Sheila Simon addressed students and chaperones and challenged them to take an interest in the political process and encouraged them to talk to their state senators and representa-

tives about issues that interest them. While in Springfield, the students also visited the Illinois State Museum, Old State Capitol and Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum.

Pictured front row l-r are: Cecilia Slane, Heather Duzan, Jakob Beckley, Abigayle Ochs, Rep. David Reis, Katelyn Hardiek, Bailey Pitcher, Mara Decker, Calee Fulling, Rhiannon Pearse, Andrew Garrett and Sen. Dale Righter. Back row: Jake Bushur, George Schalasky, Nathan Schmidt, Travis Whitt, Anthony Hall and Blake Berry.

The day was sponsored by the AIEC and is designed to introduce young rural leaders to state government. There were 24 co-ops from across the state repre-

sented at the event.

Norris Electric Cooperative is a member of Touchstone Energy — an alliance of 750 local, consumer-owned electric utilities around the country. Norris Electric is committed to providing superior service based on four core principles: integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community. The co-op serves more than 19,313 meters over 4,072 miles of line in parts of Clark, Crawford, Cumberland, Effingham, Jasper, Lawrence, Richland and Wabash counties. For more information visit [www.norriselectric.com](http://www.norriselectric.com). Norris Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Norris Electric Cooperative • Newton, Illinois 62448 • 783-8765 • [www.norriselectric.com](http://www.norriselectric.com)

Coming in June --

## 2013 Capital Credits Allocations Statements

**A**s a not-for-profit cooperative, Norris Electric is owned by the member-consumers we serve. When you pay your electric bill, you are accumulating equity in your cooperative.

One of the benefits of belonging to a cooperative is that any monies left over after expenses are paid are allocated back to the members in the

form of capital credits according to your usage.

If you received electric service from Norris Electric in 2013, you will receive a card in the mail which shows the amount being allocated to your capital credit account. This is not a charge you owe or cannot be used to pay your electric bill. It is a statement of your equity in Norris Electric

Cooperative for the year 2013.

Capital Credits will be returned to the members when Norris Electric Cooperative's Board of Directors decides that the co-op is strong enough financially to do so. This notice is for our members' information only and does not require any action of their part.

## Tamper resistant receptacles

*What are tamper resistant receptacles (TRRs)?*

**T**hey may look like standard outlets, but tamper resistant receptacles, or TRRs, are different. Their most distinguishable feature – a built-in shutter system that prevents foreign objects from being inserted – sets them apart. Only a plug that applies simultaneous, equal pressure to both slots will disengage the cover plates, allowing access to the contact points. Without this synchronized pressure, the cover plates remain closed.

While a child's curiosity knows no boundaries, it can sometimes put them in peril, especially when electricity is involved. Located in practically every room of the house, electrical outlets and receptacles are fixtures, but they also

represent potential hazards for children.

In recent years, more homes have been equipping their electrical outlets with TRRs, but in many public facilities, like hospital pediatric wards, these safeguards have been required for more than 20 years. Their efficiency also prompted the National Electrical Code to make TRRs standard in all new home construction. Existing homes can be easily retrofitted with TRRs using the same installation guidelines that apply to standard receptacles. TRRs should only be installed by a licensed electrician and should carry a label from a nationally recognized, independent testing lab such as UL, ETL, or CSA.

### TRRs by the Numbers

- Each year 2,400 children suffer severe shock and burns resulting from inserting objects into the slots of electrical receptacles. That's nearly seven children a day.
- It is estimated that 6-12 child fatalities result from children tampering electrical receptacles.
- Installing a TRR in a newly constructed home is only about 50¢ more than a traditional receptacle.
- Existing homes can be retrofitted with TRRs for as little as \$2.00 per outlet.

*For more information on TRRs, visit [www.esfi.org](http://www.esfi.org).*

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## Outage texting

*A great way to report your electric outage after hours*

When your power goes out, you can report your outage by calling 1-877-783-3221 to our answering service or you have the option of texting it in. With the surge of cell phones and popularity of texting, you now have the option to text your outage. Texting outages will provide a quick, effective and convenient option to report your outage for anyone who prefers “texting” over “talking” on the phone or to avoid on-hold time for widespread outages. To utilize outage texting, members will need to:

- Have your cell phone number on file at Norris Electric Cooperative. Please contact us at 877-783-8765 to make sure we have it on your account.
- Complete a short registration process on our website, [www.norriselectric.com](http://www.norriselectric.com). (Click on the “Outages” tab in the top right corner by the search box and follow instructions.)

## Outstanding safety record awards

Norris Electric Cooperative employees recently received awards during the Safety/Supervisory Technical Conference held in Springfield. Employees were awarded the Best Accident-Illness Safety Record and Best Lost Time Safety Record for 2013 for their excellent safety record among the state’s electric cooperatives.

The conference is sponsored annually by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperative. Attendees learned about impending changes to national safety procedure, emergency resource deployment programs, the Sperry-Piltz ice accumulation index, the Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program and other safety issues.

Ken Macken, AIEC Manager of Safety and Loss Control, said “We work in a field where one mistake can cost you your life. Our safety program strives to give everyone the knowledge they need to hopefully prevent that one mistake from happening.”



*Shown (L-R) are Scott Johnson, Norris Electric Cooperative Lineman Journeyman and Jim Miles, AIEC Safety Instructor.*



**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.**

Always call JULIE at 8-1-1 to have underground utilities located before you dig.

To avoid personal injury and damage to underground lines, state law requires you to contact Joint Utility Locating Information for Excavators (JULIE) before any digging project, regardless of the project size or depth. The call is free and so are the services.

According to state law, the person doing the digging is required to call JULIE with the locate request information at least 48 hours (two working days, excluding weekends and holidays) in advance of the start of excavation. You must begin your project within 14 days from the time you call and if you want to start your project over the weekend, remember to contact JULIE by Wednesday at 4:00 pm.

In order to help the utility locator properly identify your project area, JULIE recommends that you mark the area where you will be digging with white paint and/or flags.

Each JULIE utility member is responsible to mark their own underground facilities with paint or flags within the two working day period required by law (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and holidays).

Visit [www.illinois1call.com](http://www.illinois1call.com) to learn more about the process.

# Take a vacation from high power bills

Soaring temperatures and sultry summer nights can cause electric bills to skyrocket. This summer, take a vacation from high electric bills by making your home—and your family's habits—more energy efficient.

## Beat the heat

Air conditioning helps most Americans beat the sweltering summer heat. According to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), air conditioning accounts for as much as 50 percent of the average household electric bill. Proper maintenance and smart use of your home's cooling system will help keep your electric bill in check.

First, make sure your air conditioner's external unit is clean and free of debris. Clear away dead leaves or overgrown plants and weeds to enable the unit to perform as it should.

Second, change all of the air filters inside your home quarterly, or more often in homes with allergy sufferers or smokers. Fresh filters not only reduce the strain on your cooling system, but improve the air quality in your home.

Third, the DOE recommends that you set your home's thermostat as high as possible, while still maintaining a comfortable environment for your family during the summer months.

Bumping the thermostat up at least two degrees can make a noticeable difference on your power bill. Investing in a programmable thermostat can lead to even greater savings by automatically adjusting it so that the cooling system runs more often when you are at home and less often when you are away.

## Made in the shade

Windows are not only great sources of natural light in your home, but also great sources of heat during the summer. Curtains, blinds, and shades are some of the most cost-effective ways

to make your windows and home more energy efficient. These window coverings offer low-cost, stylish solutions to shield the sun's rays and keep the interior of your home cool and comfortable. Proper weather stripping and caulking around window panes and casings will also improve the function of your windows by keeping the cool air in and the hot air out. Solar film applied to your home's existing windows will further repel the summer heat.

## Daily grind

Today's appliances are more energy efficient than ever, performing better and using less electricity than they did in the past. But despite their functionality and efficiency, most major household appliances give off heat when in use. During peak daytime temperatures, the residual heat from appliances can put an unnecessary strain on your home's

cooling system and send your power bill soaring. Cooler temperatures in the early morning or late evening make these ideal times for running the dishwasher or washing and drying clothes. When possible, turn off your dishwasher's dryer cycle. This prevents even more residual heat from warming your home and saves on your power bill. Washing your clothes in cold water and hanging them out to dry are also great strides in reducing your household energy consumption.

As your summer heats up, call on your friends at Norris Electric Cooperative for more ways to lower your power bill. You can also visit TogetherWeSave.com to find out how little changes around the house can add up to big energy savings.

Sources: U.S. Department of Energy, EnergySavers.gov, TogetherWeSave.com



Norris Electric Cooperative • 8543 N. State Highway 130 • Newton, Illinois 62448 • 618-783-8765

Office hours: Monday — Thursday

7:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m