

# Norris Electric *News*

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

## Board of Director Election Update

There are four board seats up for election with one board member to be elected from each of the following counties: Crawford, Cumberland, Clark and Jasper. Shown below are the counties and the incumbents from those counties that are slated for election this year.

County	Incumbent
Crawford	Frank Draper
Cumberland	Joe Helmink
Clark	Scott Littlejohn
Jasper	Dave Sheppard

All of the incumbents plan to seek re-election. They must submit a petition signed by at least 25 members to be placed upon the ballot. Any other members that reside and take service in any of the counties above may also submit a petition and be placed on the ballot.

Petitions are available now. Members wishing to obtain petitions may call the office and one will be mailed or mem-

bers may stop at the office and obtain a petition in person. Completed petitions must be in the cooperative headquarters by noon on December 12, 2012.

Petitioners with qualified petitions will be placed on the ballots. Ballots may be voted by return mail or by internet as instructed on the ballots. The results will then be announced at our annual meeting to be held on February 9, 2013.

## Outage texting

### A new way to report your electric outage after hours

Currently when your power goes out and our office is closed, we ask that you call 1-877-783-3221 to report your outage to our after-hours answering service, Cooperative Response Center (CRC). Beginning November 1, 2012, a new option to alert CRC to your outage will become available. With the rise in the use of cell phones and the popularity of texting, you will now have the option to text your outage to CRC beginning next month. To utilize outage texting, members will need to:

1. Have your cell phone number on file at Norris Electric Cooperative. Please contact us at 877-783-8765 to make sure we have it.
2. Complete a short registration process on our website, [www.norriselectric.com](http://www.norriselectric.com)

CRC is based in Austin, Minnesota and they specialize in handling outage calls and dispatching crews in the electric cooperative industry. Texting outages will provide a quick, effective and convenient option to report your outage for anyone who prefers "texting" over "talking" on the phone.

### *Our office will be closed on:*

***Monday, Nov. 12  
for Veterans Day***



***Thursday, Nov. 22  
for Thanksgiving***



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# Fifty years of global giving

Norris Electric Cooperative exists because 74 years ago, a group of neighbors banded together to bring electricity—and along with it, prosperity and a better quality of life—to the areas we serve. In 1935, just 10.9 percent of American farms nationwide had access to safe, reliable, affordable central station electric service; by the early 1950s, that number had jumped to nearly 90 percent, all thanks to the formation of electric co-ops.

In the mid-1930s, rural Americans finally received the proper equipment, federal loans that provided start-up capital, and engineering guidance that was needed to provide themselves with central station electric service—that is, electricity from a utility, rather than self-generated by consumers. But many people around the world don't have such support.

An estimated 2 billion people

across the globe still live without electricity, and another 2 billion must depend on unreliable and unsafe power, largely because of the lack of resources, political strife, rugged and remote terrain, and cultural hurdles.

That's where the American cooperative spirit once again rises to the challenge.

Electric co-ops like Norris Electric Cooperative support NRECA International Programs, an affiliate of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) that takes on rural electrification projects in poor, rural villages around the world. NRECA International Programs turns 50 this month, and over the past half-century, hundreds of electric co-op volunteers, donors, and dedicated staffers have helped bring increased agricultural productivity, new sources of income, and an enhanced

quality of life to more than 100 million people in 40-plus nations.

Some electric co-ops donate equipment, like used transformers and bucket trucks. Some employees donate their time and expertise by traveling to distant countries to volunteer on line-building projects. Still others conduct annual workplace fundraising campaigns to support NRECA International Foundation, the 501(c)3 charitable organization of NRECA International Programs.

All of these efforts aim at a common goal: Bringing light and hope to rural residents in far-flung corners of our planet. Just as electric co-op pioneers did in our area back in the 1930s and '40s, making communities a better place to live is what the cooperative difference is all about.

We at Norris Electric Cooperative wish NRECA International Programs another 50 years of success.

## Attention high school seniors

Norris Electric Cooperative will award three \$500 scholarships to the sons or daughters of Norris Electric members who are currently receiving service from the cooperative at the time the scholarship application is submitted.

### Requirements for application:

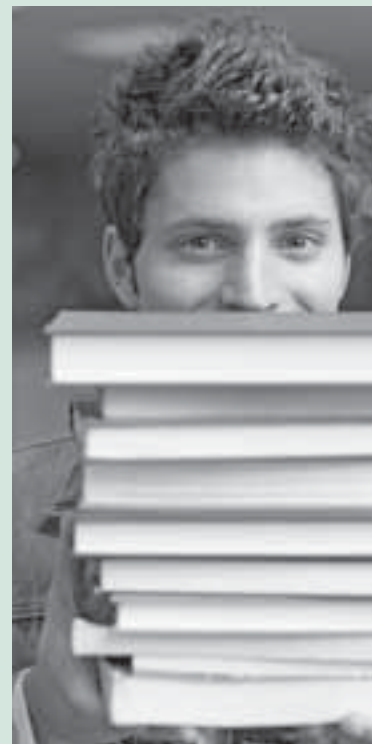
1. Must be a high school senior
2. Must begin college within a year of notification
3. Must be a full time (12 hours) student

### Scholarship awarded based on:

1. Grade point average
2. College entrance test scores
3. Work & volunteer experience
4. School & community activities
5. Knowledge of electric cooperatives
6. Biographical essay

*Deadline for application submission is Feb. 1, 2013.*

For more information call Norris Electric at 877-783-8765 or contact your high school guidance department. All necessary paperwork is available for download at the cooperative's website at [www.norriselectric.com](http://www.norriselectric.com).



## Eight 2013 IEC Memorial Scholarships available

Norris Electric Cooperative's Manager Keith McKinney has announced that the Illinois electric cooperatives will again in 2013 award seven academic scholarships to high school seniors through a memorial scholarship fund designed to financially assist deserving students in the "electric cooperative family." In addition, an eighth scholarship – to assist with costs in attending an electric lineworker school – will also be offered.

The eight scholarships of \$1,500 each will be awarded in 2013 through the Thomas H. Moore Illinois Electric Cooperatives (IEC) Memorial Scholarship Program.

Four scholarships will be awarded to high school seniors who are the sons or daughters of an Illinois electric cooperative member receiving service from the cooperative. A fifth scholarship, the Earl W. Struck Memorial Scholarship, will be awarded to a student who is the son or daughter of an Illinois electric

cooperative employee. The sixth and seventh scholarships are reserved for students enrolling full-time at a two-year Illinois community college who are the sons or daughters of Illinois electric cooperative members, employees or directors.

A new eighth annual scholarship, the "LaVern and Nola McEntire Lineworker's Scholarship," was awarded for the first time in 2011. This \$1,500 scholarship will help pay for costs to attend the lineworker's school conducted by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives in conjunction with Lincoln Land Community College, Springfield, Ill. Sons and daughters of co-op members; relatives of co-op employees or directors; individuals enrolled in the Lincoln Land lineworker's school; and individuals who have served or are serving in the armed forces or National Guard are all eligible for the lineworker's scholarship.

"We hope to assist electric cooperative youth while honoring past

rural electric leaders with these scholarships," says McKinney. "Norris Electric and the other Illinois electric cooperatives are always seeking ways to make a difference in our communities. One of the best ways we can do that is by helping our youth through programs like this one. In addition, we are very pleased to offer the electric lineworker's scholarship. It will benefit not only electric cooperative youth but also those fine men and women who have served their country through their military service and may now be wanting to become a trained lineworker."

For more information regarding the scholarships, contact Peg Cochran at 877-783-8765. All necessary paperwork is being sent to area high school guidance counselors and is available for download at the cooperative's website at [www.norriselectric.com](http://www.norriselectric.com).

## Are window efficiency claims "up to" any good?

### Federal study finds window efficiency claims leave consumers unsure

By Megan McKoy-Noe, CCC

Replacing old windows boosts a home's energy efficiency, but by how much? A new study from the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) cautions consumers not to expect all claims to live up to perceived expectations.

Energy-efficient windows offer lower heating, cooling, and lighting costs; in fact, replacing old windows with qualified models can cut a home's energy bill 7 percent to 15 percent, according to the U.S. Department of Energy's ENERGY STAR program. But true energy savings depends on proper installation and the type of windows installed—facts that folks often miss when reading window advertisements.

"Energy efficiency and cost savings are major factors for many consumers buying replacement

windows," explains David Vladeck, director of the FTC Bureau of Consumer Protection. "The FTC is committed to making sure that the information consumers get is accurate and that marketers can back up the claims they make."

To understand how consumers perceive advertised savings, a 2012 FTC study evaluated how 360 consumers in North Carolina, New York, Illinois, Oklahoma, and Washington interpreted the potential energy savings of advertised windows.

One of the ads evaluated displayed the following text (in uppercase letters): "PROVEN TO SAVE UP TO 47 PERCENT ON YOUR HEATING AND COOLING BILLS!" Another version removed the words, "up to," while a third version added this disclosure statement:

"The average owner saves about 25 percent on heating and cooling bills."

More than one-third of consumers who saw the "Up To" version reported the advertised windows would save most homeowners 47 percent on their energy bills—a far cry from the true average energy savings. However, including a disclosure statement did not weaken the ad's impact.

"The FTC believes this report will help guide advertisers to avoid the use of misleading "up to" claims," Vladeck notes. Earlier FTC studies stopped misleading or deceptive advertisements from five replacement windows manufacturers.

A window shopping guide is available at [www.ftc.gov/bcp/consumer.shtm](http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/consumer.shtm) >Energy > Shopping for New Windows.

Sources: Federal Trade Commission, ENERGY STAR

# Communities and counties form buying co-ops for power

**M**any communities and counties across Illinois are voting on aggregating their citizen's buying power into basically power purchasing cooperatives. This community and county wholesale power buying aggregation is what Illinois electric cooperatives have already been doing for their member-owners, in some cases for over 75 years.

Under the 1997 Illinois deregulation law, not-for-profit electric cooperatives and municipally owned utilities were treated differently than for-profit, investor-owned utilities such as Ameren and Commonwealth Edison. Because of their consumer-owned structure and aggregated buying power, the not-for-profit and locally owned and controlled electric cooperatives were allowed to maintain their local decision making authority on whether or not to maintain their aggregated buying power as a group, or to enter the deregulated market with both its risks and potential rewards.

Until recently, deregulation has not been a very successful experiment with a critical marketplace like electricity. And, there have been very mixed results in the few states that have deregulated the power marketplace.

With lower demand for electricity and excess supply of power caused by the recession, plus historically low natural gas prices due to new found reserves created with fracking technology, current market based wholesale power prices have declined. The decline in short term market based prices created what some expect to be a short term opportunity for a number of Alternative Retail Electric Supplier (ARES) power marketers. They have been able to secure short-term contracts and have targeted individuals



who could switch electric suppliers. More recently in Illinois, they have sought after aggregated markets, specifically communities and counties.

Electric cooperatives already provide market aggregation and have formed generation and transmission cooperatives to provide long-term stability in power supply and price. This long-term approach is different than the approach ARES power marketers have taken, which includes aggressive mail and phone marketing and the marketing of short term one to three year contracts for wholesale power.

A reasonable analogy would be entering into a short-term adjustable rate mortgage loan agreement that contained a low variable rate of interest and a "balloon provision" (which requires all amounts due and owing to be paid in full at the end of a two or three year term, or refinanced at a much higher rate). Contrast this with signing a loan for a 30-year period at a fixed rate. Prudence for those who expect to be in business long term

would likely be to choose the long term fixed rate, rather than the riskier short-term rate that can be expected to increase over the long term. Your co-op has respectfully chosen what the board deems to be the more prudent approach for the long-term.

To enter into the deregulated market, member elected board members and locally elected municipal leaders would need to vote to open up their respective service territories to the marketing efforts of ARES power marketers. It is important to note that only the wholesale energy portion of electric bills would be open to the ARES marketing efforts. The responsibility for local service, billing and outages plus transmitting and distributing the wholesale power is still the local utility's obligation and expense.

The not-for-profit, consumer-owned electric cooperatives and municipal utilities have invested millions of dollars on behalf of their members and consumers in power supply options from the latest clean coal technology to renewable wind energy projects so as to provide long-term power supply stability. A long-term diversified power supply portfolio is simply a prudent risk management approach. This power supply investment and diversification, plus cooperative aggregation of members' buying power has proven successful over the long haul, and should provide reliability and price stability for the energy needs of member-owners, not just in the short term of a few years, but for decades to come.

**Remember to turn your  
clocks back on Saturday,  
November 3rd**

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**