



# RuralHIGHLIGHTS

Local News from Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative

RURAL HIGHLIGHTS

## Equipment testing provides early warnings Helps avoid future failures and outages

RECC employees have been taking a lot of pictures this spring, but they aren't for any photo contest, and their high-tech camera sees more than pretty colors.

The featured objects in their photos are just boxes and wires, but the images they record give the co-op an early warning of any problems that could result in unexpected outages for our members.

"Hot spots" are the culprits that are being sought out with the infrared camera. An electrical connection or device that's hotter than normal indicates a problem that could lead to an early failure of the equipment. The infrared camera shows the difference in temperatures of devices in an electrical enclosure or on a pole. Any unusually high temperatures are reported for further checking, repairs or replacement of equipment as needed.

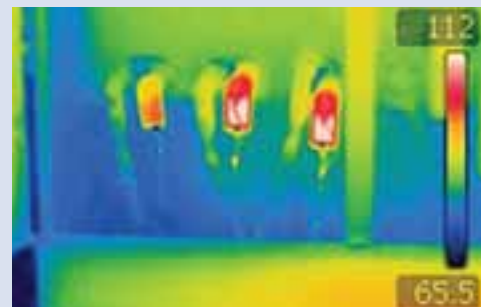
Journeyman Lineman Shane Norris has checked underground junction cabinets, three-phase pad mount transformers and riser poles where three-phase underground lines transition to overhead lines, along with part-time intern Natalie Pier. Shane opens up the electrical enclosures, and Natalie shoots infrared images of the devices inside. They also take precise GPS readings that will be incorporated into RECC's mapping system for improved accuracy and location labeling.

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Intern Natalie Pier and lineman Shane Norris check the connections inside an underground enclosure box. They also recorded precise GPS locations for the co-op's equipment to improve the digital mapping system accuracy.

The top photo shows three sets of elbow connectors and lightning arrestors in a three-phase transformer cabinet. The infrared image shows two of the lightning arrestors overheating, with red areas turning to white being the highest temperatures.



# Summer is Peak Alert season!

## Load management strategies help keep power costs down

The hot, humid days of summer bring higher electric use during evening hours, which can become Peak Alert periods for RECC. We have a plentiful supply of electric power, but the cost increases when the peak demand increases. Our Peak Switch and Dual Meter programs help reduce our peak demands and power costs, and participating members get the benefit of credits on their electric bill or a lower rate for their air conditioning and electric water heating.

Members on the Peak Switch and Dual Meter programs have remotely controlled switches installed so that RECC can cycle air conditioners and electric water heaters. Air conditioners (including heat pumps and geothermal systems) are cycled 15 minutes on, 15 minutes off through the peak period, which typically



continues for up to four hours.

Water heaters have the heating elements turned off for the entire peak period, but there is hot water stored in the tank which minimizes any inconvenience to the member.

Our Peak Switches have red indicator lights on the front that go on when a circuit is interrupted. Depending on the equipment you have connected to the Peak Switch, you may see one or two red lights come on. Switches also have green lights that may blink or remain on, but that is not an indication of control status.

If you want to know whether your equipment is being cycled on a hot day, you can call our office from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. We are now also offering an e-mail notice to members with a Peak Switch installed. We will send a notification to you on the day of any expected Peak Alert periods, to let you know that load control is planned for designated hours later in the day. Just call 438-6197 or e-mail [recc@recc.coop](mailto:recc@recc.coop) to be added to the notification list.

## Equipment testing provides early warnings

*(Continued from page 16A)*

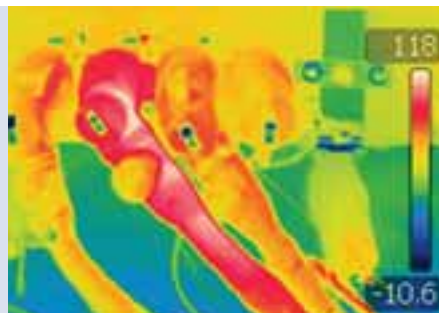
Lou DeLaby, Manager of Operations and Maintenance, says the photos have identified several "hot" elbow connections on transformers that are an early sign of equipment failure. The elbows can be replaced on a planned schedule, avoiding a future outage that might occur at any time of the day or night. "We've also found and replaced several bad elbow arrestors

and overhead arrestors, which protect the equipment from lightning surges," he adds.

Shane and Natalie took normal photos of each enclosure, showing the identifying device number and map location of the box. They then switched the camera to infrared mode and took images of the electrical devices inside. Hotter-than-normal surfaces show

up as bright red, an obvious alert that more attention is needed.

Infrared imaging is also used regularly at the co-op's nine substations to detect overheating connections and protective devices. It's another technology that Rural Electric is using to improve reliability and avoid emergency repairs on our distribution system.



*In this three-phase underground cabinet, the infrared camera showed the middle elbow connector on the left side is overheating, indicating that the elbow is headed for early failure.*



## Don't TOY with your SAFETY

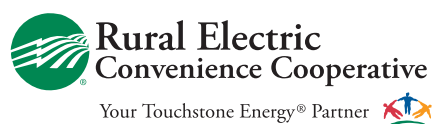
When you are playing outdoors, keep a safe distance from power lines, substations and other equipment your electric co-op uses to send electricity to your home.



**F**lying remote controlled toys and drones are a great way to have fun, but accidentally making contact with a power line or other electrical equipment can be dangerous and in some cases, even deadly.

- ✓ Never fly kites, or remote controlled devices near power lines.
- ✓ Stay away from power lines, meters, transformers and electrical boxes.
- ✓ Never climb trees near power lines
- ✓ If you get something stuck in a power line, call your electric co-op.
- ✓ Never touch or go near a downed power line.

May is Electrical Safety Month, as designated by the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI). For more great safety information, for both kids and adults, visit [www.esfi.org](http://www.esfi.org).





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Convenience Cooperative

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Nominating Committee members who met on March 8 were (from left) Dale Fesser, Charles Broers, Raymond Squires, Rodney Bourne, William Points, Kevin Duewer, James Austin and Gary Dunkirk.

## Director candidates to run for re-election

The RECC Nominating Committee met on March 8, and has named candidates for the Board of Directors in Districts 1, 2 and 3 in elections at this year's Annual Meeting. The committee nominated the three incumbent directors who are seeking re-election in their districts for three-year terms. They are:

- ★ **District 1**  
Clayton Bloome  
4935 E. Divernon Rd.  
Pawnee, IL 62558
- ★ **District 2**  
Chris Wilcox  
744 Duewer Rd.  
Waverly, IL 62692
- ★ **District 3**  
Jimmy Ayers  
8640 Cardinal Hill Rd.  
Rochester, IL 62563

The nominations have been posted at the Auburn office, as stipulated in the co-op's bylaws. Other candidates may be named by petition for a district, signed by 15 or more members in that district. Petition forms are available from the co-op office in Auburn, and must be returned by May 10 (30 days before the Annual Meeting, which is scheduled for June 9). Any persons nominated by petition will be included in the 2016 Annual Meeting Notice, to be printed in the June edition of the Illinois Country Living magazine. Biographical information and a statement from each candidate will also be printed in the notice.

Serving on this year's Nominating Committee were: District 1 -Rodney Bourne (Pawnee), Gary Dunkirk (Morrisonville), Raymond Squires (Pawnee); District 2 - Kevin Duewer, Jerome Johnson, William Points (all from Waverly); District 3 - James Austin (Pawnee), Charles Broers (Rochester), Dale Fesser (Rochester). Jerome Johnson was unable to attend the meeting on March 8.

Thank-you to these members for their time and interest in the cooperative's election process, and to the candidates who are willing to work for the benefit of all RECC member-owners!



### Plan to attend your Annual Meeting!

RECC's 79th Annual Meeting will be held **Thursday, June 9** in Chatham. A pork chop dinner will begin in the cafeteria at 5 p.m., with the business meeting at 7 p.m. Local vendor displays will be offered, and RECC members are invited to display their craft or hobby during the dinner period. Contact Dana Smith at our office at (217) 438-6516, or email [dana.smith@recc.coop](mailto:dana.smith@recc.coop) to reserve a space.