SPOON RIVER ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative
NEWS

President's Report

William R. Dodds
President/CEO

Why Does the Power Blink?

By Scott Turner, P.E.

At one time or another, we've all returned home or woken up late for work to see a blinking "12:00" on our digital alarm clock. You then have to reset every digital clock in your household that doesn't have a battery backup, from the microwave oven to the answering machine. Usually, this state of "eternal midnight" was caused by a "blink" in the electrical system.

While blinks can be annoying, they show that an electrical system is working exactly as designed. And while Spoon River Electric has taken steps to reduce the number of blinks across its power system, there are measures you can take as well.

Let's look at blinks. These momentary power interruptions can occur anywhere along a power system—from the time electrons are generated at a power plant to being shipped across transmission line to substations, or during distribution from a substation to your home.

Why blinks?

Blinks are created when a breaker, or switch, opens along any portion of the power system. The breaker usually opens because of a large, quick rise of electrical current. This large rise, called a fault condition, can occur when a tree branch touches a line, lightning strikes, or a wire breaks.

When this happens, a relay senses the fault and tells the breaker to open, preventing the flow of power to the problem site. After opening, the breaker quickly closes. The brief delay, which allows the fault to clear, usually lasts less than two seconds.

If the fault clears, every home or business that receives electricity off that power line has just experienced a blink. This could include thousands of accounts if the breaker protects a transmission line or a substation.

Reducing the blink's effects

Your co-op employs methods to reduce blink frequency. Tree trimming is probably the easiest and most common way, and one area where you can help. Make sure your co-op knows of any trees or limbs located close to a power line. Call (309) 647-2700 to tell Spoon River Electric about potential problems.

Meanwhile, you can reduce the frustration of blinks by purchasing an alarm clock equipped with a battery backup. This type of digital clock offers "ride through" ability for momentary outages. It will also keep the correct time and sound an alarm in case of a long-duration outage, provided a charged battery is in place. As an added benefit, these devices only use the battery in the event of a power interruption.

Blinks affect all electrical equipment, not just digital clocks. If there is a blink while you are operating a computer, your computer may crash and you will have to reboot, hoping all the while that there will be few corrupted files.

An uninterruptible power supply (UPS) on your computer can help prevent information loss. The UPS incorporates surge suppression technology with a battery backup and provides you some time to save whatever you were working on and exit your computer properly.

The future of blinks

Spoon River Electric operates an active system maintenance program and works hard to identify and fix sources of service interruptions. Even though blinks will never disappear from our electrical energy delivery system, by working together with we can minimize effects of the interruptions and the frequency with which they occur.

Spoon River Electric Cooperative

930 South Fifth Ave, PO Box 340,
Canton, IL 61520
8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
309-647-2700 • www.srecoop.org

President/CEO
William R. Dodds
bdodds@srecoop.org

Chairman
Bernard Marvel, Browning

Vice Chairman
Terry Beam, Cuba

Secretary
Steve Pille, Glasford

Treasurer
Lyle Nelson, Abingdon

Assistant Treasurer
Robert Lascelles, Ipava

Board of Directors
James Banks, Canton
Jack Clark, Lewistown
Greg Leigh, Avon
John Spangler, Marietta

Editor of Spoon River News
Taryn Martin
tmartin@srecoop.org

Spoon River Electric Cooperative – By the Numbers

Miles of line energized: 1,255

Number of members served: 4,808

Number of power poles in territory: 29,255

78th Annual Meeting of Members

Spoon River Electric Cooperative held its 78th annual meeting, Thursday, June 18, at Farmington Central High School. Members were updated on the organization's financial condition, pending regulations that could impact rates, the Spoon River Solar Farm projects and results of the director's election.

President/CEO Bill Dodds explained that by the end of 2014, the cooperative had a one percent increase in electric service revenues due to weather temperatures. The member-owned electric utility cooperative had a 62 percent decrease in total margins and income with net margins of $381,325. The co-op is experiencing growth. Dodds said, "Built two miles of line and added 200 meters…that's more meters that have been added per mile of line than ever in the history of the co-op."

President/CEO Bill Dodds expressed Spoon River's power supplier, Prairie Power, Inc., has continued to diversify its energy portfolio by implementing the Spoon River Solar Farm project. The completion date for the Spoon River Solar Farm is set for October 1, 2015. The renewable energy solar farm will generate 750,000 Kilowatt Hours and members will be able to sign up to purchase power directly from it. Dodd's also provided details on the farm-themed Spoon River Solar Farm Learning Center. This unique interactive experience will aid in educating children and adults on the features of solar technology and rural cooperatives. Both the solar farm and learning center projects will be located near rural Astoria in Fulton County.

Re-elected to the Cooperative's board were Steve Pill, District 4, Bernard Marvel, District 9, and John Spangler, District 7.

The Cooperative also awarded a $500 Scholastic Scholarship to Steven Parrish a graduate of Lewistown High School. The Scott Parrish Memorial Scholarship was awarded to Alexis Garlisch, a Lewistown High School graduate, by Nancy Parrish and family. A $500 Honorary Scholarship was awarded to Vanessa Williams, a

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Periodically inspect your dryer vent to ensure it is not blocked. This will save energy and may prevent a fire. Manufacturers recommend using a rigid venting material - not plastic vents that may collapse and cause blockages.

Source: energy.gov

graduate of Bushnell-Prairie City High School. Several other students who live in the Cooperative's service area were awarded $100 scholarships.

Service awards were presented to employees and directors as follows:

- Marti Prichard – 35 years of service
- Donnie Schrodt – 25 years of service
- Greg Leigh – 10 years of board service
- Jim Banks – 10 years of board service

Entertainment was provided by, Squawk! The Show!

Spoon River Electric Cooperative, a Touchstone Energy Cooperative, serves more than 4,852 members in the Fulton, Knox, McDonough, Peoria and Schuler. The locally owned cooperative has 1,266 miles of lines and a utility plant valued at more than $27.5 million. This not-for-profit member owned utility service is committed to providing reliability, fiscal stability and increasing the products and services available to enhance their member's quality of life. Learn more at www.srecoop.org.

Welcoming members to Spoon River Electric's Annual Meeting of Members, 2015

Entertainment was provided by Squawk The Show!

President/CEO Bill Dodds awards members for correct answers to trivia questions

More photos on 16d ▶

Director Steve Pille, District 4, Chairman Bernard Marvel, District 8, and Director John Spangler, District 7

Recipients of college scholarships from Spoon River Electric Cooperative at the 2015 Annual Meeting of Members at Farmington Central High School