

## President's Report



William R. Dodds  
President/CEO

## A cooperative day in YOUR life

*Co-ops are all around us.*

*By Adam Schwartz*

So how did you spend your day? Chances are cooperatives were a big part of it from dawn until bedtime. Take a moment to read this quick overview of how co-ops might be impacting you every day.

Your morning orange juice might have come from Florida's Natural, a producer-owned cooperative based in – you guessed it – Florida, but distributing throughout the U.S. If your morning coffee came from Equal Exchange ([www.equalexchange.coop](http://www.equalexchange.coop)), you get bonus points because they source their coffee from farmer-owned co-ops in developing countries, and they are a worker-owned co-op. If you like milk in your coffee or cereal, check this out: more than 86 percent of all fluid milk flows through a co-op!

The wheat in your muffin or toast was most likely processed through a farmer-owned grain elevator in the Midwest. If you had cranberries in that muffin, they likely came from Ocean Spray, or maybe you used Land O'Lakes Butter or Welch's Concord Grape Jam – all producer-owned co-ops that make the products we love on our toast.

After that big co-op breakfast, it is time to start the day. Working parents might drop off their young children at one of the over 1,000 pre-school co-ops that operate throughout the U.S.

Perhaps this is the day to make some improvements to your home. Ace Hardware, True Value and Do It Best are all examples of purchasing co-ops. These are small businesses that come together to form a co-op so that they can compete with big box retailers that are not owned by people in the local community.

You might need to stop by the credit union for a loan or pick up some cash for that home project from one of their 25,000 ATMs in their network. More than 100 million people in the U.S. are members of a credit union, and yep, you guessed it, credit unions are co-ops.

On your way home, you may stop at one of the 300 community-owned cooperative grocery stores in the country. Many of the meat products and vegetables are also sourced from co-ops. If you are in a hurry, maybe you swing by KFC, Taco Bell or Pizza Hut to pick up dinner. The franchise owners of these fast food restaurants are all members of a purchasing co-op, just like the hardware stores above. So are the owners of Dunkin Donuts and many other franchises.

After dinner, perhaps you are watching TV from one of the more than 1,000 small cable companies that serve rural America that have come together to form a co-op that helps keep costs as low as possible. Or maybe you are surfing the Internet through services provided by your local telecommunications co-op.

Travel plans? If you are on a business trip or vacation and staying in a Best Western – that is also a purchasing co-op!

And when it's time for "lights out," you can flip that switch knowing you're receiving safe, reliable electricity from your local electric cooperative, your friends at Spoon River Electric. From morning until night, you can have a very cooperative day.

# 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](http://www.srecoop.org)

## *President/CEO*

William R. Dodds  
[bdodds@srecoop.org](mailto:bdodds@srecoop.org)

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Taryn Martin  
[tmartin@srecoop.org](mailto: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



**Representative Cheri Bustos and  
President/CEO Bills Dodds at the  
Spoon River Solar Farm Learning Center.**

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Looking for an easy efficiency upgrade? Additional insulation can make a difference! The Department of Energy estimates you can reduce heating and cooling needs up to 30 percent by properly insulating and weatherizing your home.

Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)



## Look up for hazards during harvest

After working in a field on a neighbor's farm, Jim Flach parked his equipment and stepped out of the vehicle. Sadly, Jim did not realize his equipment was touching an overhead power line, and he became a path for the electrical current as he placed his foot onto the ground. Jim received a severe electric shock that ultimately resulted in his death a few months later. Safe Electricity urges farmers to take the proper precautions when working around power lines.

"The rush to harvest can lead to farmers working long days with little sleep," cautions Kyla Kruse, communications director of the Energy Education Council and its Safe Electricity program. "It is important to take time for safety. Before starting work, make sure to note the location of overhead power lines."

To stay safe around overhead power lines, Safe Electricity urges farm operators and workers to:

- Use a spotter when operating large machinery near power lines.
- Use care when raising augers or the bed of grain trucks around power lines.
- Keep equipment at least 10 feet from power lines — at all times, in all directions.
- Inspect the height of farm equipment to determine clearance.

- Always remember to lower extensions when moving loads.
- Never attempt to move a power line out of the way or raise it for clearance.
- If a power line is sagging or low, call Spoon River Electric.

If contact is made with a power line, stay on the equipment. Make sure to warn others to stay away, and call 911. Do not leave until the utility crew says it is safe to do so. The only reason to exit is if the equipment is on fire. If this is the case, jump off the equipment with your feet together, without touching the ground and vehicle at the same time. Then, still keeping your feet together, hop to safety as you leave the area.

Some additional safety tips from Safe Electricity include:

- Do not use metal poles when breaking up bridged grain inside and around grain bins.
- Always hire qualified electricians for any electrical issues.
- Do not use equipment with frayed cables.

"You need to double check, even triple check, to see what is above you," says Marilyn Flach, Jim's widow. His son Brett adds, "Be conscious of your surroundings. You need to keep your eyes open and beware of overhead lines."

For more electrical safety information, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

## You could be a winner!

Every other year, the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC) conducts a statewide member survey project on our behalf. You may be randomly selected to participate in the project. People who complete and submit the survey questionnaire will be entered in a drawing to win one of five-\$100 bill credits.

The AIEC and the vendor used to conduct the survey do not sell or share your private information.

They provide us with the blind results, and we evaluate the information that is gathered to improve how we serve you. The more completed surveys we receive, the more accurate the information we receive will be. So please help us and yourself by participating. We anticipate that survey questionnaires will be distributed in September and October.

Please contact us if you have any questions.



Nowadays, some of us take electricity for granted. But no matter where you go, you expect it to follow. And it does. It's there because your electric co-op is here. Learn more about the power of your co-op membership at [TogetherWeSave.com](http://TogetherWeSave.com).



[TOGETHERWESAVE.COM](http://TOGETHERWESAVE.COM)

# YOU'RE EVERYWHERE THESE DAYS. SO IS YOUR POWER.

