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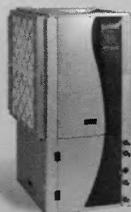
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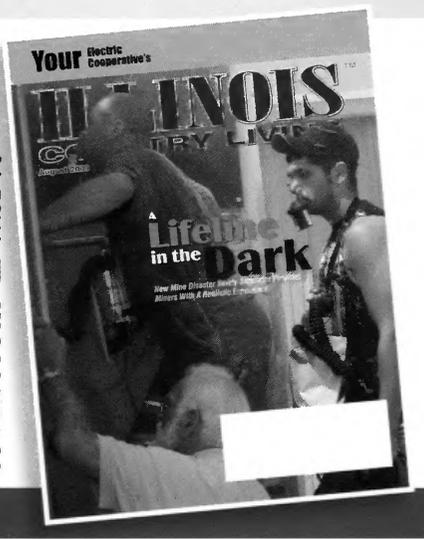
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ILLINOISTM COUNTRY LIVING

Volume 67, No. 4, August 2009

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Published by

Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives
6460 South Sixth Frontage Road East,
Springfield, IL 62712
www.icl.coop
800-593-2432 • aieinfo@aiec.coop

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Illinois Country Living is a monthly publication serving the communications needs of the locally owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives of Illinois. With a circulation of more than 176,000, the magazine informs cooperative members about issues affecting their electric cooperative and the quality of life in rural Illinois.
Illinois Country Living (ISSN number 1086-8062) is published monthly and is the official publication of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives, 6460 South Sixth Frontage Road East, Springfield, IL 62712. The cost is \$2.50 plus postage per year for members of subscribing cooperatives and \$10 per year for all others. Periodical postage paid at Springfield, Illinois, and additional mailing offices.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: Illinois Country Living, P.O. Box 3787, Springfield, IL 62708.
ADVERTISING: The national advertising representative is The Weiss Group, 1-877-934-7747. Acceptance of advertising by the magazine does not imply endorsement by the publisher or the electric cooperatives of Illinois of the product or service advertised. Illinois Country Living is not responsible for the performance of the product or service advertised.



The Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives and 25 Illinois electric cooperatives are members of Touchstone Energy, a national alliance of 660 electric cooperatives. Touchstone Energy cooperative employees adhere to four core values — integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community.

Get Involved – It's Your Personal Responsibility

Issues facing our state and nation require involved citizens.

As I write this, we are celebrating July 4th, Independence Day. In the news we've seen citizens of Iran die in the streets as they fight for their voting rights. And our troops are withdrawing from Iraq hopefully leaving their citizens with a strong and free democracy.

Here at home, our state is struggling with a budget crisis and our country is debating energy and climate change and health care. There has never been a more important time than now for rural citizens to be involved in the political process.

As a former state senator and representative, I have to thank my parents for teaching me the responsibility of being an active citizen. My dad was a Republican precinct committeeman in Bond County, and my mom was always really active in campaigns. I grew up in a family that talked a lot about politics and the responsibility of being involved. I also credit my involvement in our local community service organization, the Jaycees, with my early interest in politics.

Politics for some has a bad connotation. But the ethical abuse of some is not an excuse for any of us to not get involved. Our state has seen six years of ethical misbehavior that has frustrated the majority of well-intentioned politicians on both sides of the aisle and embarrassed the citizens of our great state.

I believe Governor Quinn is an honest man, and Illinois citizens deserve honesty in their government. I urge you to ask your representatives to vote against gimmicks, one-time revenue sources, raiding pension funds or raiding other funds. We have to work together.

As members of rural electric cooperatives you understand what it means to work together. That is the essence of cooperation. Because co-ops are also democratically controlled local organizations I hope you understand the importance of being involved in your co-op.

During my time in the General Assembly I worked with the late Earl Struck, the former President/CEO of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives and served along side your

current President/CEO Duane Noland. As we debated electric utility deregulation almost 10 years ago, Earl's main concern was that the legislation passed be in favor of local control of cooperatives from the member-owners.

Earl was right. And if there is something right in the electricity business it is the electric cooperatives and that is because of local control of members who have the right to vote. When the government in Washington, D.C. or Springfield makes decisions, the results don't always fit the local situation. Foolish legislation can sometimes create unintended consequences for local communities, when they don't fit the unique needs of local citizens.

My parents also taught me the importance of personal responsibility. I know most rural citizens feel the same way. But I worry our country is moving away from personal responsibility. I worry that rural areas of our country and state are losing population and representation. Too many in the current leadership positions do not seem to be concerned enough with the debt we are piling on future generations. As citizens, we can't do that with our personal finances and I don't think we can do it in government.

In this magazine you've seen articles on the climate change and energy debate. You've been asked to e-mail your legislators through the co-op's Our Energy, Our Future Web site (www.ourenergy.coop). In late June, the U.S. House of Representatives, by a very narrow vote, passed legislation that will dramatically impact the cost of energy. It will be especially hard on the economy of the Midwest states. Now, the debate moves to the Senate.

It is my opinion that this legislation is too important to rush, yet it seems that is what they are trying to do. They are penalizing consumers that receive energy from coal generation. In the Midwest our jobs and economy are dependent on

(Continued on page 6)

Too many in the current leadership positions do not seem to be concerned enough with the debt we are piling on future generations.

State Senator Frank Watson represented the 51st district from 1983 to 2009 and served as a State Representative from 1979 to 1982. He had to resign for health reasons after rising to the position of Senate Republican Leader.





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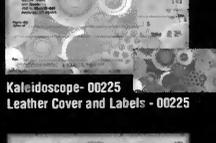
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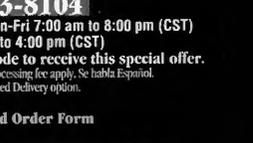
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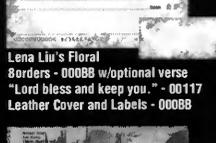
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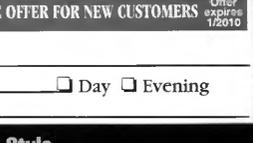
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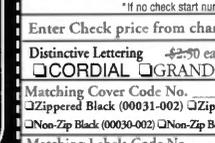
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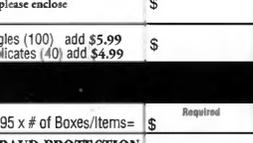
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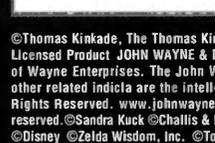
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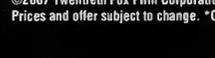
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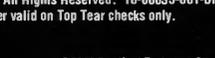
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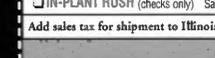
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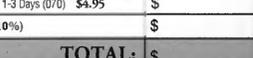
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Climate Change Energy Cap and Trade Legislation Passes House

With a last-minute blitz by the Democratic leadership, the House passed the 1,500-page Waxman-Markey bill on a narrow 219-212 vote. Before debate started, a 309-page leadership amendment was added to the climate change and energy bill with a host of changes made to gain votes.

With the grass roots support of more than 370,000 electric co-op members, including 11,082 Illinois co-op members, electric co-op leaders were able to convince House leaders to make a few changes that addressed fairness and affordability issues.

"We still have concerns about the bill," said National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) President/CEO Glenn English. "Now, we look forward to working with members of the Senate in making additional changes in H.R. 2454 as it moves forward from the House of Representatives."

Under the original language of the bill some utilities, through

the proposed cap and trade system for carbon dioxide emissions, would have received more than their fair share. For example, NRECA found that Edison International subsidiary Southern California Edison Co. would receive 144 percent of its share of the 2012 cap; Public Service Electric and Gas Co. in New Jersey would receive 132 percent; and PG&E Corp. subsidiary Pacific Gas and Electric Co. in California, 181 percent.

By contrast, NRECA's analysis found that cooperatives in Minnesota would receive only about 61 percent of their proportionate share of the cap in 2012, while co-op consumers in Kentucky would receive just 59 percent of their share of the cap. In Illinois it would be 61 percent.

To address this inequity a provision was inserted that no utility gets a "windfall" of more than 100 percent of its needs.

Even with these changes the



Congress and America's electric cooperative members must work together.

legislation still contains affordability and other concerns for electric co-op members. Electric cooperative leaders firmly agree that any future bill that comes out of the U.S. Senate must be workable, affordable and flexible, which the House bill is not. Many changes still need to occur before cooperative members are well served by such a law.

Join the 370,000 co-op members who have asked their elected officials tough questions about our energy future. Go to www.ourenergy.coop to continue the dialogue. ■

COMMENTARY *(Continued from page 4)*

affordable coal generation. We are starting to do a good job of finding new technology for clean coal, projects like FutureGen in Mattoon and the coal gasification project in Taylorville are examples. We've got to have time for those technologies to develop so our economy isn't thrashed and beaten down. We need to slow down and get this right.

Health care is the other big debate I'd urge you to be involved in. My family has operated a local drugstore in Greenville for over 100 years. As a pharmacist, when I got involved in politics I wore a pin that said, "Get into politics or get out of pharmacy." I've had my own health issues and had to resign my Senate seat in February. I hope

you will take your citizenship and personal responsibility seriously. I hope our leaders will remember our nation's foundation was built on personal responsibility and fiscal responsibility.

I urge you to remember the citizens of Iraq and Afghanistan and those brave young men and women of our armed forces who have helped fight for their freedom and to protect our country. Say a prayer for peace and one of thanks for those that have fought for your rights in a free and democratic society. Celebrate it by getting involved in your local community and in the national and state debates that will impact all of us. ■

Illinois Colleges Helping High School Dropouts

The number of adults in Illinois with less than a ninth-grade education is growing, and costing the state billions of dollars, the Illinois Community College Board warns. "The number of adults with less than a ninth-grade education has increased by seven percent since 2004," said Guy Alongi, chairman of the Illinois Community College Board, citing figures from the 2008 U.S. Census. "This is an incredible jump, and a tremendous expense to the Illinois taxpayers."

But Alongi says there is also a solution: Through the general education development (GED) program offered through Illinois community colleges, there is a way for these adults to earn the equivalency of a high school diploma.

"The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) is making a concerted effort to promote the GED program and reach out to individuals who do not have a high school diploma," Alongi announced.

Each high school dropout costs Illinois \$221,000 over the course of their lifetime.



"This is a cost that is increasing, not declining," said Dr. Karen Hunter Anderson, vice-president for adult education and instructional support at the ICCB. Anderson proudly reported that 15,734 individuals in Illinois earned a GED in 2008, giving these individuals the opportunity to further employment, training, and post-secondary education. But, Anderson noted, in comparison to the problem, there is still much to do.

For instance, the Shawnee Community College District, made up of Union, Pulaski, Alexander, Massac, and a portion of Jackson and Johnson counties, has 15,751 adults 16 years of age and older who are not currently enrolled in high school and listed as earning less than those with a high school diploma.

That is why Shawnee Community College is moving to expand GED programming from two nights per week to four nights, and making the alternative high school program an option for at-risk students.

For more information go to www.iccb.org/aegateway/student/faqs.html. ■

Coal 77 Percent Cleaner Now But More Investment Needed

The American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity (ACCCE) released the findings of an Energy Ventures Analysis, Inc. report that finds nearly \$100 billion has been spent to deploy clean coal technologies to reduce air emissions since 1990.

Steve Miller, President and CEO of ACCCE released the following statement. "Today's (May 20) report conclusively shows that given realistic time frames technology can solve our environmental challenges without negatively impacting consumers and the economy. Industry is committed to eliminating emissions from coal-fueled power plants. One hundred billion dollars is a significant start and billions more will be spent in coming years as power plants begin deploying the next generation of clean coal technologies to address carbon and other emissions."

The nearly \$100 billion deployment in emission-reduction technologies has made today's coal-based generating fleet 77 percent cleaner than it was in 1970, based on regulated emissions per unit of energy produced. At the same time, prices for making electricity from coal have remained stable at about a third of the cost of other base load fuels.

Source: www.americaspower.org/News/Research. ■





Youth to Washington Program Celebrates 50 years

Since 1964, the nation's electric cooperatives have sponsored more than 40,000 high school juniors and seniors for visits to their U.S. congressional delegations, energy and grassroots government education sessions and sightseeing in Washington. This year 65 rural Illinois youth leaders joined 1,532 young leaders from across

the country. They had the opportunity to visit with our nation's leaders as they debate critical issues such as energy policy and health care. For more information about the program and how to join next year's youth delegation, contact your local electric cooperative or go to www.youthtour.coop. ■

Co-op Growth Rate Exceeds Industry

Recent data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) shows that the rate of consumer growth for electric distribution cooperatives over the past several months has continued a slowing trend that began in early 2007. Despite the slowdown, cooperatives continue to enjoy a higher growth rate than the rest of the utility industry.

Historically, cooperatives' consumer growth has been between 2 percent and 2.5 percent per year. Since 2007, however, growth has been trending down, likely due to effects of the ongoing recession. Although still positive, the consumer growth rate at the end of February hovered around 1 percent versus 1.3 percent in August 2008, and is near its lowest level since data collection began in 2001. ■





Tax credits for your energy-saving efforts

Times are tough, so use the national economic stimulus plan to stimulate energy savings in your home and improve the environment, too. The following federal tax credits are available now:

- Up to 30 percent on the cost of a new, energy-efficient heating and air conditioning system.
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A Lifeline in the Dark

New Mine Disaster Safety Simulator Provides Miners With A Realistic Experience

By Ed VanHoose

The rugged faces of the veteran miners with their serious looks and piercing eyes contrast starkly with the nervousness hidden behind a thin layer of determination on the faces of the young miners. They greet each other with a studied familiarity while the room quickly settles into an air of open camaraderie. They have come for a valuable lesson. These men must learn to survive a mine disaster.

Their lives could depend upon what they learn here today.

Safety training efforts have ramped up in an attempt to meet tighter federal regulations stemming from the 2006 explosion in the Sago mine of West Virginia. There, 13 people were trapped underground for 42

hours, leaving only one survivor. Prior to the new regulations, refresher safety courses were traditionally offered only once per year.

“As a result of the Sago disaster, the regulations now require hands-on training once each quarter, in which all underground miners go through this kind of hands-on training trying to get realistic expectations of what they might encounter,” says John Howard, Associate Dean of the Mining Program for Illinois Eastern Community Colleges (IECC) just before the training session.

Howard begins the class with the safety features familiar to the miners, and then quickly moves on to the new devices. Several new apparatus have

been added to the lifeline recently. The lifeline is a cable on which is mounted various types of tactile equipment to indicate directions to miners.

“Miners, if they can’t see, they can find the lifeline and it will lead them to safety,” says Howard.

The most notable tool in the newly revamped training program comes in the form of a giant red and white mobile training vehicle parked just outside the training facility. In operation since June 5, the Mobile Mine Emergency Training Vehicle (MMETV) simulates conditions miners might encounter in a mine disaster.

Howard’s face lights up as he shows off the vehicle before the class gets a chance to experience the

realistic environment offered inside the unit.

"The interior control panel lets me manage how much smoke is present in the vehicle, and the temperature inside. If you look at the LCD display you can see thermal-imaging and infrared cameras so we can observe trainees in a smoke-filled environment," says Howard. "We also have an intercom system so we can hear everything they are saying. It's two-way so I can also talk to them."

A tour of the active training portion of the vehicle reveals steel doors that can be manipulated into innumerable configurations to provide a unique experience every time a group of trainees enters. The lifeline and directional devices stretch throughout the chamber. A cache of Self Contained Self Rescuers (SCSRs), personal kits miners use to obtain breathable air, sits hidden to one side, and a mock entry to a refuge chamber lies along another path.

Once the doors close, a strobe light and loud music from hidden speakers disorients occupants. From the control panel Howard touches a button and the chamber quickly fills with smoke. It only takes a few seconds to realize the danger of encountering this type of environment unprepared. Trainees must rely solely on their sense of touch, and their connection with the lifeline, to navigate the maze.

Standing in the doorway Howard seems at ease in the swirl of the smoke, even as it begins to hide him from view.

"Once a year the regulations require training is done in obscured vision. We used to do this by bringing a smoke generator into the building, and smoke up the room, much to the dismay of everyone else in the building," Howard says. "They don't care much for that!"

The strobe reflects off the smoke, further devouring his form, while the music drowns his voice.

"This is only a little smoke," Howard yells over the music. "When

the trainees go through, the chamber will be completely blacked out."

The mobile unit is a recent addition sponsored by the Illinois Eastern Community Colleges, Illinois Office of Coal Development, Peabody Energy, Big Ridge, Inc., and Knight Hawk Coal.

Back in the classroom, Howard demonstrates each of the new additions to the lifeline. Trainees will have to identify several new markers to successfully navigate free from a mine disaster. Specifically, new markers indicate refuge chambers, additional direction markers, and door markers that indicate alternate escape ways. Hands-on training with the SCSRs follows a fast-paced description of the kits.

"SCSRs must provide at least one hour of oxygen to a miner in case of an emergency, but many last much longer," says Howard.

Much controversy surrounded the insufficient amount of SCSRs in the Sago mine. As a result, mine administrations have gone to great lengths

to ensure there are adequate numbers of these kits located throughout the mine, even with the high cost of the units.

"I'm guessing there are between 1,000 and 1,300 SCSRs underground, at \$500-\$600 a piece," says Howard.

Currently, the Patiki Mine located just outside of Carmi, Ill. employs around 240 miners. It is overstaffed by approximately 50 miners who are undergoing training for a new mine in West Kentucky. That means there are around four SCSRs available per employee.

In addition to the greater abundance of SCSRs in the mines, new regulations also call for refuge chambers closer to the active mining site.

"Within 2,000 feet of the working facers there has to be a refuge chamber," says Howard. "We call it a rescue alternative now, but it is a rescue chamber big enough to hold everybody who might be inside at that point and provide them with oxygen, carbon dioxide scrubbing materials, food, and water for 96 hours."



Self Contained Self Rescuers (SCSRs) provide miners with breathable air during mine emergencies. Miners participate in a quarterly training class and receive hands-on training with these devices in order to ensure adequate knowledge of the process and procedures involved in their use.

The miners have jokingly nicknamed these chambers "tin cans" and "coffins." With such grotesque nicknames, the use of refuge chambers seems in doubt, but even in the extreme circumstances of the Sago disaster, rescuers reached the trapped miners in less than 48 hours. Since refuge chambers are stocked with enough provisions to last well beyond that, miners forced to use a chamber would certainly find a greater increase in survival rates.

All of these measures are intended to provide a safe work environment for the men. The workers at the Patiki mine are no strangers to safety. Their lobby contains an overflowing trophy case that speaks volumes about their dedication to the well-being of miners.

John Howard echoes the pride exhibited by the trophy case when he says, "Illinois, up until last year had, to my knowledge, the longest run of fatal free years in coal mining, probably in the United States, maybe in the world."

Unfortunately on Oct. 16, 2008 one young miner lost his life in a tragic mine-related accident. Prior to that, Illinois had over five years without a single fatality.

Howard describes the five-year period as, "pretty amazing" saying, "Our record was outstanding." ■

Did you know?

- 18 mines are in operation in Illinois, the newest being Royal Falcon in Jackson County.
- A total of 3,467 people are employed in the mines.
- Nearly 33 million tons of coal were harvested from these mines in 2008.



Smoke billows out of the rear of the Mobile Mine Emergency Training Vehicle (MMETV) as trainees enter.

Mine Safety Makes Sense For Cooperatives

Electric cooperatives have a vested interest in keeping coal miners safe.

"In Illinois, the vast majority of electricity comes from coal," said Phil Smith, the Director of Communications for the United Mine Works of America. "A safe coal miner is a productive coal miner that helps keep the lights on."

Mine accidents not only affect the lives of those involved, but also affect the cost to produce electricity. Accidents cause mines to temporarily shut down, which in turn can increase the cost of electricity.

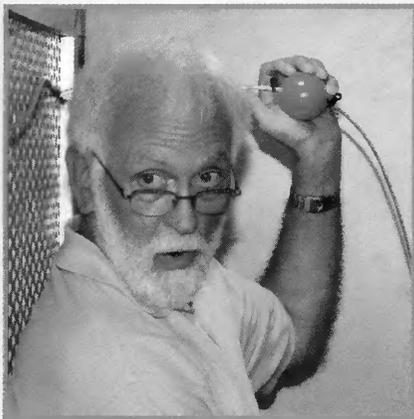
Daryl Donjon, the President/CEO of Wayne-White Counties Electric Cooperative says, "From my position, coal mine safety is important to cooperatives because of the economic load they bear, and for job development in rural areas. Safer mines operate better, have less shutdowns, and make the long-term

need for coal more sustainable."

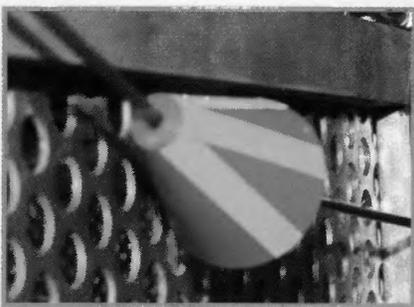
With all of the efforts underway to produce cleaner, more efficient methods of using coal for electricity production, the human factor of keeping miners safe can be lost in the shuffle. Founded around the principles of member participation, cooperatives have always understood the human element behind technology.

"Since cooperatives generate energy through coal, our goal is to continue using coal in a clean, safe manner," says N. Duane Noland, President/CEO of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC). "Cooperatives understand mining can be very dangerous. We have a duty to the community to be sure that miners are safe. After all, coal mines are generally located in rural areas, and the miners are our members. We want members to be safe."

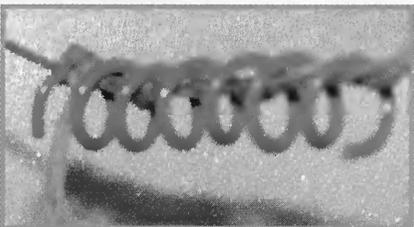
The Shapes of Safety



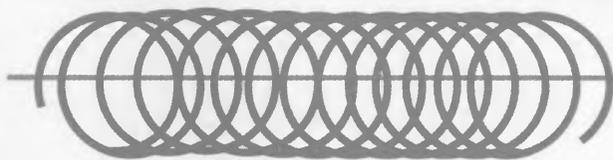
John Howard holds up a ball, attached to the lifeline, which indicates a door to allow trapped miners to access alternate escape routes.



Directional cones strung along the lifeline in the new Mobile Mine Emergency Training Vehicle (MMETV) allow trainees to determine the correct direction to find an exit. Trainees slide their hands over the line. When they encounter the small end of the cone first, they know they are moving toward safety.

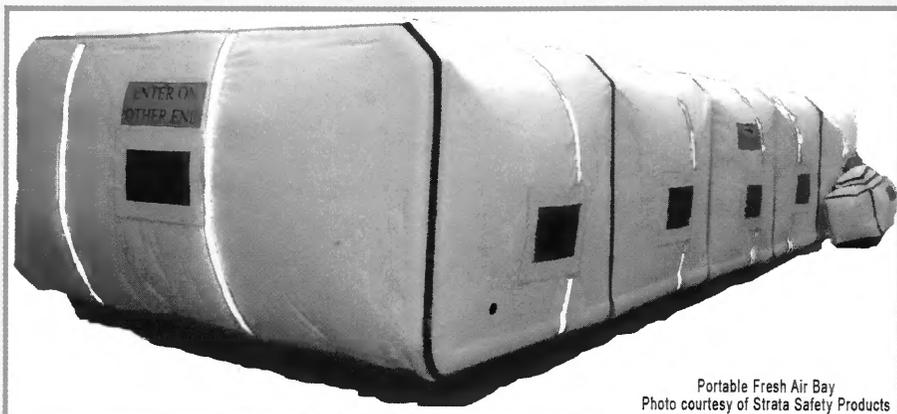


A corkscrew strung on the lifeline indicates a refuge chamber location.



Fresh Air Bay Skid
Photo courtesy of Strata Safety Products

Walk-in steel emergency refuge chambers can operate from a main power source indefinitely, or from a battery back-up. All Strata chambers include an airlock compartment for purging the air, seating, storage, food, water, gas monitor, first aid and a toilet.



Portable Fresh Air Bay
Photo courtesy of Strata Safety Products

The Strata Safety Portable Fresh Air Bay is an inflatable chamber that is folded up and stored in a protective steel container until needed. In an emergency the Fresh Air Bay is inflated out of the steel skid using compressed air cylinders. Supplies provided include water, food, a gas monitor, flashlights, first aid kits and a toilet.

A Few Scary Statistics on Seatbelts

Click it in your car and on the farm

Vehicular accidents are horrible and this writer would be fine if he never saw or heard of another one.

Perhaps you saw in the news information about a recent crash on Interstate 44 near Miami, Okla., where a semi plowed into the back of several parked vehicles on the Interstate. Ten people lost their lives that day in that terrible accident. When my family and I travel home for holidays or vacations we travel right by that part of Interstate 44.

If you are driving for vacation, or just driving to the next field on your farm, there are a few reminders that we should all keep in mind as we crawl into that vehicle. One extremely large matter of importance is the use of your seatbelt.

Let's do all we can to eliminate as much risk as we can when it comes to safely traveling in our motor vehicles, which also includes farm machinery. When it comes to that farm machinery the rule of thumb is, if it has a seatbelt, click it.

Here are some important safety belt statistics from the Public Information Office, Division of Motor Vehicles, Richmond, Va., that we all need to keep in mind each and every time we crawl behind the wheel of a motor vehicle:

- One out of every five drivers will be involved in a traffic crash this year.
- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among people age 44 and younger and

the number one cause of head and spinal cord injury.

- Approximately 35,000 people die in motor vehicle crashes each year. About 50 percent of those people could be saved if they wore their safety belts.
- For every one percent increase in safety belt use, 172 lives and close to an estimated \$100 million in annual injury and death cost could be saved.
- Safety belts, when used properly, reduce the



number of serious traffic injuries by 50 percent and fatalities by 60-70 percent.

- Safety belts should be fastened before going any distance and any speed. Nearly 75 percent of crash deaths and injuries occur within 25 miles of one's home. Most injury-producing motor vehicle crashes involve low speeds under 40 m.p.h.
- Motorists are 25 times more likely to be killed or seriously injured when they are "thrown clear" than when remain inside their vehicles.
- Safety belt use is one of the best defenses against the unpredictable actions of a drunk driver.

These are just a few statistics that probably should remind us all of safe use of the restraint systems within our vehicles and farm machinery. There are many more but I believe the point is made.

Let's all be as safe as we can out on the roads and fields of our great state of Illinois.

Let's prevent unnecessary injury or worse by simply making our seat belts click. I know it won't prevent every accident, but there's no question it will keep you and the ones you love a bit more safe.

Thanks for reading and I'll see you driving safely out on the highways and byways. ■

Ken Macken is Manager of Safety and Loss Control for the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives. kmacken@aiec.coop, 217-241-7933.



"One out of every five drivers will be involved in a traffic crash this year."

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Proper pH Prepares Soils for Planting

How to measure and adjust your garden's soil pH

Last month we discussed a little bit about soil pH. Soil pH is one of the most important aspects of gardening, and often the least understood because it involves the word "chemistry" and that takes many back to their high school days.

Soil pH measures the acidity or alkalinity of the soil. Some people like to refer to it as the "sourness" or "sweetness" of the soil, but those terms can cause problems. They'll work in many cases but not all situations.

An improper pH can tie up some the essential nutrients for plant growth. It's not that the nutrients aren't there, but the soil particles, due to the soil chemistry (there's that word again) bind them so tightly that roots can't absorb them.

There are some alternatives. We can inject trees with the micronutrients, but that creates a wound that allows for decay and insect invasion.

We can apply "chelated" products such as Miracid, which are formulated in such a way that soil particles don't grab on to them. However, chelated forms tend to be extremely water soluble, meaning they may leach through the soil before the roots can absorb the micronutrient.

A soil test is the best bet to determine the soil pH. You can buy kits at some garden centers or nurseries. The University of Illinois Extension maintains a list on our Web site of current soil testing labs. (www.extension.illinois.edu)

As mentioned last month, the soil pH really isn't something you want to disturb unless you are absolutely sure of its reading. If the soil is basic or alkaline and you add more limestone, you can do some drastic damage. Soil pH isn't something that changes quickly or regularly. It's something that is modified bit by bit.

Most native soils have a fairly consistent soil pH. Only when you start gardening does the pH start to change. Adding wood ashes to your garden raises the pH. Using excess fertilizer can lower the pH. Watering can affect the pH, but that would depend on the water's pH, which can be determined by calling your municipal water source or testing your well.

Adding limestone year after year, because

"grandpa always did it" will change the pH. Years ago, it's possible that some of the prairie soils were acidic and needed limestone. Not today.

Once you have a soil test in hand, you can determine if the soil pH needs to change.

If the pH is between 5.5 and 7.0, there's really no need to do much. Most of our garden plants will do just fine in that range.

On the other hand, if the pH is less than 5.5, you should consider adding garden limestone to the soil. The rate is approximately 150 pounds per 1,000 square feet. The amount seems unwieldy, but it's relatively inexpensive. If you have only a few areas that need adjusting, buy smaller bags.

The finer the limestone, the faster it reacts.

If the pH needs lowering one pH point (for example, 6.5 to 5.5), add approximately 15 to 20 pounds of sulfur. Here, the quantity isn't much. Make sure you use elemental or garden sulfur. Dusting sulfur is a fungicide and should NOT be used.

Some of the garden fertilizers will also acidify the soil. Ammonium sulfate, iron sulfate and aluminum sulfate will do the trick over time. Word of warning: aluminum sulfate may damage some plants and should probably only be used around hydrangeas to turn the flowers blue.

Apply the limestone or sulfur in the early fall, spreading evenly over the area. Fall rains and winter snows should start changing the pH by next spring.

Wait a couple of years and test the soil again. You can test the soil again to see the effects of your efforts.

Remember, the soil's buffering action may resist further changes.

On top of that, remember that pH is based on multiples of 10. In other words, it took 150 pounds to make the soil more alkaline. It won't take 300 pounds to move it another point, but 1,500 pounds per 1000 square feet.

All you can say about that is "Wow." ■

"If the pH is between 5.5 and 7.0, there's really no need to do much."

David Robson is an Extension Educator, Horticulture, at the Springfield Extension Center, University of Illinois Extension, P.O. Box 8199, Springfield, IL 62791. Telephone: 217-782-6515. E-mail: drobson@uiuc.edu.



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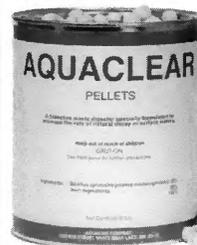
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Lessons From a Home Energy Makeover

First you have to find the air leaks in your home

Last month I told you we'd be learning from the Arkansas electric co-ops home energy makeover contest. The winners were Carroll and Sue Lutens in Donaldson, Ark. The Lutens, who are members of South Central Arkansas Electric Cooperative, were chosen from nearly 1,000 applicants to receive an energy efficiency makeover of their home. It seems to be a perfect choice — a perfect family and a perfect house for the intended purpose. Bret Curry, the Residential Energy Marketing Manager for the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas, had these words to say about the family.

"Carroll and Sue Lutens are so excited to have won this makeover," Curry said. "And they are so deserving. They are retired and living on a fixed income in a home that, like many others in our state, has serious energy problems. With this makeover, they can save money on their electric bills while having a far more comfortable home."

As deserving as the Lutens are, there are many other families in need, too. I have already told Bret thanks for not having me on the committee that selected the home. But even though only one home could be chosen, the project is designed to have a far broader impact. Through the makeover, the cooperatives plan to not

only make one house more energy efficient, but to also teach all of the cooperative members how to improve their own homes. That is why I think it is the perfect house. This house is much like thousands of other houses. It has energy problems, but most can be fixed fairly easily by buying some materials and using a lot of elbow grease.

To determine what energy improvements were needed, we first tested the house using a blower door test and infrared scanner. The blower door

test is used to simulate the house air infiltration as it would be if the wind was blowing about 20 mph on all exterior surfaces of the house at one time, which we know never happens. The fan in the door is simply trying to remove all of the air out of the house. The instruments on the door measure the amount of air going out of the house, which means that the same amount of air is coming into the house. As you may have read in this column, that process is often called house breathing. We call it air infiltration or better yet, LEAKS.

Using a computer program, we then calculated the natural air changes per hour (nach/hr).

This more accurately reflects the true air infiltration of the house. The Lutens' house had a rate of 1.8 nach/hr of air infiltration. For the purpose of teaching, let's round it off to 2 nach/hr. This means that all the air in this house changes twice every hour or once every 30 minutes. Are you beginning to understand why the Lutens could not afford to adequately cool or heat their home? And so many others across our state have similar situations.

With the blower door test and the infrared scanner, we were able to determine where the air leaks were and working quickly, began to seal those leaks. Once the sealing is completed, using lots of foam and caulk, additional insulation will be installed, along with other improvements. Next month, we will talk in depth about those improvements so that you, too, can learn and get some tips that will help give your house an energy efficiency makeover ... even if it's just one improvement at a time. ■

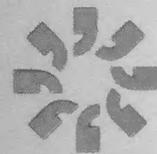


"With the blower door test and the infrared scanner, we were able to determine where the air leaks were and working quickly, began to seal those leaks."

Doug Rye, the "Doctor of Energy Efficiency—the King of Caulk and Talk" can be heard on several different Illinois radio stations. Or you can go to his Web site at www.dougyrye.com, e-mail him at info@philliprye.com, or call 501-653-7931. You can also sign up for a free newsletter and order his "how to" videotapes.



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Popeye's Adventures in Little Egypt

Chester's community of fans celebrate an American icon Sept. 11-13.

by Jen Danzinger

A cartoon legend has his origin in a small southern Illinois city. Cartoonist Elzie Crisler Segar was born in Chester in 1894. His King Features comic strip, "Thimble Theater," began in 1919.

Segar based several of his characters on members of the community. Olive Oyl was modeled after store owner Dora Paskel. Opera house owner and former employer of Segar, William "Windy Bill" Schuchert was the inspiration for hamburger-munching Wimpy. Segar patterned Popeye,

the show-stealing sailor who debuted in 1929 and went on to have his own series of comics and Fleischer Studios animated shorts, after Chester's own Frank Fiegle.

The community of Chester is proud of its Popeye past and continues to celebrate with an eye toward its future.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of Chester's Popeye Picnic. The three-day festival's theme, "Popeye's Adventures in Little Egypt," refers to both a previous

animated Popeye short, "Egypt Us," and southern Illinois' nickname for its geographic similarity to Egypt's Nile delta.

The picnic has been a community-building experience. According to Debbie Brooks, Popeye Picnic committee chairperson, "The Popeye Picnic is the culmination of the efforts of not only the committee, but the entire town. Businesses, organizations, and individuals come together to support the picnic in many ways. It really takes everyone's contribution to make it a success."

The annual festival is just one part of the overall long-term tourism goals of the city. In 1977 the Xi Upsilon Chapter of Beta Sigma Phi built a bronze statue of Popeye in the Elzie C. Segar Memorial Park. The city of Chester plans to open a new visitor center near the original statue. The picnic committee, with the support of the community, is developing a Popeye & Friends Character Trail with additional statues placed to create a walking tour through town. Current statues include Olive Oyl, Wimpy, and Bluto. This year a new statue of Castor Oyl will be unveiled. More statues will be added to the trail through 2043.

Chester's ties to Popeye have had a positive economic effect. Local businesses have capitalized on the connection to Popeye, and cartoon murals have been painted on many buildings in the downtown area, offering tourists photo opportunities throughout the year. Spinach Can Collectibles has an impressive museum of memorabilia and a gift shop filled with souvenirs.

According to Popeye Picnic trustee and Egyptian Electric Cooperative member, Cathy Rinne, "Popeye and the picnic have drawn visitors from all over the world to Chester. Our local hotel is booked full for the next year's picnic weekend before the current one is even over. These folks not only come to Chester, but they visit neighboring communities as well, so the economic impact is really regional."

The tourism isn't limited to the weekend of the picnic. Rinne says, "It was once common for visitors to



The Wimpy statue was unveiled as part of the "Popeye & Friends Character Trail" in 2006.

come only for the picnic weekend, but many have expanded their stays well into the week before and the week following the picnic. They have obviously chosen to make Chester their vacation destination and we are grateful to be able to provide them with fun, quality family entertainment."

"The picnic is non-profit, so we rely on donations to meet our financial obligations," says Brooks. "Through the generosity of our supporters, we have been able to expand the events that we offer each year and we have been able to make many of them free of charge."

Visitors to this year's event will enjoy carnival rides, a Popeye-themed parade, fair food, musical entertainment, a film festival and more. There are many free activities for children, including a petting zoo, pony rides, and inflatable bounce houses.

This year's festival highlights include a live-broadcast radio show performed by a cast of players (including Rinne as the Sea Hag).

For those interested in drawing, Cartooning with the Pros will offer participants lessons. This year's professional artists are Hy Eisman, current Popeye comic strip artist, and George Wildman, former Popeye comic book artist. After the lessons, attendees can compete for prizes in a cartooning contest.

"There is really something for everyone at the picnic," says Rinne.

30th Annual Popeye Picnic: Popeye's Adventures in Little Egypt

Chester, Ill.
Sept. 11-13, 2009

For more information, visit
www.popeyepicnic.com.

Recipes From The Heart

Who: Cornerstone Baptist Church of Winchester, IL

Cost: \$10, plus \$2 shipping

Details: hard-backed, comb-bound

Pages of recipes: 91

Send checks to: Debbie Rhoades,
847 Albers Lane, Winchester, IL 62694
or call 217-370-1563.



Buttermilk Pie

- 1-1/3 C. sugar
- 3 T. flour
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 C. melted butter
- 1/2 C. buttermilk
- 2 tsp. vanilla
- 1-1/2 tsp. lemon flavoring
- 1 unbaked pie shell

Mix sugar and flour. Beat eggs. Add eggs and buttermilk to the sugar and flour mixture. Add vanilla, lemon and butter. Mix well. Pour into the pie shell. Bake at 400° for 10 minutes. Turn oven to 350° and bake until done, about 45 minutes.

Pizzagetti

- 1 lb. Italian bulk sausage
- 1 (16-oz.) can stewed tomatoes
- 1/2 tsp. dried basil leaves, crushed
- 1/4 tsp. garlic powder
- 7-oz. uncooked spaghetti noodles
- 1/3 C. sliced pimento stuffed olives
- 1 (12-oz.) pkg. Monterey Jack or Mozzarella cheese
- 1 T. vegetable oil
- 1 (8-oz.) can tomato sauce
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. pepper
- 1 (12-oz.) can Mexican
- 1 (4-oz.) can mushrooms, opt.

Brown sausage over medium heat until cooked, drain. Stir in tomatoes, tomato sauce, basil, salt, garlic powder and pepper. Heat to boiling; reduce heat and simmer uncovered for 10 minutes. Cook spaghetti. Stir in corn with liquid, olives and drained mushrooms into the sausage mixture. Simmer uncovered for 5 minutes. Stir in cheese until melted. Serve over spaghetti noodles.

Fresh Guacamole

- 4 ripe avocados
- 1/2 red onion
- 2 plum tomatoes
- 1 jalapeno pepper
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 T. fresh cilantro
- 3 T. fresh lime juice
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. pepper

Peel and seed avocados. Place in a medium bowl. Squeeze 1 T. lime juice over avocados immediately to prevent browning. Mash avocados with a fork until just slightly chunky. Place remaining ingredients in a food processor, including remaining lime juice. Chunk large ingredients for better blending. Pulse until finely diced. Pour mixture into avocados and stir well. Serve with tortilla chips.

Fresh Guacamole

Coconut Kisses

- 1 med. peeled potato
- 1 lb. powdered sugar
- 1 C. shredded coconut
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 (1-oz.) square unsweetened chocolate, opt.

Boil potato, drain and mash. Let cool. Add powdered sugar gradually, then coconut and vanilla. Mix well. Drop by teaspoon on greased cookie sheets. Bake at 325° for 15 minutes. Melt chocolate in microwave. Spoon over top of candy.

Visit www.icl.coop to see
an archive of past
Illinois Country Living recipes.

Mothers and Others

Who: St. Luke Evangelical Lutheran Church Women's Organization of Campbell Hill, IL

Cost: \$10, plus \$3.50 shipping

Details: hard-backed, three-ring-bound

Pages of recipes: 149

Send checks to: Kathy Rathert,
951 Loy School Road, Ava, IL 62907,
or call 618-426-3530.

One Point Salad

- 3 C. broccoli, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 3 C. cauliflower, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1 C. celery, chopped small
- 1/2 C. black olives (about 18)
- 1 (16-oz.) can mushrooms, drained
- 1 (18-oz.) can sliced water chestnuts, drained
- 3/4 C. fat free Italian dressing

Combine all ingredients into a large bowl. Stir to coat all vegetables with dressing. Chill for several hours before serving.

One Point Salad

Cabbage Rolls

- 1-1/2 lb. hamburger, fried and crumbled
- 1 onion
- 2 eggs
- 3/4 C. rice
- Steamed cabbage leaves
- 2 sm. cans tomato sauce
- 3-1/2 tomato sauce cans of water
- 1 T. sugar
- 1 can sauerkraut
- Bacon strips

Mix hamburger, onion, eggs and rice and roll mixture in steamed cabbage leaves. Place sauerkraut in a pan. Lay cabbage rolls on top of the sauerkraut. Mix tomato sauce with water and sugar and pour over rolls. Place bacon on top and cook 1-1/2 to 2 hours at 350°.

Cherry Dump Cake

- 1 can cherry pie filling
- 1 box yellow cake mix
- 1 can crushed pineapple
- Butter
- Nuts, chopped, opt.

Spread pie filling on the bottom of a non-greased 9x13-inch pan. Spread one large can of crushed pineapple on top of the pie filling. Spread the cake mix over the pineapple. Dot with butter and sprinkle with nuts. Bake at 350° for 45 minutes.

Watergate Salad

- 1 (20-oz.) can crushed pineapple
- 1 (3-1/2-oz.) pkg. pistachio instant pudding
- 1 (8-oz.) ctn. Cool Whip
- 1-1/2 C. miniature marshmallows
- 1/2 C. chopped nuts
- 1/2 C. chopped maraschino cherries

In a large bowl, mix pineapple with juice and pudding mix. Fold in Cool Whip, marshmallows, nuts and cherries. Stir until mixed well. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

Photos by Catrina McCulley Wagner

Electric Co-op Leaders Speak Frankly with Congress

Co-op members continue fight for affordable and flexible climate change legislation

In early May, roughly 3,000 electric cooperative grassroots leaders from across the country converged on Capitol Hill with a critical message for Congress — in addressing climate change legislation Congress must make sure electricity remains reliable and affordable. Our economy depends on it and so do co-op members.

In face-to-face meetings with lawmakers, the co-op representatives stressed that if climate change legislation isn't enacted, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) would take matters into its own hands. Many on both sides of the political spectrum agree that could well be a disaster. In mid-April the agency announced it was ready to use the federal Clean Air Act to curtail the release of carbon dioxide and five other greenhouse gases blamed for contributing to climate change. Believing the Clean Air Act "not well-suited" to addressing global climate change, electric co-ops are urging Congress to act on a simple, affordable, flexible and effective solution.

In late June the U.S. House of Representatives narrowly passed the 1,500-page American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009 bill (H.R. 2454) that some are calling a cap-and-trade plan and others are calling a cap-and-tax plan. Essentially it is designed to curb carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions. It would set a specific limit on such emissions from sources like power plants, factories, and refineries, requiring those sources to account for all greenhouse gases with allowances. An ever-shrinking number of allowances would be traded between companies. Unfortunately, under some parts of this plan the price to generate electricity from fossil fuels — a price directly tied to electric bills — could potentially fall into the hands of Wall Street speculators.

Allowances would be auctioned off at undetermined prices, leading to huge cost burdens for any source of carbon dioxide emissions. In the case of power plants, those costs would ultimately be passed on to consumers using the power.

Scott Ramsey, President and General Manager of Southern Illinois Power Cooperative (SIPC, www.sipower.org), said, "When SIPC recently ran the numbers for our emissions we estimated an impact to



The 1,500-page American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009 passed in the House of Representatives on a 219-212 vote in late June. Now the bill moves to the Senate where it may move to a floor debate in August. There is still time to for co-op members to let their voices be heard. Go to www.ourenergy.coop to send a message to Congress.

the homeowners in our region of \$240-\$1,300 per year per home. If the bill moves forward as is through the Senate and is signed by the President, it will leave open the potential for market speculation creating more cost uncertainty. If carbon dioxide emission allowances jump in price, utility bills could jump to several thousand dollars per year for each homeowner."

The Obama Administration pointed to such a system as a new, substantial source of revenue for the federal government — effectively muddying the initial environmental argument for regulating carbon dioxide. Such a backdoor tax increase would force electric cooperatives to essentially become tax collectors for the federal government, and allow Wall Street investors to set allowance prices and determine how much you pay for electricity.

Some would argue that national energy and climate change policy should focus on reducing emissions, not on "revenue enhancement" for federal government. Money generated, through a cap-and-trade system or other means, should be used wisely and devoted to developing related technology or returned to those who foot the bill.

"You can either side with Wall Street and the

speculators, or you can side with Main Street, your constituents and your electric cooperative,” said Glenn English, CEO of the Arlington, Va.-based National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the service arm of the nation’s 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric co-ops.

English said progress was made in making the House bill more affordable and fair to electric co-op members. “NRECA thanks all the Members of the House who have worked to address concerns expressed by electric cooperatives throughout this process. We have much work ahead of us and must continue to improve this bill before it is enacted into law,” he said.

Electric co-op leaders continue to have significant concerns about the bill. English said, “We look forward to working with the members of the U.S. Senate to make significant improvements to this bill to make it even more workable, affordable, and fair.”

Specifically, electric co-ops and NRECA will work to:

- Make sure the emissions caps, particularly in the first decade of the program, are consistent with the availability of technology - the caps in the current bill remain too stringent.
- Ensure that emission allowances for the utility sector are distributed based on emissions to minimize the additional costs to the consumers who will be most affected by the reductions required by the bill.
- Improve the cost-containment provisions of the legislation to avoid price shocks.
- Make other improvements to the bill that will make it more workable, affordable, and flexible.

English said, “NRECA is committed to working with Congress to develop climate change and energy legislation that achieves the nation’s energy and environmental objectives in the most affordable manner possible.”

What’s next? The debate moves to the Senate where Democratic Senate leaders hope to move the bill through as quickly as possible. Co-op leaders are asking co-op members to remain engaged and to contact their representatives in Congress.

Senate Chairwoman Barbara Boxer of California expects to mark up a bill in early August. The real debate will occur after that markup and on the Senate floor. It is unlikely the House bill

can pass the Senate, but a climate bill can pass the Senate, according to NRECA. Ideally any legislation that passes would have a large research and development investments component to develop the technology needed, and timelines that are flexible enough to not damage the economy.

Co-op member e-mails and communications need to keep flowing to both the House and the Senate. The House needs them because if the bill moves through the Senate, it will go to conference and then a conference report will have to be voted on in the House and the Senate.

English credits his staff, all the co-op leaders and the 370,000 co-op member-consumers from across the country that sent the affordability message to Congress for helping convince the House leadership to make some adjustments to the legislation. English, a former congressman from Oklahoma, says while messages from electric co-op leaders carry a lot of weight on Capitol Hill, nothing compares to the voices of co-op members themselves: the 42 million hard-working citizens that will ultimately foot electric bills impacted by federal climate change policy.

If you are concerned about affordable climate change legislation, become a part of the conversation today, and join the hundreds of thousands of electric co-op members already involved in the Our Energy, Our Future™ grass-roots campaign. Please visit www.ourenergy.coop today.



A cap and trade system that addresses carbon dioxide emissions from fossil fuels such as coal, gasoline, diesel, natural gas and propane would create a new energy “tax” for consumers and our economy. Depending on the assumptions and factors used in the calculation the cost to households could be between \$175 and \$3,100 annually. Because the carbon allowances for carbon dioxide emissions would be traded on Wall Street in a cap and trade system the cost predictions are speculative too.

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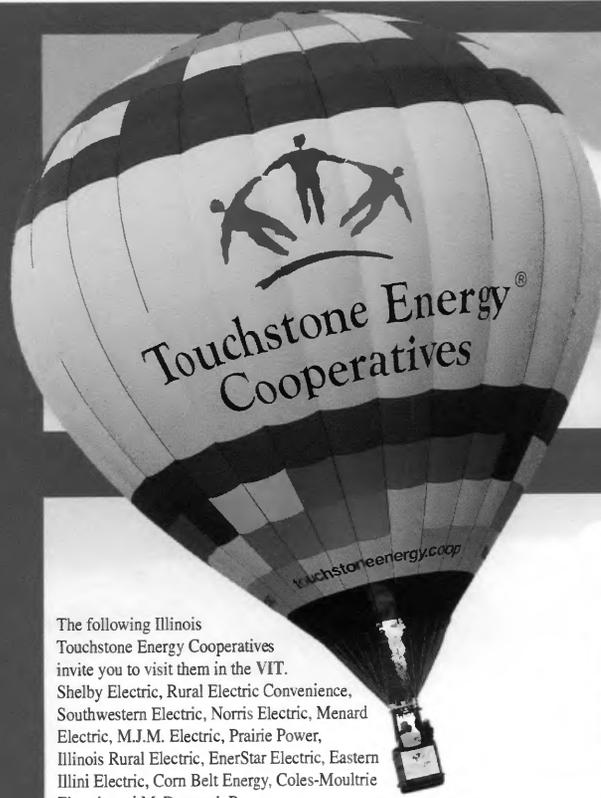
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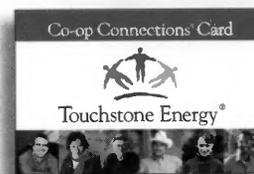


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- 4) Mail to: Illinois Marketplace, P.O. Box 3787, Springfield, IL 62708, by deadline.

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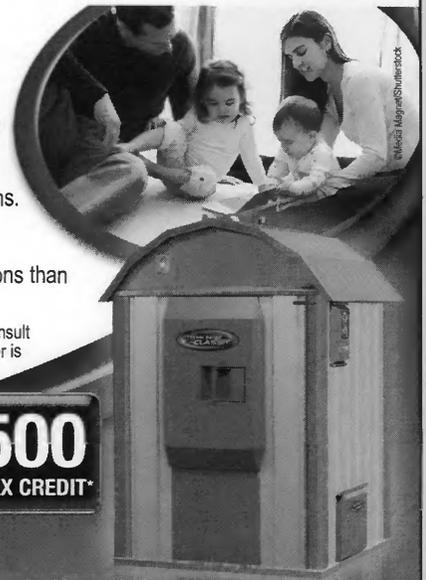
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2, 9, 16, 23 and 30, Village Market in Downs. 4 – 6 p.m. Purchase locally grown produce, fresh baked goods, honey, plants and flowers. Shop crafts and handmade items. Master gardeners will be on hand to answer your questions. 309-378-4294 or marketmaster610@gmail.com.

5, A Hometown Celebration in Ste. Marie. Buffet lunch, old-fashioned games, horse-drawn wagon rides, non-motorized parade featuring decorated bikes, wagons, golf carts and just plain fun. 618-455-3227 or www.saintemarie-foundation.org.

4, Park-N-Cruise on the downtown square in Macomb. 6 – 9 p.m. Enjoy vintage, antique and classic cars driven in from miles around. Take pleasure in live entertainment, shopping and dining on the square. 217-837-4855.

5, Fall Music on Main in Galena. Outdoor dancing at the Green Street Plaza in downtown Galena. Fun, live music, dancing and food. 815-777-9050.

5, Farm and Barn Harvest Fest in Mokena. Celebrate harvest time at historic Yunker Farm. Quilt and craft show, food, entertainment and contests. House and Garden Trolley Tour Courtesy of the Mokena Historical Society. Fresh produce, plants and flowers, antique tractors and toys. Horseback riding and grooming demonstrations. Sheep shearing, goat milking, spinning, soap making and homemade ice cream. 708-390-2401.

5, 12, 19, 26, Concerts in the Vineyard- Fall Music Series at Mackinaw Valley Vineyard in Mackinaw. Live music concerts performed Saturdays from 7 – 10:45 p.m. featuring local classic rock music groups. Bring your own folding chair or blanket for lawn seating or call to reserve a spot on the deck for a small fee. Pizza and cheese and crackers available or bring your own picnic. Admission is \$5 per person. www.mackinawvalleyvineyard.com or 309-359-WINE.

5-6, Echoes of the Past in Apple River. Antique farm equipment demonstration including draft horses, mules and small engines Oak Hill Farm near Apple River. Wagon and carriage rides. Donations accepted. 815-594-2348.

5-6, Shawnee Hills Wine Festival in Cobden. Sample the wines of the 12 wineries on the Shawnee Hills Wine Trail. Enjoy music, arts, crafts and food, as well as vineyard and winery tours. 618-893-4898.

5-6, Coal Creek Festival in Pana. Take part in this one-of-a-kind event held in a log-cabin village setting with era demonstrations, crafts, food and entertainment. 217-562-3222.

5-7, Casey Popcorn Festival in Casey. Kids shows, live bands, carnival, arts and crafts, car show, free popcorn and more! 217-232-2676 or www.popcornfestival.net.

5-7, Jersey County Victorian Festival in Jerseyville. Enjoy this living history event, featuring a large Civil War Reenactment, Bluegrass music, tours of the Fulkerson Mansion, working artisans, crafts, antiques, collectibles and a variety of great food. Working steam engines, tractors and crawler tractors will plow, thresh and power sawmill. A Duel of Honor, stagecoach robbery and Gettysburg Address will take place daily. Admission is \$8 per adult, children ages 7 to 12 are \$2; children age 6 and younger are free. 618-498-5590.

6, Ice Cream Social and Craft Fair at Apple Canyon Lake near Galena. 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Solar observing and drumming circle. Booths for crafters available. www.applecanyonlake.org or 815-492-2238.

6, Grape Stomp and Harvest Festival at Mackinaw Valley Vineyard in Mackinaw. Good fun but not “clean” fun as guests compete in two big tubs with “Lucy” style stomping! Judging is done by audience applause and children are welcome to compete as well as adults at this family-friendly event. Live musical entertainment to stomp by and wine tasting is available throughout the day. Admission is \$5 for adults and free for children 12 and younger. www.mackinawvalleyvineyard.com or 309-359-WINE.

10-13, Singles in Agriculture National Fall Festival at Carlyle Lake in Carlyle. Tours, campfire, water sports, nature hikes, dance and more. 815-288-5634 or www.singlesinag.org.

11, Boat Parade in Grafton. Come pay tribute to our soldiers and remember our fellow Americans that died on this day. The parade will begin at Grafton Harbor at 6 p.m. and proceed down the Mississippi River. 618-786-7678 or 217-562-3222.



11-13, 30th annual Popeye Picnic in Chester, Ill. Celebrate Popeye's 80th Birthday with a parade, live music, carnival rides, statue unveiling, Bluto look-a-like contest, film festival and more. For a complete schedule of events, go to <http://www.popeyepicnic.com/>.

11-13, Ladies Getaway Weekend at the Ramada in Galena. 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. The shops of downtown Galena will dedicate a full weekend to the celebration of women. Registration includes commemorative tote bag with keepsake ornament and a chance to win a \$300 Galena shopping spree. Enjoy an all women's art show, and "Miracles of the Mind," a mind-boggling interactive show by hypnotist Brian Imbus at 8 p.m. each night; \$20. Sunday brunch spectacular with Hat Lady Jill Rokusek. Great food and fun-filled humor. Admission, \$17. Register on-line. www.galenachamber.com or 815-777-9050.

13, Ladies, Pamper Yourself Day at Eccentrics in Stockton. 1 – 5 p.m. Spend an afternoon pampering yourself. Enjoy appetizers, desserts, locally grown wines, mini-manicures and pedicures. Pick out your new fall handbag, accessories, and home decor. 815-947-3701, eccentrics@live.com.

17-18, Pike County Color Drive in Pike County. 21st year. Every fall, the Pike County Color Drive provides beauty of rural Pike County bathed in the splendor of autumn. 217-285-2971 or www.pikecolordrive.com

18, Smiles Day 2009 at Central Park Square in Rushville. 10:30 a.m. Enjoy a grand parade, music, food, and more. 217-322-6602.

18-19, Schuetzenfest 2009 at the Effingham County Fairgrounds in Altamont. Immerse yourself in the culture and heritage of the German pioneers who first settled this region. 618-483-5532.

18-19, The Third Annual Lewistown Fall Festival in Downtown Lewistown. Events include a Paint the Town, Bogart Jones, Friday 8 p.m. – 12 a.m.; Saturday, Phat Kitty 8 p.m. – 12 a.m.; The VFW will host an all you can eat breakfast from 7 – 11 a.m. for \$5. Beer garden, Cruise-in from 5 – 8 p.m., Saturday a 50/50 raffle at 9 p.m., fun, food and more. 309-547-4306.

18-20, Tower Hill Community Fall Festival. The 23rd annual festival at the Tower Hill Village Park in Tower Hill, Ill. will feature a coronation, talent show and Karaoke on Friday; car show, motorcycle show, tractor drive, horseshoe tournament, auction, garden tractor pull parade and more on Saturday; followed by church services and a demolition derby on Sunday.

18-20, Marshall Autumn Fest at the Courthouse Square in Marshall. Enjoy a weekend on the Clark County Courthouse Lawn filled with a variety of events, food and music for the whole family to enjoy! 217-826-8087.

18-20, The Ninth Annual Clark County Antique Power Show at the Clark County Fairgrounds in Marshall. Horse plowing, horse and mule pull, tractor pull, garden tractor pull, kids games, homemade ice cream a flea market, vendors and more. 217-251-6089 or 217-889-3716.

19, The Ninth Annual Shrimp Festival on Main Street in Golconda. A family event. Featuring locally grown prawn, cooked in many ways by several vendors who also serve traditional foods. Music all day by several bands. Carriage rides, face painting, little Miss and Jr. Miss contests, and beer tent. Farmers Market begins at 8:00 a.m. The festival starts at 10:00 a.m. For more information call 618-683-6246 or on line at mainstreetgolconda.org.

19-20, The 39th Annual Abraham Lincoln National Rail-splitting Contest and Crafts Festival at the Logan County Fairgrounds in Lincoln. This fun and educational event has something for all ages – rail splitting, corn shucking, tomahawk throwing, pioneer village, antique cars and tractors, historical displays, a quilt show, crafters, a flea market, kids games, food vendors, Lincoln presentations and much more! 217-732-4795.

19-20, Vintage Illinois at Starved Rock Wine Festival in Utica. Saturday 11 a.m. – 6 p.m. and Sunday 12 p.m. – 5 p.m. The largest Illinois Wine Festival where you can choose to taste and purchase wines from 30 different Illinois wineries and sit back and enjoy the live musical entertainment at Matthiessen State Park. www.VintageIllinois.com.

26, Wine and Music on the Lawn at the Dr. Charles M. Wright House in Altamont. 11 a.m. – 6 p.m. Purchase a commemorative wine glass and sample wines from Illinois Wineries. The 1889 house is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and will be open for tours. \$5 for adults and \$1 for students. 618-483-6397 or www.wrightmansion.org.



18-20, The 48th Annual Working Farm Show in Atkinson. Live demonstrations of combining beans, picking corn with pull-type equipment from the 50s, threshing oats, cutting corn with a corn binder, shelling corn, running a sawmill and more. 309-944-4982 or www.ae-ta.com.

To be considered for inclusion, please submit events in the format used above. Preference is given to events sponsored by non-profit entities. Submitting an event is not a guarantee of publication. Photos are welcome, but will not be returned unless a self-addressed and stamped envelope is provided. Events are subject to change, so please contact the event sponsor for confirmation.

Deadline: August 15 for November Events. **Mail to:** Illinois Datebook, PO Box 3787, Springfield, IL 62708. **E-mail to:** cwagner@aiec.coop

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