

Norris Electric *News*

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

Area youth visit D.C.



Pictured from left: Emily Moore, Congressman John Shimkus, Brianna King and Jarrett Jones.

Jarrett Jones of Effingham, Brianna King of Hutsonville and Emily Moore of Lawrenceville represented Norris Electric Cooperative in Washington, D.C. during the annual “Youth to Washington” Tour, June 9-16. This event, sponsored by the electric and telephone cooperatives of Illinois since the late 1950s, is an introduction to our democratic form of government and cooperatives for rural youth.

The students met with Congressman John Shimkus, U.S. Senator Dick Durbin, and were among 69 rural Illinois youth leaders selected for the trip. The Illinois students joined more than 1,730 young leaders from across the country, a record high for the “Youth to Washington” Tour. In addition to the Capitol, they also visited Arlington National Cemetery, the Washington National Cathedral, several Smithsonian Museums, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, the World War II Memorial, memorials to Presidents Lincoln, Jefferson, Washington and Roosevelt, the National Archives, the Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia, the Newseum, and several other historical sites.

Sophomores and juniors in high schools that are within the service area of Norris Electric Cooperative are eligible to participate in the annual program. To learn more about the “Youth to Washington” Tour go to www.youthtour.coop or www.facebook.com/ILYouthtoWashington.



Norris Electric donates to Lawrence County



Norris Electric presented the Lawrence County CEO Board with \$1000 matching donation to the \$1000 that was received for the year. Tim Bohnhoff, of Norris Electric, presents a check to Lawrence County CEO along with the Board of Directors on Tuesday, June 27, 2017.

Electricity theft: Not worth the risk

By Christine Smith

Every year, electric cooperatives across the country cope with thieves—folks who deliberately tamper with their electric meter to steal power. Not only is this practice extremely dangerous, it's a serious crime that ends in hefty fines and jail time.

In 2016, Norris Electric Cooperative investigated several cases of meter theft, an increase from the year before. These involved cases in which consumers interfered with the operation of a meter or jumped power to elsewhere to lower or avoid paying electric bills. "We've seen people do some dangerous things—using knives, forks, magnets, jumper cables, and any number of other objects to get around paying for the power they use," explains Tamara Phillips, general manager for Norris Electric Cooperative. "However, not only are these persons stealing from their

fellow co-op members, they're also risking their lives and those of our workers."

According to the Business Technologies Strategies unit, a division of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, power surging through a compromised meter can cause an electrical catastrophe. A short circuit could produce an arc flash bright enough to cause blindness and powerful enough to launch fragments of shrapnel-like, red-hot debris. Serious injury or death from electrocution, explosion, or fire often results from meter tampering. Only trained Norris Electric personnel wearing protective clothing should work on meters.

"Anytime you get into a meter base, you run a risk," comments Phillips. "With an arc flash, somebody could get killed or seriously maimed."

Electricity theft is not a victimless

crime. Norris Electric loses revenue and expends resources to investigate tampering. These costs are then passed on to the entire membership. Global estimates vary, but the Northeast Group, LLC, recently reported \$96 billion worth of electricity is stolen from utilities annually.

Since everyone pays for lost power, please let us know if you suspect meter tampering. Call Norris Electric at 877-783-8765 to report possible theft of service. All information can be given anonymously.

Christine Smith writes on safety issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

Source: The Northeast Group, LLC, NRECA Business Technologies Strategies

Farm Progress Show is back in Illinois



2017 means the nation's largest outdoor farm event is back in Illinois. Once again, it will be held at Progress City in Decatur, Ill. This is where people from all over gather to meet, observe and learn. This is where major manufacturers choose to roll out their newest offerings and agricultural families take a break from their daily routine to immerse themselves in the wider ag community. This is where tradition and business have come together for the past 64 years and where we celebrate agriculture.

Join fellow cooperative members and others from the ag community by visiting the Illinois Touchstone Energy Cooperative's exhibit in the Varied Industries Tent at this year's Farm Progress Show, August 29-31, 2017. You can learn more about

cooperatives and how they help the communities they serve.

Stop by and charge up your phone at our charging station and while you are there, play one of our games for a chance at a prize. See how smart you are by answering a question off the spinning wheel. Cooperative members who present their Co-op Connections card will receive a special gift. If you don't have a Connections Card, please contact the office.

The Varied Industries Tent runs the length of Fifth and Fourth Progress Street and is between West Progress and Central Avenue. The Illinois Touchstone Energy Cooperative's exhibit will be on the end cap just inside the entrance across from the food court.

Make sure you check out the

Live Line Demo, sponsored by Wabash Valley Power Association, Inc., located just outside the Varied Industries Tent on Junior Lot #549. This electrical safety demo features 7,200 volts of electricity. It is great for the whole family and an experience you won't want to miss. To learn more, check out their website at www.liveline demo.com.

Weather permitting, the Touchstone Energy Hot Air Balloon will be flying the American flag each morning of the show and also plans to fly late afternoon on the first two days of the show.

Check out Prairie Farmer Magazine or visit www.farmprogressshow.com to learn more about the 2017 Farm Progress Show.

Hope to see you there!



Michelle Smithenry interns with Norris Electric

Norris Electric was excited to have an intern, Michelle Smithenry, work with us this summer. Michelle is the daughter of Bruce and Janet Smithenry of Newton. Michelle graduated Newton Community High in 2014 and graduated from Lake Land College in 2016 with an associate degree in pre-engineering. She is currently enrolled at Southern Illinois University Carbondale pursuing a degree in mechanical engineering.

Our operations department

You've met our linemen, forestry and billing departments, now we would like you to meet our operations department.

The operations department is the central hub of the Co-op. Within that hub, daily lineman duties are dispersed, outages are restored, appointments are made and day to day occurrences are handled.

But most importantly, when storms arrive, so does the operations department. When the Linemen are working around the clock to restore your power, so is the operations department. They are the first ones to arrive and the last ones to leave. Their sole purpose revolves around keeping our members' lights on and keeping our crews safe. Hats off to our operations department!



Annette Stanciu



Jamie Mendenhall

Payment Methods

Norris Electric has several different payment options for our Members. Check out the list below and select the best one to suit your lifestyle.

Automatic Draft

Each month Norris Electric will automatically draft your checking or savings account the day before it is due. You will never have to worry about your bill again! Call the office for this convenient option.

Bank Online

This option is set up by your bank. An electronic payment will be transferred to Norris Electric from your bank.

Over the Phone

You may choose to call the office during working hours and pay over the phone using a credit card, debit card or e-check.



Online Payments

You can make payments on our website. Call the office to get a password.

Local Banks

There are several local banks that will accept payments as long as it is not past due. Call the office to see if your bank participates in this service.

Norris Electric Office

Members are able to pay at the office during the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday. There is also a secure drop box at the door where you can leave payment if the office is closed.

Mail

Of course, there is always the option of mailing your payment.