

The SOUTHEASTERN Light

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative Eldorado, Illinois

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

President's Comments



Dustin Tripp
President/CEO

Since 1964, October has been designated as National Co-op Month, providing cooperatives with an opportunity to explain the cooperative difference to their members. In this month's article, I would like to explain some of the cooperative differences and how it benefits all of us as cooperative members.

As the electric utility industry continues to evolve and face continual change, we can all be proud that we are part of the electric cooperative program. Electric cooperatives have a very unique business model that provides many benefits for its members and has proven the test of time for over 79 years. Your electric cooperative is a not-for-profit, member-owned business and exists for the sole reason of serving members. Your electric cooperative sets the rates just high enough to cover the cost of doing business unlike investor-owned utilities that strive to maximize profits for investors or shareholders. Any money that is collected by the cooperative above the cost of operations is allocated back to you as capital credits. This allocation becomes your equity ownership in the cooperative, and when the financial condition of the cooperative permits, the capital credits are returned to you in the form of cash. Over the past seven years, your cooperative has paid back over \$13 million in capital credits as cash to members.

Electric cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by the members who actively participate in electing representatives, setting bylaws and making decisions. The members of a cooperative have equal voting rights – one member, one vote. Each customer of the cooperative is a member and owner of the business with

an equal say as every other member, unlike investor-owned utilities where the amount of governance is determined by the number of shares held in the company.

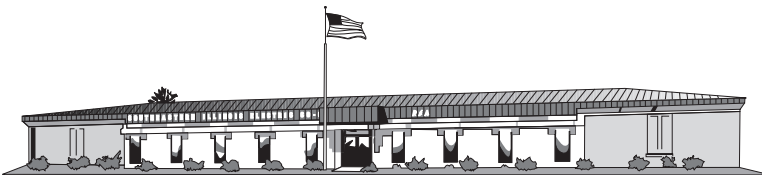
Electric cooperatives and their employees support the local community and local economy in various ways. Commitment to community is a founding principle of electric cooperatives, and as a local business, your cooperative is staffed by your friends and neighbors that work hard for you. Whether the employees are working through storms to restore your power, volunteering their time to help install lighting on local ball fields or finding ways to help provide grants for local schools, your cooperative employees are finding ways to make a difference in your community.

At SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative, not only is the delivery of energy provided by your local cooperative, the generation and transmission of your energy is also provided by a local cooperative. Southern Illinois Power Cooperative (SIPC) located at the Lake of Egypt is a locally owned, locally operated generation and transmission cooperative that has been providing service to you for five decades. SIPC provides a significant boost to our local economy by providing local jobs at the plant and various other associate organizations. SIPC also consumes a local fuel supply that supports our local economy and provides additional jobs right here in Southern Illinois.

In summary, from start to finish your

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READERSHIP PRIZE WINNER:
Franklin Knight, Broughton, IL



Electrocution hazards on the farm

Rain clouds are moving in quickly, and you want to finish harvesting that last field. Another wagon is ready to dump, and more will be arriving soon. You need to move the portable auger to the next storage bin. To stay on schedule, you decide to move the auger without first lowering the height. Without warning, the auger contacts overhead power lines, and two workers are electrocuted. It was too late to do anything.

This scenario is repeated on dozens of farms throughout the United States each year. Electrocution is quick and deadly, killing an estimated 62 agricultural workers every year.

The tragic aspect is that these deaths could have been prevented. Farm workers can reduce their risks of electrocution by knowing how they, or others on the farm, can unknowingly come in contact with electricity. This publication focuses on electrical hazards posed by overhead power lines, standby generators and general operating procedures of electrical systems at the farm work site.

Electrocution hazards

The most common risk of electrocution comes from overhead power lines. Utility lines typically are not insulated, meaning that the lines are bare. The lines may have been installed without insulation, or the insulation may have been removed by exposure to the elements.

Always treat overhead power lines as if they are bare. Unlike birds that rest on wires unharmed, humans often die when they touch overhead lines because they contact the earth and wire at the same time. This creates a channel for electricity and electrocution can occur.

Overhead power lines

Many types of farm equipment can come in contact with overhead power lines. Tractors with front-end loaders, portable grain augers, fold-up cultivators, and equipment with antennas easily can become an electrical hazard and must be operated with care.



Performance of certain farm tasks also pose electrocution hazards. Always use ladders with caution so that they do not come in contact with overhead power lines. Harvest of tree crops or construction also pose hazards.

Grain bin regulations

Many electrocutions occur near grain bins, and requirements in the National Electrical Safety Code (NESC) address those dangers. The Code requires raised power lines in dangerous locations where tall equipment is used.

According to the NESC, power lines must be at least 18 feet above the highest point on any grain bin with which portable augers or other portable filling equipment are used. The clearance must maintain a specified distance around the bin and sloped to meet the lower line clearance. If you are installing new grain bins, contact a licensed electrician or power company representative to help place electrical service lines. Lines also can be buried to reduce risk of electrocution. Installation costs for overhead and underground power lines can vary; contact local reps.

Determine equipment clearance

If you have overhead power lines, ask local utility company officials to help determine line height in each area of the farm. Never measure line heights yourself! Once you know the height of all power lines, you can

determine the clearance needed for equipment that must travel underneath the line. Try to maintain at least a 10-ft. clearance between the power line and the top of all equipment that must travel under it.

Consider the possibility that some equipment during transport is actually taller than when in use. For example, a large, 16-row planter that folds up would be taller during transport than during field use.

Train seasonal employees

Busy planting and harvest seasons may require temporary employees, persons who may not be aware of potential dangers associated with overhead power lines. Always remind additional workers about overhead power lines. Give them special instructions such as, "Never transport this cultivator through this gate because of the overhead line."

Standby generators

Some farms are equipped with a standby generator to provide emergency power for essential farm operations during local power failures. A key component of your operation's emergency power system is the transfer switch, which removes the farm's electrical system from the power company's utility lines.

The switch prevents electricity generated by a farm operation's emergency power system from entering

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ELECTRIC CO-OPS COMMIT

Co-op Month 2017


10 reasons to support your local cooperative

1. A co-op is not-for-profit. After bills are paid, any remaining funds are either reinvested in the co-op or retained as capital credits and returned to members when it is feasible to do so.
2. Co-ops provide retail opportunities in areas where for-profit entities might not see the value, such as cooperative grocery stores that are now established in rural areas and small towns.
3. Your local electric cooperative is located in the area it serves and supports the community through fundraisers, donations and manpower.
4. In a state that depends so heavily on farming, many organizations that support agriculture are cooperatives, such as insurance providers, grain elevators and lending institutions.
5. The Seven Cooperative Principles, to which all cooperatives must adhere, insure that co-ops are ethical businesses.
6. As a member-owner, cooperatives put your needs first.
7. Cooperation among cooperatives – cooperatives help one another by pooling resources to provide better products and services at a lower price.
8. Co-ops help build local leaders through cooperative leadership.
9. Cooperatives provide stable, good-paying jobs in the community.
10. One member, one vote – each cooperative member has equal voting rights to help guide the cooperative's business.

*Happy Cooperative
Month from*



**SouthEastern Illinois
Electric Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 



President's comments

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electric energy is generated, transmitted and delivered to you by local cooperatives with a very unique business model that benefits all of us as cooperative members. As the utility industry continues to evolve and explore different ways to serve its customers, all of us can be very proud to be member-owners of our electric cooperatives, what we stand for, how we operate and how we truly make a difference in our very own communities.

See you next month and as always, "We'll keep the lights on for you."

Electrocution hazards on the farm

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the power company's utility lines and protects from electrocution those power company workers who service lines during an outage. The switch also protects your generator when power is restored.

Always use the transfer switch whenever your standby generator is in operation. Make sure all workers know the location of the transfer switch.

Avoid injury

Despite operating precautions, equipment can come in contact with electrical lines. It is important to know how to handle these situations.

If your tractor comes in contact with overhead power lines, stay on the tractor. Ask someone to contact

the local utility company immediately to remove the danger. If there's an emergency, such as an electrical fire, and you need to leave the equipment, jump as far away from the equipment as possible. Do not allow any part of your body to touch the equipment and the ground at the same time.

Once you get away from the equipment, never attempt to get back on or even touch the equipment. Many electrocutions occur when the operator dismounts and, realizing nothing has happened, tries to get back on the equipment. The best way to handle emergencies is by prevention. Respect electricity and avoid contact with overhead lines.

POWER OUTAGE

If your power goes off, we offer these suggestions

1. Check the fuses or circuit breakers in your service panels. If you have breakers, make sure they are in the "ON" position.
2. If you have a meter pole, check the main breaker panel just below the meter socket. If the breaker is in the "OFF" position, check all of your wiring from the meter pole to your various buildings. If the wiring appears to be okay, reset the breaker to the "ON" position.
3. If you still do not have power, check with neighbors to see if they have power.
4. To report a power failure or other emergency, please phone 1-877-399-8405. This phone number is monitored around the clock, 365 days per year to accept your outage and emergency calls.
5. Your phone call will be handled by SouthEastern's automated outage reporting system and will be identified automatically through ANI (Automatic Number Identification). An outage record will then be generated

for your location. Please note that the phone number from which you place the call will be the number used to generate the record. If the system fails to recognize your phone number, members having touch-tone phones may simply enter their seven-digit phone number (without area code) in order to report the outage. Members not having touch-tone phones will be asked to leave a message. It is important you leave your name, phone number and location of the outage. Retrieving messages and entering them into the system is time consuming; therefore, please leave only a message that will help in restoration of electric service. Do not remain on the line for an operator because a live operator is not there to respond. In order to keep a current listing of all numbers, it is important that you notify the Cooperative of any changes in your telephone number.

6. Handling outage calls electronically allows you to report power failures very quickly. Once your outage has been reported, it will be dispatched to repair personnel who will restore your outage as soon as possible. Calling back repeatedly will not shorten the length of the outage, but may hinder the efforts of other members who are trying to report outages.

OUTAGE CALLS ONLY 1-877-399-8405

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618-273-2611 or 800-833-2611 • Office hours: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. M-F