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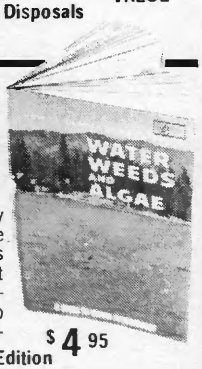

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Lincoln Land Community College

(Continued from page 5)

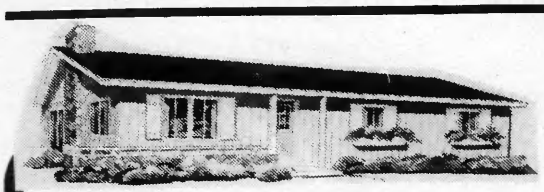
fans, two in each of three buildings, ran continuously. The system had to be shut down manually when the college was closed. Now, the computer shuts down the fans — on an alternating basis — for 15 minutes each hour and controls the amount of outside air that is mixed into the system. The computer, which cost $65,000, is expected to save more than $40,000 a year.

Another facet of the school's energy-saving drive was reflected in the scheduling of a four-day week during the nine-week summer session in 1978. With electrical costs running anywhere from $600 to $1,000 a day, costs were expected to be reduced by about 20 percent. In addition, students and faculty members were able to avoid driving to school a day a week, so fuel costs were effected, too.

LLCC has also undertaken a long-range energy conservation plan with a three-stage priority system. High priority items are those with a high cost-effectiveness. The plan covers everything from installing more efficient parking lot lights to integrating a 3,000-watt wind generator into the school's electrical system.

Under the program, lower-wattage fluorescent tubes have been installed in areas where a slight reduction in light would not be detrimental, and an incandescent track-mounted lighting system in the student gameroom was replaced by a ceiling-suspended fluorescent setup. The school has an experimental solar collector system which is expected eventually to provide a substantial part of the heating and cooling requirements for Mason Hall, one of the buildings on campus.

Using a 13.7-percent annual average rate of increase for fuel costs, the school's architects project a savings of $8-million in the next 20 years, even if only stages I and II are completed. And with the Hot Line School teaching improved techniques and safety to linemen from all over the state, there may be several lives saved, too, thanks to the forward-looking leadership at Lincoln Land Community College.



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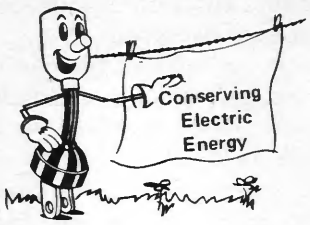
Current Comments by Allen Sisk, Manager



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D. E. Hanes – President
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As I write this column in mid-October the weather is near ideal. The trees are beautiful and the temperature just about right to really enjoy the outdoors. The harvest is moving right along. We hear reports of fair-to-poor yields, but prices that aren't too bad. Many are reporting the ground too dry to work up for wheat. It seems life is a series of "Good news and bad news."

By the time you read this it will be the Thanksgiving season – the elections will be over. It will also be time to prepare for the winter season. This reminds me that your cooperative is still conducting "energy audits." The Member Service Department personnel of your organization will come to your home and discuss with you the many ways you could possibly cut back on the energy fuels you use. It's a free service and an attempt to help you get the best use of your fuel dollars. If you think we could be of help – just drop us a note or give the Member Service Department a call. (38-36Yl)

Work is progressing well on the new Irvington-to-Dix transmission line and we've started construction on the new Dix substation. If the weather holds we should have everything in operation before the extreme winter weather. This system improvement will allow your cooperative to give better service to large sections of southwest Marion County and northwest Jefferson County.

We're also progressing with the rephasing of lines in western Washington County. These projects are taking quite a bit of time and costing many dollars but are needed, if we are to continue to provide the kind of reliable service that you've become accustomed to.

By now you've received the new rate schedules and we appreciate your cooperation in making the switch from the old rates to the new. We're printing summaries of your cooperative's three rate classes on these pages for your information and comparison.

In developing these new rates we prepared a lengthy cost of service study in which we examined all costs by each type of consumer at various levels of power consumption. It was done to assure you that the new rates are fair to everyone. We will be happy to review the cost of service study with anyone who is genuinely interested.

Summary of new rates

Effective with November 1, 1980 payments for kilowatt-hours used beginning October 1, 1980.

Residential Rate: Available for residential, public building and farm consumers that are generally self-billed and where the required transformer capacity does not exceed 50 KVA (single phase) or 150 KVA (three phase).

Single phase Facility Charge		$6.00/month
Three phase Facility Charge		$22.00/month
0-1000 KWH/month	@	5.4¢/KWH
Over 1000 KWH/month	@	3.2¢/KWH

5% State Utility Tax added to facility & energy charges

Small Power Rate: Available for commercial, industrial and public building consumers where the required transformer capacity does not exceed 100 KVA (single phase) or 300 KVA (three phase).

Single phase Facility Charge		$6.00/month
Three phase Facility Charge		$22.00/month
0-1000 KWH/month	@	5.8¢/KWH
Over 1000 KWH/month	@	4.5¢/KWH

5% State Utility Tax added to facility & energy charges

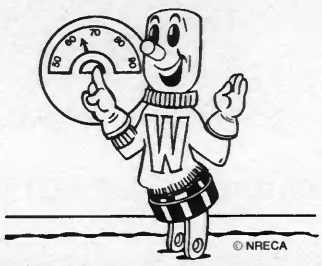
Large Power/Load Factor Rate: Available to commercial, Industrial and public building consumers where the required transformer capacity exceeds 300 KVA.

0-45,000 KWH/month	@	4.0¢/KWH
Next 120,000 KWH/month	@	3.0¢/KWH
Over 165,000 KWH/month	@	2.1¢/KWH
Demand Charges	@	$3.81 per KW
Power Factor Charges Added		
5% State Utility Tax Added		

The above rate summaries are for your information and comparison. The complete rate schedules contain minimum bill and other requirements that might apply to individual consumers. The complete rate charts are available upon request.

Hi-Lites

Edward Hake
Dan Hiestand
Wayne Estes



Look closely for your location number in this issue. If you find it, please notify Tri-County Electric Cooperative's office and we will gladly mail you a four-dollar coupon to apply on your next month's bill.

It's time to think about winter preparations

The summer has zoomed right past us and it's time to get ready for winter. Although many heating systems are relatively maintenance free, others require a yearly routine of getting them ready for winter operation. (28-4B)

Tax Credits

In order to encourage conservation, tax credits are allowed on weatherization measures on your home. A tax credit of 15 percent of the first $2,000 for authorized weatherization measures may be taken on your federal income tax. Internal Revenue Form 5695 must be used to apply for the credit. Insulating of air ducts is an authorized item for tax credit. Heat loss from ducts in unheated crawl spaces or attic spaces can account for 15 percent of the total heat loss.

All Furnaces

Read the owner's manual as it will help in understanding your heating system. All belt-driven models should be checked for belt wear and proper belt tension. Oil the motor if it has cups or plugs over the bearings on each end of the motor. Caution! Do not over-oil. On belt models, oil the shaft bearings of the fan. Vacuum fan blades with care. The frames of furnaces and many other heating systems are grounded, therefore, a faulty vacuum cleaner could cause you to receive an electrical shock. On fossil fuel furnaces, check all flues and chimneys for leaves and bird nests. Check brick and rock chimneys for faulty mortar joints. Make sure ignitable items, such as clothing, cobwebs and paper are not too close to flues. Check all supply and return openings to be sure they are not blocked by furniture, drapes and other items.

Wood Or Coal Burning Equipment

These vary greatly in type and design, but a good inspection of grates, fireboxes and chimneys should turn up possible trouble spots. Acquaint yourself with the danger of creosote deposits, especially in the chimneys.

Individual Room Heaters

Check for foreign matter such as lint, paper and hair. Vacuum and turn them on while you can open the doors and windows. Burning the dust off can be extremely irritating to the nose, eyes and throat. Lint should be blown out of thermostats. A hand hair dryer can be used for this, with the dryer on the cool setting. (45-10A)

Word of Warning

If you attempt to service any heating system, be aware of the possible hazards. If you fail to get the proper flame color, or have doubts about your ability to service your equipment properly, call an experienced serviceman. Your cooperative will be able to advise you of qualified servicemen in your area.

For a free energy audit of your home, call 244-5151.

Your Cooperative will be happy to assist you in locating areas in your home where heating and cooling energy is wasted, and make suggestions for necessary improvements.

Happy Thanksgiving

from the Board and Staff of TRI–COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Electric and telephone cooperatives praised for rural life contributions

Electric and telephone cooperatives were cited as being strong developmental influences in improving rural life by the Senior Vice President of the Cooperative League of the U. S. A. during a banquet officially marking the observance of October as Cooperative Month.

Dr. Allie Felder paid tribute to Illinois' and the nation's rural electric and telephone cooperatives, as well as the more than 400 cooperatives which are active in Illinois.

He said Illinois might very well be called the "cooperative king" as he noted that variety of cooperative organizations made up of hundreds of thousands of Illinoisans.

More than 300 Illinois cooperative leaders attended the banquet, a buffet-style dinner held at the Governor's Mansion in Springfield. The function was the initial observance of Cooperative Month, and was followed during the rest of October by activities on the local level. As in the past, the Cooperative Month observance was coordinated by the Illinois Cooperative Coordinating Committee.

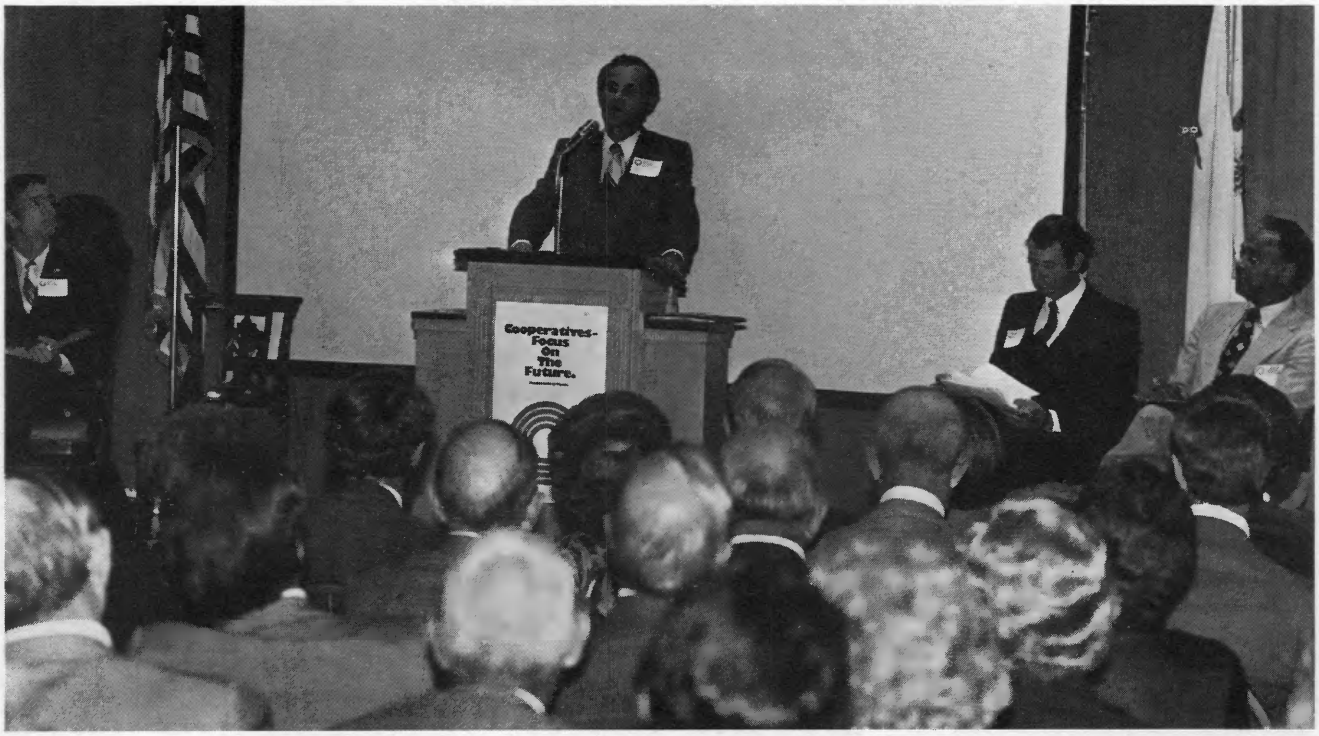
Dr. Felder recalled the beginning of the cooperative movement in Europe, saying that American cooperatives developed in four ways: immigration of Europeans to this country, incidental discovery of cooperatives by Americans traveling in Europe, lessons earned through direct contact with foreign cooperatives through the International Cooperative Alliance and deliberate investigations of the European cooperative movement by presidential commissions organized as early as the first part of this century.

He noted that credit unions form the largest bloc of cooperatives, enrolling approximately 31.5-million Americans. Agriculture marketing and supply cooperatives handle more than 37 percent of the agriculture products in the country, 75 percent of the dairy products, 40 percent of the grain, 30 percent of the cotton, 30 percent of fruits and vegetables, 40 percent of the petroleum, 35 percent of fertilizer and 32 percent of all agriculture chemicals.

Dr. Felder is a graduate of the University of Illinois with a master's degree in rural sociology and economics.

Glenn Webb of Tunnel Hill, newly elected Chairman of the Board and President of Growmark, Inc., served as master of ceremonies. Webb is the son of Ray Webb, former Southeastern Illinois Electric Cooperative and Southern Illinois Power Cooperative Director. He also is a brother of present Southeastern Director Kenneth Webb.

Thomas H. Moore, Executive Vice President and General Manager of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives, addresses the more than 300 Illinois cooperative leaders who attended the Cooperative Month banquet October 6 in Springfield. Looking on are Illinois Director of Agriculture John Block (left), featured speaker Dr. Allie Felder (right) and Glenn Webb, master of ceremonies.



Obituary

John F. Temple, former IREN editor

John F. Temple, editor of the *Illinois Rural Electric News* from 1961 until 1973, died August 9 in Springfield, following a long illness. Temple, who was 72, was one of the most widely known and deeply involved electric cooperative leaders. His warm personality and sincere interest in cooperatives and their people helped achieve friendship and respect across the state and nation. He was a familiar face at electric cooperative meetings across the state.

Born in Petersburg, Indiana, Temple was the son of the Rev. and Mrs. H. C. Temple. "Home" was Salem, where his father retired as minister of the Salem Presbyterian Church. He was graduated with a degree in journalism from the University of Illinois and worked as a reporter and photographer for the *Illinois State Register, St. Louis Star-Times* and the Associated Press. In 1950 he joined with his brother, William, in the operation of the *Wayne County Record* at Fairfield, and served as editor and co-publisher of that newspaper from 1950 to 1961.

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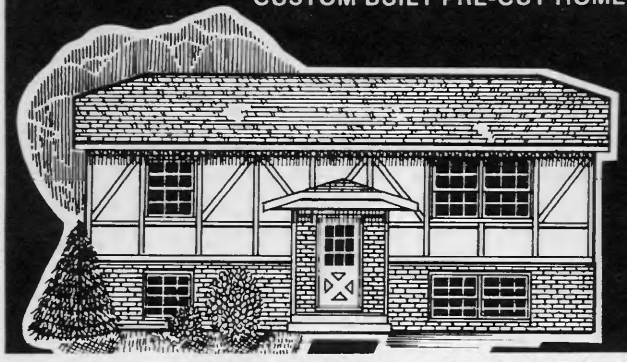

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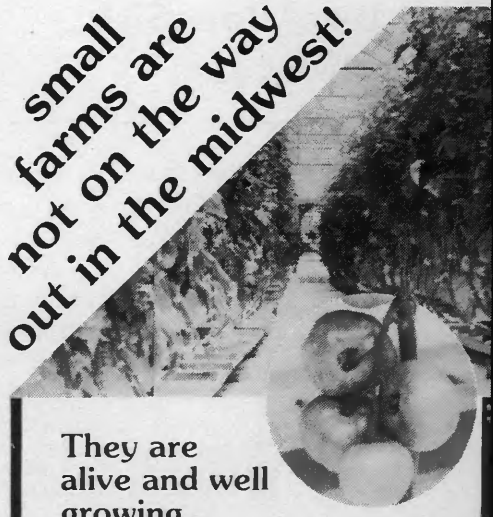

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Current Comments
by Allen Sisk, Manager

The 1980 Annual Meeting is now history. It was good to see so many of you there. We learned several things from your comments and we hope you understand more about your organization. For those of you unable (or unwilling) to attend, we would appreciate your comments also — just drop us a note. The night meeting in a new location was a new experience for many of us. The Directors felt that the move would give working families a better chance to attend. Apparently it worked as we saw several "new" faces.

The rate increase that we've mentioned several times is upon us. You should be getting your new rate charts and letter of instructions ... the mail soon. The increase needed to cover our costs was very difficult to project because the "basic" cost of the wholesale power was increased by about 22 percent. However, the demand costs were reduced and the end result you will notice is in line with our earlier projections.

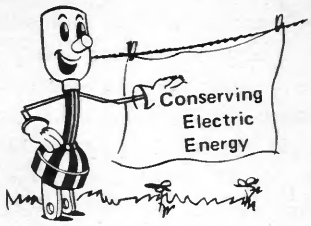
Now the good news — Patronage Credit Checks for the years 1953-1954 are ready to mail. If you were a member of Tri-County during those years, you should get a check within the next few weeks.

With the continuing inflationary spiral it becomes exceedingly more difficult for all of us to make ends meet. It is the same with your cooperative. Everything we buy costs us more, too.

Every month, more and more of our members are failing to pay their bills on time, and we have an increasing number who fail to pay at all. Not only does this deny the cooperative the revenue it needs to meet its obligations on a timely basis, it also adds to our cost to process and collect delinquent accounts.

If you always ready your meter and pay on time, we want you to know that we sincerely appreciate it. For those of you who don't, I would like to remind you that, in accordance with the cooperative policy, it is the responsibility of members to read their meters and pay their bills by the DUE DATE, WHICH IS THE TENTH (10th) OF EACH MONTH. Legislation, the past couple of years, has made it difficult to discontinue service to delinquent accounts during winter months. Therefore, let this be a promise to those who pay on time and a warning to those who don't — during the next couple of months, we will be stepping up our disconnect procedure. If you are behind with your payments, you should either catch up or at least contact the Mt. Vernon office and make arrangements to catch up. We don't intend to burden our good paying customers by letting others neglect their responsibility.

More next month.



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Pretty And Practical Ceiling Fans

A touch of nostalgia may do more than create the mood of a long-past, unhurried era. The slowly revolving blades of an electric ceiling fan are practical as well as pretty.

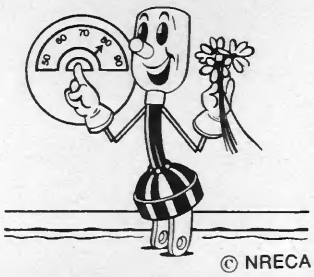
A fan may not drastically lower your power bill, but it will raise the comfort level of a room. In the winter, the turning blades force rising warm air back down into the living area of a room. For an example: houses with vaulted ceilings or houses with wood burning heaters — these fans do a good job of moving the heat from the ceiling area to where it is needed. In the summertime, the constant motion helps circulate conditioned air or offers slight breezes as a much less expensive alternative to air conditioning.

Ceiling fans can be attractive and useful in almost any room in the house. Fans are available in a wide range of styles from rustic to contemporary to ornate, and may have lights attached as an added feature. Usually, when a lamp is included, they may be operated together or independently. You may discover extra advantages of a ceiling fan. If a fan is located above an open porch, screened porch or sun room, the air movement will discourage biting insects. In a home that is disturbed by outside noises, the faint motor sound of some models provides a soft background hum that may help drown out other offensive noises.

When purchasing a ceiling fan, you will need to consider the style, the

Hi-Lites

Edward Hake
Dan Hiestand
Wayne Estes



Look closely for your location number in this issue. If you find it, please notify Tri-County Electric Cooperative's office and we will gladly mail you a four-dollar coupon to apply on your next month's bill. Cotton & Hurst were the lucky winners last month.

New employees

Ellis (top left)

Hampton (top)

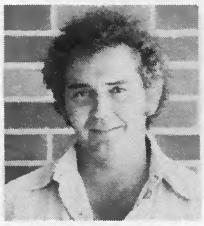
Paschel (left)

Marcia Ellis worked part time while attending Kaskaskia College from January to May this year. On May 19 she was hired as full-time computer programmer. Marcia lives with her parents on Rt. 7, Mt. Vernon. She graduated "top of her class" at Kaskaskia and placed second in a statewide data processing contest. Her hobbies are tennis and piano.

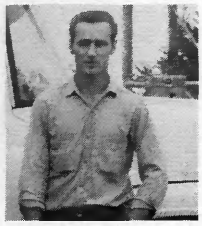
Paula Hampton was hired as part time cashier on June 9. She will work at the counter of the Mt. Vernon office the first two weeks of each month. She lives on Rt. 4, Mt. Vernon, with her husband, Gerald, and son, Chad. She enjoys baseball and garden work.

Dan Paschel was hired as a groundman-truckdriver last September. Dan attended Wabash Junior College and then ITT Tech (Evansville) and has an associate degree in electronics. He worked for Henkel & McCoy Contractors before joining Tri-County. Dan, his wife, Deborah, and son, Timothy, live at No. 3 Normandy (Mt. Vernon).

Stevens retires; Hale still disabled



Stevens



Hale

J. R. Stevens, a lineman for your cooperative for the past 14 years, has retired to devote more time to his business interests.

Jim Hale, a lineman for your cooperative for the past 12 years, remains on the disabled list. Jim injured his back last September and is unable to work.

Home energy audits still available

Your electric cooperative will perform energy audits for members upon request. The purpose of an energy audit is to check your home and consult with you in an effort to point out any improvements you can or should make which may reduce energy use.

Clip and mail the questionnaire to Tri-County's office if you would like an evaluation made of your home's insulation, weatherstripping, wiring and appliance use. Please fill out the report to help us prepare for visiting and checking your home at a scheduled time during our regular working hours.

Many of the energy audits we have performed thus far have proven helpful and informative to the members requesting the audits. Perhaps an energy audit in your home will find some energy-wasting problem areas that you don't know exist. Why not fill out the questionnaire below or give us a call?

FREE Order for Home Weatherization Audit — FREE— No Obligations

To:
Tri-County Electric Cooperative
Member Service Department
Box 309
Mt. Vernon, IL 62864

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Location Number: _____

Owner ____ **Tenant** _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

diameter of the fan blades, the ceiling height (fans usually hang down about 12 inches and those with lights will decrease head clearance by another 8 inches), the blade construction (high quality wood or metal is important) and along with the efficiency of the fan.

To compare the efficiency of various ceiling fans, note the amount of air that each is rated to move. A large ceiling fan, 52-inches in diameter, should move around 7,000 cubic feet per minute (CFM) at the high speed and 4,000 CFM at the low speed. The other common size for a ceiling fan is 36 inches. With that fan blade size, air should move at a rate of 4,000 CFM on high and 3,000 CFM on low.

Also, compare the electricity consumed by the fan at each setting. The lower the wattage required to move the air, the more efficient the ceiling fan.

The soft breezes and decorative look make ceiling fans hard to beat for adding additional comfort and charm.

energy efficiency

Plenty of homework to do before starting insulation project

It is not difficult to answer the question of whether or not you should insulate. The answer would surely be "Yes, I should insulate." The more difficult questions to answer are, "When, how and with what will we accomplish the task?" Each individual homeowner should analyze this particular situation and then proceed from that point.

Very basic questions must be answered prior to calling a contractor or attempting to purchase material. Those questions include, "Should we insulate ceiling, sidewall, floor or all three?" What materials would be best suited for our application? Would it be best to hire a contractor or do all or part of the insulation ourselves? These and many other questions should be considered prior to the actual installation. This is, perhaps, an oversimplification of the procedure. There are, however, many homeowners who are unfamiliar with what needs to be done, what is available, and what their best method of installation of insulation would be.

With the proper amount of thought given prior to the installation, quality control can be assured from the beginning to the end of the process. For help in discussing your particular application with a qualified third party, you could get expert advice from your local power use advisor. He will be knowledgeable about what's available, who the installers are in your area, and he can help explain the recommendations for adequate insulation and help analyze your investment payback.

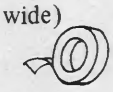
For do-it-yourselfers

Tools

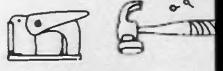
1. Temporary lighting

2. Temporary flooring

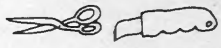
3. Duct or masking tape (2" wide)



4. Heavy duty staple gun and staples, or hammer and tacks



5. Heavy duty shears or linoleum knife to cut batts or blankets and plastic for vapor barrier



For an example of the type of considerations which must be made, let us single out the outside wall area of an existing structure and make plans to insulate it. To begin with, we must first determine whether or not there is material in the wall cavity. This can be checked in some cases by removing electrical cover plates or removing trim boards in places, or may require drilling general test holes. If the cavity is found to contain some insulation, then a more thorough examination should take place to determine whether or not the walls should be reinsulated. Adding insulation to the walls which already contain insulation is difficult and the effectiveness of the addition is questionable.

If the determination is made that no insulation exists in the wall cavity, one must then decide on a particular material. This material could be foam, cellulose fiber, mineral wool, fiberglass, or vermiculite. All these materials can be blown in place with the wall cavity intact.

There are different techniques for installing insulation materials in the

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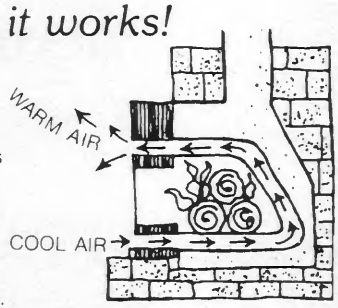
Cool air is drawn into the C-shaped tubes (which serve as the grate) with two-speed blowers. The air passes through the tubes, returning the warm air into the room at 160 cubic feet per minute. Smoke and gases escape up the chimney. The glass doors and draft control prevent heated room air from being drawn back into the fireplace.



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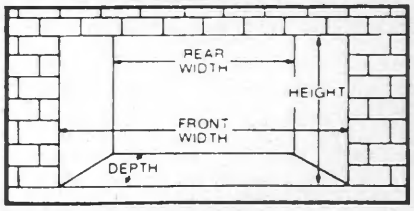
Central Duct-work _____ Yes _____ No
Clean Out Trap _____ Yes _____ No

Approximate winter utility bill:
Electric: $_____ per mo. Gas: $_____ per mo.

Fireplace Dimensions:
Height _____ inches
Rear Width _____ inches
Front Width _____ inches
Depth _____ inches
(From front of opening to back of fire box.)



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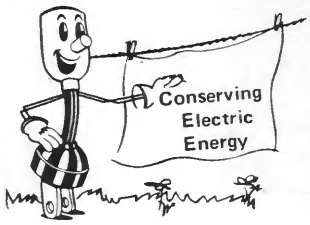
by Allen Sisk, Manager



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Solar heat? Or just hot air?

With all the hoopla over solar energy we had somehow missed the point that our federal government now classifies as solar power: hydroelectric dams, gasohol (the alcohol part), windmills and woodstoves! My engineering training tells me that, yes, the sun does provide the energy to make rivers flow, crops and trees grow, and winds blow. But, the logical engineer part of me also says, "Why stop at that?" After all, the coal, oil and natural gas we glean from the earth were derived from plants and animals which lived a few million years ago, storing the sun's energy which we can use today by burning. And then, the sun itself isn't much more than a big nuclear furnace. So where does that leave us? We're not sure, except that we plan to be darned careful whenever we hear someone spouting glowing statistics about solar energy. No telling what he might have thrown into that stewpot!

Why, the very latest thing in "electric heat," the heat pump, has a two to one thermal (heat) efficiency, which means that for every unit of electric energy put in you get two units of heat energy out. Magic? Sorcery? Of course not. What you get from each unit of electric energy required to run the motor is two units of solar heat extracted from the air just the way a refrigerator does it, only in reverse. That makes the heat pump half solar and half electric, doesn't it? Maybe sort of a first cousin to a windmill. (6-11S)

As far as we know, the IRS doesn't allow heat pumps as a "Solar Tax Deduction," but why shouldn't they? After all why should heat pumps take a back seat to a smokey old wood stove?

So far this year we've had fewer requests for new service connections and feel the reason for this is the high interest rates and the high cost of building. We may have to curtail some of our planned work too, if prices of materials and equipment keep going up. We never thought that some of the items we need and use to build and maintain lines could cost so much. As an example, some transmission line poles now cost us almost $600 per pole, and some poles we use every day cost us almost $100 per pole.

Many have asked, and the answer is, yes, we will have a rate adjustment sometime later this year. Our contract for wholesale power with Illinois Power Company will expire and they have already informed us of their request for an increase in wholesale power rates. They are asking for about a nine percent increase, we'll keep you informed on how this will affect the Tri-County rates.

We have mentioned several times before that you can help lower our power cost by helping hold down the peak demand. Our high demand for power usage happens from 6 to 8 a.m., 11 a.m. to noon, and from 5 to 9 p.m. When we add to these already high peaks, we just add more to our power bill from the supplier. (15-1J)

We pay for those high periods of usage because the supplier needs the equipment necessary to generate that much power, even if it's only for a short period of time. You can help by using those appliances "that can be used anytime," during the off peak times. We need this kind of cooperation from all of you, if we intend to keep our wholesale rates at a halfway reasonable cost.

It's tim to pla beat the clock

If you can shift your use of electricity to times other than 5 to 9 p.m. on certain days this summer, you will help lower the peak demand. And that means lower power costs for our power supplier and your local cooperative, which in turn will benefit you. Everybody comes out a winner! In short, you beat the clock by limiting your use of electricity during the periods when demand is greatest.

For the rural electric cooperatives, this occurs on hot summer evenings when the temperature climbs to 85 degrees or more by 5 p.m. Most families are together then, with lights and television on, dinner cooking, hot water running and the air conditioner turned down.

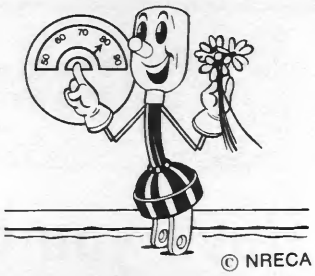
It's a time our power supplier must prepare for by building the

Heads Up!

Overhead lines are dangerous.

Hi-Lites

Edward Hake
Dan Hiestand
Wayne Estes



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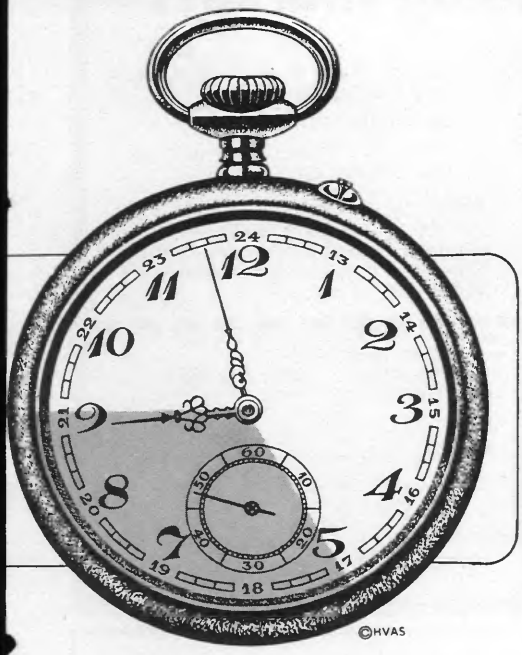
Look closely for your location number in this issue. Ralph Habbe, Jr. was our lucky winner last issue. If you find your location number, please notify Tri-County Electric's office and we will gladly mail to you a four dollar coupon to apply on next month's bill.



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Are you paying twice to use your major appliances?

You are if you use major heat-producing appliances during the hottest hours of the day when your air conditioner is already working overtime!

A rule of thumb is that for each one cent of electricity used by heat-producing appliances, it costs as much as one-half cent more to cool your house because of the added warmth from the appliances. By using heat-producing appliances – such as the stove, electric clothes dryer, clothes washer or dishwasher – during the morning and after 9:00 p.m., you'll find you need less electricity to cool your home

Time your use of energy to get the most for your energy dollars and at the same time you'll be helping your electric cooperative lower peak demand on its system. If you desire help planning more efficient use of energy, contact your electric cooperative headquarters. We're here to help.

generation and distribution facilities to meet this demand – an increasingly expensive responsibility.

To be a peak shaver, follow these suggestions when it's 85 degrees or hotter by 5 p.m.: (37-26L3)

– Keep your air conditioner at 80 degrees or as high as comfort allows.

– Use your electric oven or range as little as possible. Instead, cook in countertop appliances, an all-day slow cooker or an energy-saving microwave even.

– Run only a fully loaded dishwasher after 9 p.m. or in the morning.

– Postpone washing and drying clothes until off-peak times.

– Limit the use of electrically heated water. Take showers or baths after 9 or in the morning.

– Turn off unused lights and appliances.

By being just as aware of *when* you're using electricity as *how much* you're using, you can beat the clock to help hold down the cost of electricity. And that's a game worth playing.

Tri-County Annual Membership Meeting

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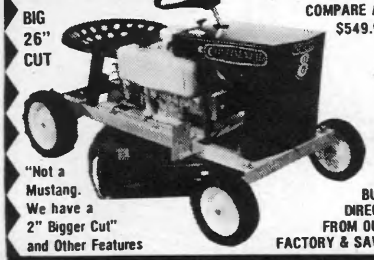

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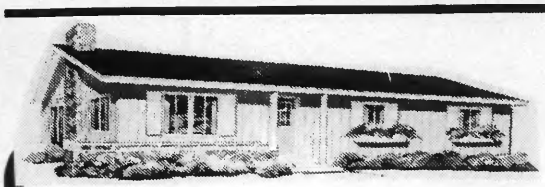

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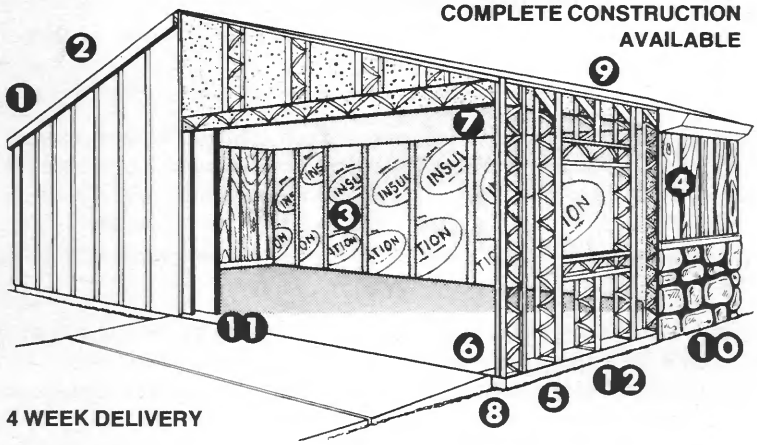

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Doing their homework was part of the agenda for those attending the regular quarterly meeting of the Illinois Electric Cooperative Managers' Association. In this photo, C. E. Ferguson, manager of Coles-Moultrie Electric Cooperative, and Walt Smith, manager of Illini Electric Cooperative, take notes during a presentation.

is scheduled to receive $123-million this winter.

Problems with the program last year centered around delays in payment to utilities by the administering agencies, Wayne E. Curtis, manager of the State of Illinois ECAP program, told the managers.

He promised that such delays would be minimized this year.

A highlight of the meeting was a program comparing the CBS broadcast of Harry Reasoner's "60 Minutes" report on the nuclear Clinton Power Station with the actual footage shot at the site and in the offices of the Illinois Power Company (IP).

Illinois Power had videotaped Reasoner's interviews and combined clips of their tapes with those from the November 25 broadcast, indicating that "60 Minutes" had edited out, presented incorrectly, or ignored salient facts about the witnesses' testimony about the plant's construction.

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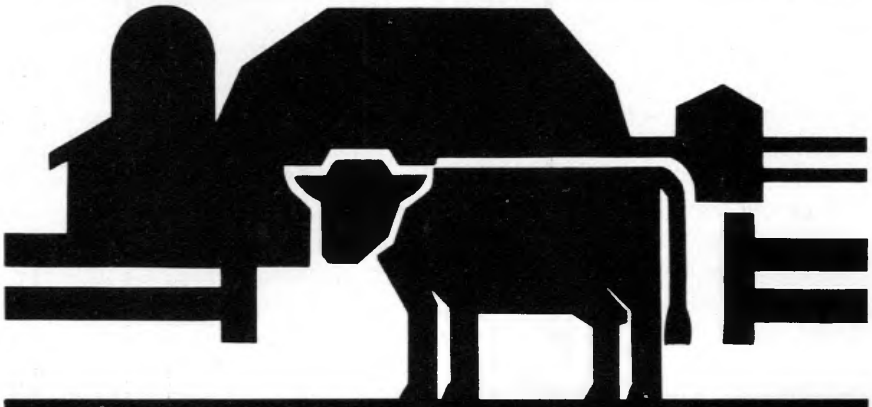

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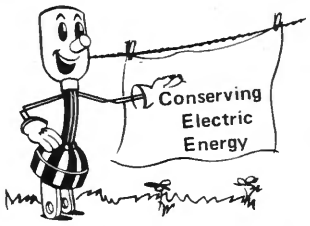
by Allen Sisk, Manager



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The Holiday festivities are behind us–only the pleasant memories of happy times (and perhaps a few bills) remain. We're now looking forward to a new year and in fact a new decade.

Allen Sisk

Some will be able to remember the "flappers" of the 20's; the depression years of the 30's; the war years of the 40's; the dry spell of the 50's; the "hippies" of the 60's and the energy confusion of the '70's. We're not sure what the 80's will be remembered for but we're quite sure there'll be some "belt tightening" in the picture. The higher costs of all fuels has our full attention for the moment. We're all looking for more energy efficiency in our cars, homes and businesses.

Your cooperative is interested in helping you use your electrical energy efficiently. We are now offering to make "energy audits" upon request. The purpose of the energy audit is to check your home and consult with you in an effort to point out any improvements you can or should make which may reduce energy use. (15-21D)

This is a new field of activity for us and we have no idea just how strong the response will be. However, if you desire an audit just drop us a note and we will contact you to set up an appointment. If the demand for audits is high, we may not get to yours as quickly as you, or we, would like but we'll do our best to be reasonably prompt.

More next issue.

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Let's take a closer look at capital credits

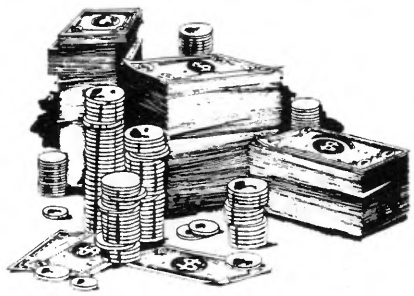
All nonprofit organizations which are truly cooperative in nature recognize three essential principles: democratic control, limited return on equity capital and net margins distributed according to patronage.

Let's look closely at the last and most distinct element of cooperative operation: net margins distributed according to patronage.

Perhaps the most significant difference between a cooperative and other corporate businesses is that in a cooperative the net margins or capital credits belong to the patron who is the owner, the consumer and the equity contributor. The cooperative customarily refunds all or part of these margins as patronage refunds to its members because, in a nutshell, capital credits are a member's payments in excess of the cost of providing goods or services. (27-35B)

Electric Cooperatives Are Different

Electric cooperatives, as with any capital intensive utility and business, require a heavy capital investment. They were initially financed by 100 percent federal government loans. They have had to face the necessity of not only obtaining funds from and through the federal Rural Electrification Administration, an agency within the United States Department of Agriculture, and the private money markets to meet their annual operating expenses and other needs, but also to meet principal and interest repayment schedules to REA.



Because of relatively low consumer density, less than four consumers per mile of line, it takes more than $6,400 per member to build a mile of electric distribution line in rural Illinois. For such a heavy investment, the operating revenue for electric cooperatives is relatively small. Averages mean very little to electric cooperatives that serve thinly populated areas or provide area coverage in a territory that has a poor economic base. But even the average annual revenue per member per mile of line is low--about $950 compared to an average of more than $14,500 for urban-based utilities. And yet, electric cooperatives have been able to maintain rate parity with other utilities. But at this rate, paying off the total loan capitalization of a system built with REA financing is a slow process for members of electric cooperatives.

In contrast to commercial power companies, electric cooperatives are required to repay their total indebtedness to REA within a period of 35 years...with interest. The investor-owned electric utilities do not retire their borrowed capital–they refinance it.

Building to meet the load growth of expanding rural areas and to ensure adequate, reliable power for present consumer needs requires ever-increasing amounts of capital. (37-26AA11)

This means that electric cooperatives must charge their members rates which are high enough to repay government loans and to build and maintain reserves, in addition to paying the increasing costs of wholesale power, fuel and the expenses of

Hi-Lites

Edward Hake
Dan Hiestand
Wayne Estes

Be careful on snow and ice.

© NRECA

Look closely for your location number in this issue. If you find it, please notify Tri-County Electric Cooperative's office and we will gladly mail you a four-dollar coupon to apply on your next month's bill.

providing service. The revenue requirements must therefore be greater than actual operating costs.

The cooperative must produce a margin at the end of the year in order to stay in business and continue providing service. The margins constitute the members' investment of capital in the system and not a profit either to the cooperative or to its members.

What Exactly Are Capital Credits?

Because of the cooperative nature of rural electric systems, every dollar of payment by an electric cooperative member in excess of the cost of providing electric service is an investment in the cooperative by that member, which the member is entitled to recover in the future. Regardless of whether the term capital credits, member equity or patronage capital is used, it is an electric cooperative member's payments in excess of the cost of furnishing that member's electric service.

This payment in excess of costs is represented by what is termed "margins" in electric cooperative operations. This margin of payments over cost is shown on the cooperative balance sheet by an item called "equity." Equity represents the member-owners' contributions of capital to the cooperative business. It is different from debt capital which usually comes from non-owners of the cooperative for a fixed term and involves the payment of interest.

Capital credits, margins or equity in the cooperative system is credited to the individual member's account according to total yearly patronage with the cooperative. Capital credits, then, are allocations of margins to individual members, based directly on the member's proportionate contributions to the margins realized.

How Do Electric Cooperatives Build Equity?

Unlike other organizations, including other types of cooperatives, electric cooperatives have one primary source of equity capital--their margins.

This is an important consideration in electric cooperatives efforts to raise capital from sources outside the federal Rural Electrification Administration. Private investors traditionally consider equity capital as an indicator of financial strength--a safeguard for their investments.

When an investor-owned utility needs additional equity capital, it issues common stock to develop "instant" equity. On the other hand, nonprofit electric cooperatives must produce margins in order to develop equity. The greater the margins, the greater the equity. The common stock owner in a private, profit-oriented utility receives a return or dividend on his equity capital, paid with funds provided by the utility's customers. The electric cooperative member-owner receives no interest on his contributed capital other than his lower cost electric service.

How Are Capital Credits Refunded?

Electric cooperatives generally use the First-in, First-out (FIFO) method to retire capital credits. Under the FIFO method the member who has his capital invested in the system the longest receives his investment back first. Newer members must wait their turn before their contributed capital is returned.

In View of the Present Economics, Why Retire Capital Credits?

In contrast with most types of cooperatives, electric cooperatives were begun as nearly 100 percent debt-financed organizations and have built a reputation as solid financial risks. To maintain their reputation electric cooperatives must develop a solid equity level before retiring capital credits. It is the long-term goal of most electric cooperative boards of directors to rotate consumer equity on a 20-year cycle. As electric cooperatives retire capital credits, their margins must increase by the amount of the retirement to maintain this equity level for the financial strength necessary for long-term successful operations. As the nation's economy and energy situation become more

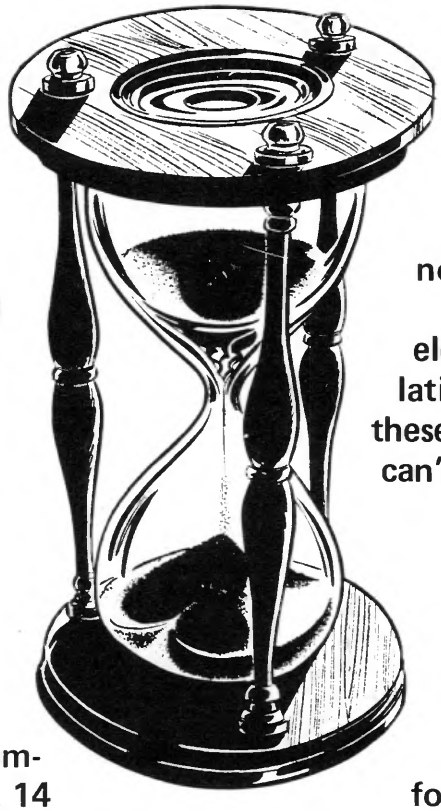
uncertain and unpredictable, a cooperative's ability to retire capital credits while maintaining an adequate equity level is not an easy task. The return of capital credits on a regular basis is heavily dependent upon a cooperative's overall financial stability.

Capital credit retirements remain one of the cooperative member's most tangible evidence of true ownership of his electric utility. It is a unique method by which electric distribution cooperatives can ensure maximum benefit and equitable treatment for members, directly involve them in the financial operations of their business and, at the same time, maintain the financial integrity of the consumer-owned and controlled organization.

Time is running out on tomorrow's electricity!

It's too bad we can't stockpile electric energy for the lean years. It must be produced as needed to meet demand.

Despite energy conservation, demand will increase over the next 20 years because of population growth and reliance on electricity to replace gas and oil. Conservative government and industry forecasts show the need to build 500 new generating plants to meet that demand.



So what's the problem?

A coal-fired power plant started this year could take 10 years to complete and a nuclear plant, 14 years. It takes from five to seven years just for the paperwork on the average coal-fired plant . . . years that cost the consumer dearly.

Each day of construction delay in the regulatory jungle adds as much as $300,000 to the cost of a coal-fired plant. Regulators themselves now admit that about 40 percent of the average electric bill goes for regulation. Illinois can't afford these delays, and consumers can't afford to pay the cost of unneeded delay.

We need reasonable, orderly regulation that serves the public interest. We need regulatory reform before time runs out on our electric energy supplies.

Electric Cooperatives of Illinois

Energy: today and tomorrow