

# SPOON RIVER ELECTRIC

# News

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SPOON RIVER ELECTRIC CO-OPERATIVE, INC  
309-647-2700 ■ CANTON, ILLINOIS

## District meetings set for February and March

We like to emphasize that Spoon River Electric Cooperative is a member-owned business, and we also like to run it that way. That's why we have an annual meeting every year, to keep you up to speed on what your co-op's doing.

However, we also hope to communicate with you more than just "giving you a speech" every year, and writing messages for you in our newsletter.

We'd like to hear from you, too. And we know some members may be intimidated by the crowd at the annual meeting, and may be reluctant to ask questions. With that in mind, we're scheduling a series of small, informal, meetings throughout our service territory in the next couple of months, in the hope that our members will come and visit with us.

We hope to tell you what we're doing with your co-op, and ask you if you're pleased with our efforts. And we hope you'll let us know if you have any questions or concerns. We hope you're reasonably content. If you are, we hope you'll tell us so. If you're not, we'll be pleased to hear your constructive criticism. Whatever the case, we hope you'll attend the meeting nearest you. If you can't make that one, you'll certainly be welcome at one of the others. We'll serve light refreshments, and as an

added incentive, we've added a coupon for you to bring with you. If you bring in your magazine with this article inside, we'll give you \$5. Please note that this offer's limited to \$5 per subscriber, and you must present this coupon. Hope to see you there!

The times, dates and places of the meetings are listed below.

District 1 — Lyle Nelson  
Orange Chapel Church  
2/28/00 7 p.m.

Districts 3 and 4 — Jack Schoon and Dave Bergland  
White Chapel Church  
2/29/00 7 p.m.

Districts 5 and 7 — Jack Clark and Jeff Lasswell  
Farm Bureau Building  
3/6/00 7 p.m.

Districts 2 and 6 — Curtis Strode and Corky Bordner  
Wee-Ma-Tuk  
3/7/00 7 p.m.

Districts 8 and 9 — Bernard Marvel and Scott Parrish  
Woodland Church  
3/13/00 7 p.m.

**Coupon good for five dollars when presented at a Spoon River Electric Cooperative district meeting in February and March, 2000.**



***It's family, it's community,  
it's rural America.***

No matter which Main Street you cross in rural America, you always sense that it has a special quality. It's not just the smog-free air. Nor is it the way the ham tastes richer in your mouth at the local diner. It's not even the way sunlight penetrates beyond the buildings to dance on the flower beds in front of the town hall. No, you can definitely tell you are on Main Street, U.S.A. by the way people share a sense of community and family. It's the way people look you in the eye and ask about your day. It's community. It's rural America.

*It's family,*



*it's community,*



***We're your hometown  
electric cooperative,  
proud to take part in  
making your community  
a better place to live.***



*It's rural America.*

# A primer on HOME heating systems

It's the middle of winter, and your home heating system is: a) worn out and barely going to make it until spring; b) inefficient; c) inadequate and you're freezing. You figure that with your tax refund next spring you'll be able to do something about your system.

## ELECTRIC HEATING

Electric heating systems may be resistance heating systems or heat pumps. Electric resistance heating works by converting electric current directly into heat. Electric heat pumps, however, operate on a completely different principle. They use electricity to move heat from one location to another, much in the same way that a refrigerator's cooling system moves heat from inside the box to outside the box.

A heat pump does the same thing for a house and can be reversed so that heat is moved into the house in the winter and out in the summer. As a result, because heat pumps use electricity to move heat rather than to generate it, they can deliver more energy to a home than they consume.

## PROGRAMMABLE THERMOSTATS

A programmable thermostat can reduce your heating cooling bills by up to 30 percent. It's simple: you can program the thermostat to higher or lower levels (depending on the time of year) when you are not home, so you don't waste energy.

But you don't feel comfortable calling a contractor or retailer because you don't know anything about heating systems beyond where yours is located. Before you call the experts, take a few minutes and review some basics about home heating systems.

## SIZING YOUR HEATING SYSTEM

Many existing systems are oversized — sometimes by a factor of two or three. Oversized systems do not operate at peak efficiency and can cost more to purchase, operate and maintain.

To be most efficient, your heating system should be able to keep your home at 70 degrees Fahrenheit on the coldest day of the year. In addition, your new system should not exceed your peak hourly heating demand by more than 25 percent.

## GAS AND OIL HEATING SYSTEMS

Gas and oil heating systems may be furnaces or boilers. Furnaces heat air that is circulated throughout the house by ducts. Boilers heat water or steam that circulates through pipes to radiators or baseboards. Some hot water systems circulate water through plastic tubing in the floor, called radiant floor heating.



For more information about home heating systems, call your local electric cooperative. Your friends there will be happy to provide you with information and suggest ways that you can maximize energy efficiency and save money, too.

*Source: Center for Renewable Energy and Sustainable Technology*

## ZONING

This means dividing your home into areas with common heating and cooling requirements, with each zone being controlled by its own thermostat. Zoning can make your home more comfortable and save you money. You can heat or cool different portions of your house depending on whether you are using them.

# Another good reason to make your bed!

Did you know that if you leave your waterbed unmade, not only does it look messy, it also uses more energy? The heater in an unmade waterbed consumes 30 percent more

electricity than one in a made-up bed. So make that bed up in the morning. You'll sleep better at night, knowing you're saving energy.

## Sign up for budget billing

If you have a 12-month billing history and are in good standing, you can qualify for budget billing.

### Auto debit payment

Pay your bill "Worry Free" with an auto debit to your checking or savings account. This is a great way to pay your bill while away from home or if your busy schedule gets in the way. You'll save postage, too. This is a good way to make sure your payment is received on time and avoid late penalties. All you need to do is sign up for our "Worry Free Auto Debit" and we take care of the rest. You will still receive your notice by mail to notify you of the date and amount charged to your account.

### Worry Free Auto Debit Payment Plan Fill out below or attach a Voided Blank Check

Bank Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Savings       Checking

Account Number \_\_\_\_\_ Bank Route Number: \_\_\_\_\_

I agree to have Spoon River Electric deduct from my account specified above.

Sign Here \_\_\_\_\_

## Check out our paging services, storage

Spoon River Electric still has storage space available for all your needs. Whether it is just a few boxes or a car or boat, we can fit it in. There are no set contract periods; rental is a month to month basis. So even if you need a place to store something out of the way for a couple of months, we can help. Contact us today at 649-5454 to take care of your needs.

Paging is a cheap source of communication.

You can lease a pager and service from Spoon River Electric for as low as \$11.24 a month and never be out of contact. The pagers all come with a tone and vibrate function, so when working on or around noisy machinery you can feel your page. We provide a wide range of options that can be added to your service at anytime. Contact us so you can stay in touch even while you're away.

## Long live the light bulb

You think your light bulbs burn out too soon? Well, Thomas Edison's had to be changed every two days! Today there are fluorescent light bulbs that will last 23 years.

Unfortunately, the ordinary incandescent light bulb hasn't progressed as much as halo-

gen and fluorescent bulbs. The lowly incandescent has only increased its life span 150 percent since 1910. Today's fluorescent bulb can last 416 percent longer than the one you installed in 1989. Install fluorescent bulbs. They'll cost less to operate, too.

# SPOON RIVER ELECTRIC

# News

SPOON RIVER ELECTRIC CO-OPERATIVE, INC  
309-647-2700 ■ CANTON, ILLINOIS

## Thanks to those who attended district meetings

The Spoon River Electric Co-operative Board of Directors, Staff, and President/CEO would like to thank those members who attended their district meetings. We felt it was important to update you on the activities of your Co-operative. We enjoyed visiting with you and getting your input. This will help your Board as we go forward in this up

and coming deregulated world. For those members who were unable to attend you will find a listing of some of our new services available to you below. Our most recent service that should be of interest to you is our long distance telephone service. We think you will find the rates very good. See our ad on page 16d.

### NEW SERVICES

Please note that we now have a toll-free telephone number!

**(877) 404-2572**

**Worry free auto debit payment plan  
Fill out below or attach a voided blank check**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Savings \_\_\_\_\_ Checking

Member \_\_\_\_\_

Account \_\_\_\_\_ Bank Route # \_\_\_\_\_

I agree to have Spoon River Electric deduct from my account specified above.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Account # \_\_\_\_\_

### OTHER NEW SERVICES AVAILABLE

- Long distance phone service
- Surge protection leasing
- Credit card
- Storage
- Pager service
- Geothermal rebates
- Rental security lights
- Free water heater program

# Don't let Spring zap your children!

Spring is a time of mixed emotions. For many, it's time of hope that the cold will finally go away for good. For others, it's a time of hope and renewal. For parents, it offers an opportunity to get out and throw a few baseballs to the children, or to watch them play outside. For children, it means summer vacation's coming soon.

But there's another side to spring, too. For emergency room doctors and nurses, spring is a busy season, with many of the patients being children.

Surprisingly, there are almost twice as many childhood injuries in the warm spring months as winter.

During the spring and summer months, children are at increased risk because most, especially the younger ones, tend to forget the safety rules they learned the previous year. They're more likely to get hurt in collisions involving cars, bikes or pedestrians. There are also more drownings, poisonings, falls and chokings. Sadly, most could be prevented.

If you have youngsters, be sure to take precautions to help protect them during the warm months.

Check with your local Red Cross, American Heart Association or hospital to see if you can get training in cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR). It could save a life.

Children often put themselves at risk on the streets. Be sure to remind yours about the dangers of crossing streets. Remind them to stop at the side of the road before crossing, and to look both ways.

When driving, always be careful to buckle up your children, and remember that the front passenger's seat is no place for a small child. Remember that children are required by law to be either in a child safety seat or buckled in with a seat belt. Proper use of such devices, while often frustrating to children, can save lives. When using child seats, be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions carefully!

Bicycle helmets are hot and uncomfortable, and some children think they're "uncool." But they prevent serious injury and save lives. Since head injuries are the most common kind of bike-related trauma, be sure to insist that your chil-

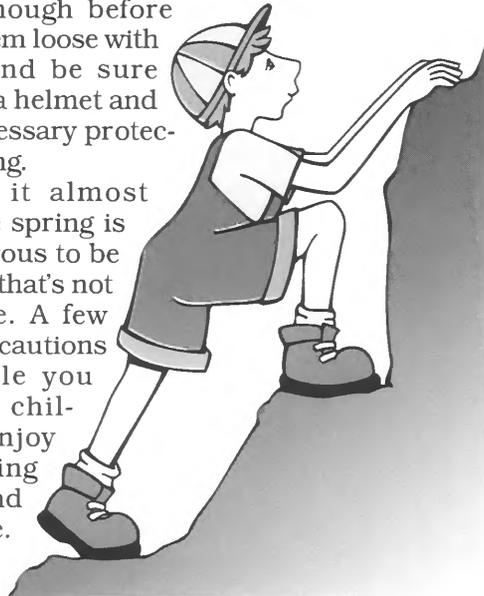
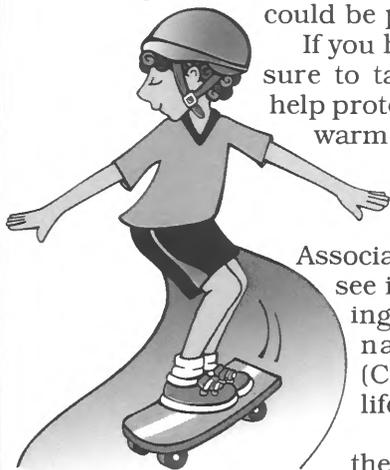
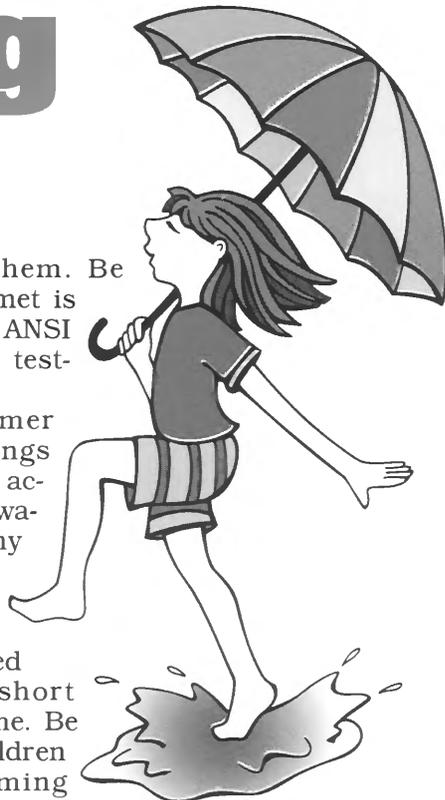
dren wear them. Be sure the helmet is approved by ANSI and/or other testing agencies.

Warmer weather brings about lots of activity around water, and many drownings occur when children are left unattended for very short lengths of time. Be sure your children have swimming lessons, and then keep in mind that they're still not completely safe around water. Many water-related accidents happen because children who know how to swim overestimate their abilities. Keep an eye on your children at all times when they're near water.

Keep poisonous substances away from children. Nearly two-thirds of all calls to poison control centers concern children who are under five years old, and 90 percent of such poisonings take place at home. Cleaners, medicines, paints and insect sprays are the products most often ingested by children. Be sure to store such items in out-of-reach cabinets with childproof locks.

With warm weather, children are more likely to be involved with all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), and children and ATVs can be a dangerous combination. Be sure your children are well trained and mature enough before turning them loose with an ATV, and be sure they wear a helmet and all the necessary protective clothing.

While it almost seems like spring is too dangerous to be enjoyable, that's not really true. A few simple precautions will enable you and your children to enjoy the warming weather and still be safe.



# Call your co-op for lightning protection tips



April showers may bring May flowers, but what else do April showers bring? You guessed it – thunderstorms. Yes, it's already time to gear up for stormy weather. To protect your home, possessions and family, take precautions now to prepare for those wayward bolts of lightning.

Do all your major appliances have surge protectors? Do the lightning rods on your home and barns have good connections to the ground? Have you and your family gone over lightning safety for the coming spring and summer? Here are some tips to follow:

- In case of severe storms, stay inside a building or metal vehicle.
- Do not use the telephone, except in the case of an emergency.
- If outdoors, do not stand near utility poles or under large trees.
- Avoid high areas such as hills and tall structures.
- Stay away from metal equipment, wire fences, metal pipes and similar objects that might conduct lightning.

Protect yourself and your home from lightning. Just one bolt could spoil your whole day.



# BTC communications

## Long Distance Service Offering

BTC Communications, through an association with a large consortium of individuals and businesses, is able to offer the following wholesale long distance program. The underlying carrier for the plan is QWEST Communications, the nation's fourth largest carrier.

**4.9¢**

PER MINUTE

**ALL CALLS IN ILLINOIS**

**6.9¢**

PER MINUTE

**ALL CALLS OUT OF STATE**

- Free To Join
- No Monthly Fees
- Major Carrier
- 6 Second Billing
- No Monthly Minimums
- No Term Agreement

— No Codes to Dial —

— Long Distance & 800 Service At The Same Low Rate —

• All Calls Same Rate — 24 Hours A Day — 7 Days A Week

Free NO Surcharge Calling Cards: 13.9¢ — 6 Second Billing

For Additional Information, Call: (877) 404-2572

Mail To: Spoon River Electric Co-operative, P.O. Box 340, Canton, IL 61520

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security Number \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_ Estimated Monthly Usage \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Current Carrier \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Numbers: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Services Desired : \_\_\_\_\_ Outbound 800 \_\_\_\_\_ Travel Cards Number Requested \_\_\_\_\_

800 Service: \_\_\_\_\_ New Existing \_\_\_\_\_ To Ring To: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby authorize BTC/PNG Telecommunications, Inc., or its designator, to transfer my long distance service. I agree to financial responsibility for all charges arising from all long distance services provided. The service requested will be provisioned only on the approval of credit for the application. A switching charge may be incurred each time the underlying interexchange company is changed.

Customer Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Spoon River Electric Co-operative, Inc.

930 South Fifth Avenue  
PO. Box 340  
Canton, Illinois 61520

(309) 647-2700

Office hours: 8 a.m. — 4:30 p.m.

Web address: [www.netins.net/showcase/centralil/](http://www.netins.net/showcase/centralil/)

### OFFICE CLOSING

Spoon River Electric Co-operative's office will be closed on Friday, April 21, in observance of Good Friday. The cooperative will resume normal business hours on Monday, April 24.

# SPOON RIVER ELECTRIC

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SPOON RIVER ELECTRIC CO-OPERATIVE, INC  
309-647-2700 ■ CANTON, ILLINOIS



## Youths tour Springfield — two win Washington trips

High school students from across Illinois met their state legislators in Springfield during "Illinois Electric and Telephone Cooperatives Youth Day" on Wednesday, April 12. The tour was an opportunity for the students to learn more about the co-ops' democratic business model, as well as their state government. During their trip to the capitol, the students met with Secretary of State Jesse White. Seventeen area students representing Spoon River Electric Co-operative, Inc., Canton, met with Senators Laura Kent Donahue and George Shadid and Representative Donald Moffitt at the State Capitol. Nearly 300 students and chaperones also toured the Illinois Supreme Court, the State Capitol, Lincoln's Tomb, and the Executive Mansion. Representing Spoon River Electric Co-operative were, front row from left, Ginny Scharfenberg of Maquon, Matthew Baker of Lewistown (winner), Tiffany McKown of Ellisville, Holly Froelich of Abingdon, Natalie Putney of Trivoli, Julia Holak and Josh Eich of Canton and Megan Utzinger of Knoxville. Back row from left: Weston Poppenhager of Astoria, Tony Schupp of Mapleton, Donnie Lundeen of Vermont, Bradley Arthur of Abingdon, Sen. Shadid, Sen. Donahue, Rep. Moffitt, Josh Knowles of Cuba, Kara Miller of Smithfield (winner), Lindy Bair of Astoria, Tanya Games (chaperone) and Drew Heisel of Glasford.

### SERVICES AVAILABLE

- Surge protection leasing
- Credit card
- Storage
- Pager service
- Geothermal rebates
- Rental security lights
- Free water heater program



## **Cooperative commitment — you can count on it**

**I**ntegrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community — strong principles on which electric cooperatives were founded more than half a century ago. While investor-owned utilities are concerned with profit margins, electric cooperatives are committed to providing their members with the best local service possible.

Co-ops aren't closing local offices and service centers in Illinois. Instead, they are right where they've always been, providing personal service from people you know and trust.

***Electric cooperatives —  
we're here for our members!***

# Use light, but cut costs by lighting wisely

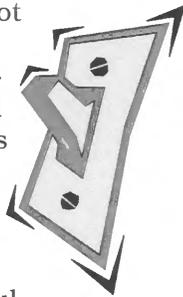
Light is wonderful! During winter, when days are short, many people suffer from “the winter blues.” They’re caused partly by the shortness of the days and partly by the weakness of the light during daytime hours.

But as wonderful as it is, artificial light is relatively expensive. About 15 percent of the electricity used in the average home goes for lighting.

Here are some suggestions to help you reduce your real “light bill.”

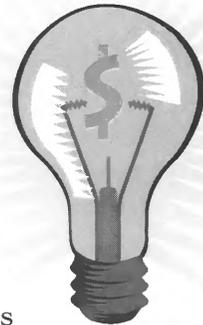
## Indoor lighting

- Turn off lights in any room not being used.
- Light-zone your home. Concentrate lighting in reading and working areas and where it’s needed for safety (in stairwells, for example).
- Reduce overall lighting in non-working areas by removing one bulb out of three in multiple light fixtures. Replace it with a burned-out bulb for safety. Replace other bulbs throughout the house with bulbs of the next lower wattage.
- Consider installing solid state dimmers or high-low switches when replacing light switches, so you can reduce lighting intensity in a room and save energy.
- Use one large bulb instead of several small ones in areas where you need bright light.
- Use compact fluorescents when you can: They’re far more energy-efficient than incandescent lights. These lights can fit into many incandescent lamp sockets and provide the same quality of light. Compact fluorescent lamps are three to four times more efficient than conventional bulbs and last 10 times as long. For several years, they were very expensive, but many electric co-ops and building supply stores offer them on sale at very reasonable prices.
- Consider fluorescent lighting for the kitchen sink and countertop areas. These lights, set under kitchen cabinets or over counters, are pleasant and energy-efficient.
- Fluorescent lighting also is effective for makeup and grooming areas. Use 20-watt deluxe warm white lamps in these areas.



- Need new lamps?

Consider the advantages of those with three-way switches. They make it easy to keep lighting levels low when intense light is not needed. Use the “high” switch for reading or other activities that require brighter light.



- Turn three-way bulbs to the lowest lighting level when watching TV. You’ll reduce glare and save energy.
- Use low-wattage night light bulbs. These come in 4-watt and 7-watt sizes, and the smaller one may work well for you.
- Try 50-watt reflector floodlights in directional lamps (such as pole or spot lamps). These floodlights provide about the same amount of light as the standard 100-watt bulbs at half the wattage.
- Try 25-watt reflector flood bulbs in high-intensity portable lamps. They provide about the same amount of light but use less energy than the 40-watt bulbs that normally come with these lamps.
- Keep all lamps and lighting fixtures clean.
- You can save on lighting costs through decorating. Light colors for walls, rugs, draperies and upholstery reflect light and reduce the amount of artificial light needed.

## Outdoor lighting

- Have decorative outdoor gas lamps turned off, unless they’re essential for safety. By turning off one gas lamp, you might save from \$40 to \$50 a year in gas costs. If you need an exterior light, you might consider replacing your gas model with an electric unit.
- Use outdoor lights only when they’re needed. One way to make sure they’re off during the daylight hours is to put them on a photocell unit or timer.
- Consider installing solar-powered pathway lamps or high-efficiency sodium lamps for outdoor security lighting. They are available at many local hardware stores and building suppliers.

# SPOON RIVER ELECTRIC CO-OPERATIVE

## Long Distance Service Offering

BTC Communications, through an association with a large consortium of individuals and businesses, is able to offer the following wholesale long distance program. The underlying carrier for the plan is QWEST Communications, the nation's fourth largest carrier.

# 4.9¢

**PER MINUTE**  
All calls in Illinois

# 6.9¢

**PER MINUTE**  
All calls out of state

- |                   |                       |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| • Free To Join    | • 6 Second Billing    |
| • No Monthly Fees | • No Monthly Minimums |
| • Major Carrier   | • No Term Agreement   |

— No Codes to Dial —

— Long Distance & 800 Service At The Same Low Rate —

- All Calls Same Rate — 24 Hours A Day  
— 7 Days A Week

Free NO Surcharge Calling Cards: 13.9¢  
— 6 Second Billing



For Additional Information, Call: (877) 404-2572

Mail To: Spoon River Electric Co-operative, P.O. Box 340, Canton, IL 61520

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street \_\_\_\_\_ Estimated Monthly Usage \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Current Carrier \_\_\_\_\_  
 Your Telephone Numbers: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  
 Services Desired:  Outbound  800  Travel Cards  800 Number Requested \_\_\_\_\_  
 800 Service:  New  Existing To Ring To: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby authorize PowerNet Global Communications, or its designator, to transfer my long distance service. I agree to financial responsibility for all charges arising from all long distance services provided. The service requested will be provisioned only on the approval of credit for the application. A service charge may be accessed by the local telephone company when they make the carrier change.  
 Class 1 + LDA69EZ 800# E 69EZ Travel T14E Agency NEC.

Customer Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Spoon River Electric Co-operative, Inc.

930 South Fifth Avenue • P.O. Box 340 • Canton, Illinois 61520  
 (309) 647-2700 • Office hours: 8 a.m. — 4:30 p.m. • Web address: web.winco.net/~srec

# SPOON RIVER ELECTRIC

# News

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309-647-2700 ■ CANTON, ILLINOIS

## Baker, Miller tour Washington



Two area youths spent the week of June 16-23 exploring Washington D.C. The students met with Illinois congressional leaders and learned about their government during the annual "Youth to Washington" tour. This event, sponsored by the electric

and telephone cooperatives of Illinois, began in the late 1950s to introduce rural youths to our democratic form of government and cooperatives. Matt Baker of Lewistown and Kara Miller of Smithfield represented Spoon River Electric Co-operative. They met with Congressman Lane Evans on Capitol Hill and were among 55 rural Illinois youth leaders selected for the trip. In addition to the Capitol, students also visited Arlington National Cemetery, the National Cathedral, the Supreme Court, the Smithsonian Museums, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia and a number of other historical sites. Pictured are (l-r): Baker, Congressman Evans and Miller.

# Mark your calendar!

Our annual meeting is set for Thursday, September 7<sup>th</sup>, at 7 p.m. at the Canton High School Auditorium, Canton

Business meeting begins at 7 p.m.

Come and help your co-op conduct its business; Visit with friends and neighbors, and talk to your

Co-op employees and directors.

*We hope to see you there!*

# Breathe easy and save money too — change your A/C filter

While it seems mildly disgusting, dirty filters in any forced-air HVAC (heating/ventilation/air-conditioning) system actually do get more dirt out of the air than clean filters. As the filter gets dirty, the dirt blocks new dirt coming through.

But a dirtier filter isn't better for your furnace. The dirtier the filter, the harder your equipment has to work to force air through it. This lost efficiency increases the time the equipment must work, raising your energy bills and reducing equipment life.

Continuing to use a dirty filter can reduce air flow, causing equipment to overheat, then quit altogether. Sometimes systems will restart if you just change the filter. If not, your repair person is just a phone call and a checkbook away.

Filtering air also raises its quality for those breathing it. While furnace filters may not meet the needs of those with asthma or other lung diseases, they can definitely remove bothersome lint and cut down on the need to dust. You should be aware, however, that breathability is generally best if air is filtered continuously; if your blower has a "low" setting, leaving it on all the time results in the best air quality.

## Types of Filters

The most common "el-cheap-o" furnace filter is a one-inch pad of adhesive-coated fiberglass in those neon pinks, blues, and greens you've grown to love in your teenager's hair. Your furnace thinks these filters are great, as they get rid of the dog hair, sawdust and other large particles that reduce mechanical efficiency.

Your lungs, however, have other ideas. Your lungs are affected by smaller particulates and pollen that standard filters don't trap.

3M to the rescue! These "Fiber for Every Occasion" folks have developed several additional types of materials that, while still fitting in the one-inch filter slot typical of most household equipment, do a better job of air cleaning.

"Passive electric" filters, for instance, use fibers that pick up a static charge as the air passes through. The charge attracts and holds fine particles. Different types of fibers - polypropylene, polyolefin - can improve cleaning, as can pleating, which adds additional material to the filter while keeping thickness to an inch. Look for filters in these categories that can get rid of as much as 97 percent of pollen and 35 percent of dust.

- Some can even be washed and re-used.
- Other filters use thin metal plates. Some work similarly to the passive-electric fiber filters.
- Others draw additional electricity to create opposite charges on two successive plates. Dirt gets charged while passing through the first plate, causing it to stick to the plate with the opposite charge. These filters frequently generate ozone, which some models reduce through use of an additional carbon filter.



**Just try to breathe through this disgusting mess. This ugly looking filter should have been changed months ago.**

Metal filters are "permanent" - a real advantage for those in cramped condos with limited storage space. But you have to clean them frequently. They can also be relatively expensive, so do a back-of-the-envelope comparison on costs before you buy. If your system is new, a permanent filter will probably save a few dollars in the long run. But if you have a 12-year-old heat pump with a 15- to 17-year

- expected life, you may want to stick with disposable filters, as chances are the size needed for the current equipment isn't going to fit replacement equipment down the line.

Manufacturers recommend changing filters every month or two when the equipment is in use. Look for two different types of ratings on your furnace filters:

- "Arrestance" is used for larger particles. Standard and static-charge filters generally rate around 75 percent effectiveness on this scale. Pleated polyolefin filters generally get a 90 percent arrestance effectiveness rating or higher.
- The "Dust Spot Efficiency" standard measures a filter's ability to remove fine particles - between 0.3 and 6 microns in size. This standard puts anything under 30 percent in the "low efficiency" category. Garden-variety filters are usually around 10 percent. Pleated filters vary widely - from 20 to 55 percent. In general, it takes a separate filtering system to get into the 90 percent range on this test.

Both these measures come from a standard developed by the American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air-conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE), and the labeling on filters doesn't always make it clear which ASHRAE standard is being used. Check carefully.

You may also have seen a filter measurement standard called "thermal DOP." It's used only to measure very high-performance filters that normally can't be used with standard furnaces.

Source: Charlotte LeGates, *Energy.com*

# SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL COUNTY FAIR

The local  
county

fair is in  
town. Will



you attend this year? The county fair is

more than just cotton candy and a queen contest. It's good wholesome fun for your community.

Sit back and remember the fairs of your yesteryear. Remember the sense of pride you felt when the lambs you'd slaved over all year won first place? Remember how you felt when your dad put you in the seat of the antique tractor? Or how about when your mom's apple pie won a ribbon in the fair bake-off? The fairs of today are somewhat different, but people still go to the fair to see the livestock, ride the newest rides and eat a myriad of goodies. This type of fun needs to be around when

your children's children  
come along. Think  
about it, shouldn't  
you support your  
county fair?



# Note changes in your billing cards

As you have already noticed, Spoon River Electric's billing and meter cards have changed. In a constant effort to better our service to the members and keep up with challenging times due to deregulation, a change in our computer service was needed. In this change, while giving up some options, we gained some advantages. Spoon River Electric Cooperative is sorry for any inconveniences this may have caused.

Please use one of the following options to return your meter reading...

1. To return your card by mail, X out your name and address, put on your return address and place a stamp on the opposite side of the card.
2. To use our drop box located in the drive-up lane at our office 24 hours a day.
3. Call your meter reading in at (309) 647-2700 or toll free at (877) 404-2572.

Due to changes in the billing system, we can no longer offer the ability to figure the bill at the counter or when calling in your reading. An option we offer to our members is the Budget billing plan. This is where your payment will remain constant throughout the year so you know exactly how much to pay each month. Please contact our office today for details.

**Spoon River Electric Co-operative, Inc.**  
930 South Fifth Ave., PO Box 340, Canton, IL 61520  
(309) 647-2700  
(877) 404-2572

PRESORTED  
FIRST-CLASS MAIL  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
CANTON, ILLINOIS  
PERMIT NO.4

PLEASE SUBMIT READING BY 4<sup>TH</sup> OF MONTH USING DROP BOX, PHONE, OR BY MAIL.  
IF YOU HAVE MOVED, OR EXPECT TO, PLEASE CONTACT OUR OFFICE DURING CO-OP OFFICE HOURS.  
OFFICE HOURS: MON.-FRI. 8 A.M. TO 4:30 P.M.

Account # \_\_\_\_\_

Location # \_\_\_\_\_

Meter # \_\_\_\_\_

~~Willie Wirmand  
930 South Ave.  
Canton, IL 61520~~

## METER READING

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## SIGN UP FOR BUDGET BILLING

If you have a 12-month billing history and are in good standing, you can qualify for budget billing.

### Auto debit payment

Pay your bill "Worry Free" with an auto debit to your checking or savings account. This is a great way to pay your bill while away from home or if your busy schedule gets in the way. You'll save postage, too. This is a good way to make sure your payment is received on time and avoid late penalties. All you need to do is sign up for our "Worry Free Auto Debit" and we take care of the rest. You will still receive your notice by mail to notify you of the date and amount charged to your account.

### Worry Free Auto Debit Payment Plan Fill out below or attach a Voided Blank Check

Bank Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Savings       Checking

Account Number \_\_\_\_\_ Bank Route Number: \_\_\_\_\_

I agree to have Spoon River Electric deduct from my account specified above.

Sign Here \_\_\_\_\_

## SPoon RIVER ELECTRIC CO-OPERATIVE, INC.

930 South Fifth Avenue • PO. Box 340 • Canton, Illinois 61520  
(309) 647-2700 • (877) 404-2572 • Office hours: 8 a.m. — 4:30 p.m. • Web address: web.winco.net.nsrec

# SPOON RIVER ELECTRIC

# News

SPOON RIVER ELECTRIC CO-OPERATIVE, INC  
309-647-2700 ■ CANTON, ILLINOIS

Technology moves at such a fast rate, it's impossible to stay current with new trends. Here at Spoon River Electric Cooperative, we attempt to keep up with changing market trends so the cooperative can continue to offer quality services to our members. A current trend we see in the marketplace today is the development of the fuel cell. This new product on the market will change the way electricity will be delivered.

In a remote area where it is near impossible to run power lines to, a fuel cell can be installed and electricity provided without the need for power lines. The fuel cell still needs a source of energy, this energy comes from propane gas. With this in mind, Spoon River Electric Cooperative is preparing for the future. Spoon River Electric has formed a new business, Spoon River Propane, to

meet these future needs.

The cooperative has recently purchased two different leading propane companies and will begin operation sometime in September 2000. This allows our members a one stop shop for all their energy needs. Spoon River Propane can be reached at 1-888-346-6771 or write to us at Spoon River Propane, PO Box 370, Canton IL 61520.



## OTHER NEW SERVICES AVAILABLE

- Long distance phone service
- Surge protection leasing
- Credit card
- Storage
- Pager service
- Geothermal rebates
- Rental security lights
- Free water heater program

### Spoon River Electric Co-operative, Inc.

930 South Fifth Avenue  
PO. Box 340  
Canton, Illinois 61520

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# Your Illinois Electric cooperatives are advocates of electric safety



People of all ages should understand and respect the power of 7,200 volts of electricity. That's why many electric cooperatives are educating the public about electric safety by sponsoring Kyle Finley's Live Line Demo safety program.

His display is constructed with the same poles, transformers and line hardware used by your local cooperative. And each time Kyle, a former co-op lineman, gives his program at co-op annual meetings, fire departments, schools, fairs and more, he's helping co-ops spread their electric safety message to protect you, your family and friends.

For more information about electric safety call your local electric cooperative.

***Illinois electric cooperatives —  
we care about you, our members.***

## Do you need surge protection for your computer?

**S**trange things can happen to electricity between the power plant and your home. Lightning can strike the lines, tree limbs can brush against them, and cars may hit the power poles they're strung on. All those events can cause either momentary blinks, or catastrophic failure.

If you have a home computer, you've probably experienced the frustration of having your power supply suddenly flicker or go off completely, resulting in a loss of data.

Rapid changes in the amount of electricity going into your computer can result in damaged circuitry, loss of important data and a lot of frustration. While your co-op does its best to keep your power humming through its lines without interruption, many things are beyond its control. You may need some additional protection, if you have sensitive equipment.

What can you do to protect your computer from spikes and outages? There is equipment available for home use that is designed to eliminate or filter out power surges or provide a source of backup power if your power fails. Your first choice might well be a whole-house surge protection device, and your co-op may sell and service them. Check there first.

Other devices plug into outlets in the home, to protect just those items plugged into them. It's this kind of equipment that may save your computer's fragile innards if a lightning bolt hits nearby and enters your home's wiring.

From the standpoint of protecting data, nothing beats saving your work, and saving it often.

No matter how dependable your electricity is, or your computer, or your software, it's prudent to save your work frequently. That way, you lose only the work you've done since the

last save.

Surge protection equipment has been coming down in price for several years, and a good safeguard doesn't have to cost a lot. Look for a unit that has a quick "response time," and that can handle a fairly hefty surge. The quicker the response time, and the higher the surge-dampening ability, the better the protection.

If you can't shut down your computer during periods when power interruptions are likely, such as during intense lightning storms, you may be wise to invest in an Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS).

A UPS system operates with a battery backup that provides instant power to your computer if the outside voltage suddenly drops. Because the system takes over virtually instantly, your computer doesn't notice. The batteries normally supply enough power to continue operating for 15-20 minutes, but each system's reserve time will vary, depending largely on cost.

If you need a system that will just enable you to shut your machine down in an orderly fashion so you can wait out a storm, you can buy that at a fairly reasonable price.

On the other hand, if you want to be able to go on working on battery power, you'll need more. That'll cost you. Like surge-protection equipment, UPS systems have been coming down in price, too. Look for one with a quick reaction time and a battery sized to meet your needs.

If you're thinking about buying a surge protector or battery backup system for your computer, be sure the equipment you choose meets your needs. If power surges and outages concern you, surge protectors and battery backup systems may be just what you need for important protection.

# SPOON RIVER ELECTRIC CO-OPERATIVE

## Long Distance Service Offering

BTC Communications, through an association with a large consortium of individuals and businesses, is able to offer the following wholesale long distance program. The underlying carrier for the plan is QWEST Communications, the nation's fourth largest carrier.

# 4.9¢

**PER MINUTE**  
All calls in Illinois

# 6.9¢

**PER MINUTE**  
All calls out of state

- |                   |                       |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| • Free To Join    | • 6 Second Billing    |
| • No Monthly Fees | • No Monthly Minimums |
| • Major Carrier   | • No Term Agreement   |

— No Codes to Dial —

— Long Distance & 800 Service At The Same Low Rate —

- All Calls Same Rate — 24 Hours A Day  
— 7 Days A Week

Free NO Surcharge Calling Cards: 13.9¢  
— 6 Second Billing



For Additional Information, Call: (877) 404-2572

Mail To: Spoon River Electric Co-operative, P.O. Box 340, Canton, IL 61520

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street \_\_\_\_\_ Estimated Monthly Usage \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Current Carrier \_\_\_\_\_  
 Your Telephone Numbers: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  
 Services Desired:  Outbound  800  Travel Cards  800 Number Requested \_\_\_\_\_  
 800 Service:  New  Existing To Ring To: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby authorize PowerNet Global Communications, or its designator, to transfer my long distance service. I agree to financial responsibility for all charges arising from all long distance services provided. The service requested will be provisioned only on the approval of credit for the application. A service charge may be assessed by the local telephone company when they make the carrier change.  
 Class 1 + LDA69EZ 800# E 69EZ Travel T14E Agency NEC.

Customer Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Spoon River Electric Co-operative, Inc.

930 South Fifth Avenue • P.O. Box 340 • Canton, Illinois 61520  
 (309) 647-2700 • Office hours: 8 a.m. — 4:30 p.m. • Web address: web.winco.net/~srec

# SPOON RIVER ELECTRIC

# News

SPOON RIVER ELECTRIC CO-OPERATIVE, INC  
309-647-2700 ■ CANTON, ILLINOIS

## *Holiday Greetings*

The employees, staff and board of directors of Spoon River Electric Co-operative Inc., would like to wish all our members a joyous holiday season.



Our office will be closed Dec. 25 and 26 for Christmas and January 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> for the New Year's holiday.

# Students encouraged to apply for 2001 IEC Memorial Scholarship



Edward Cox, president/CEO of Spoon River Electric Co-operative, Inc., has announced that for the sixth consecutive year the Illinois electric cooperatives will award academic scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 each to three high school seniors. The scholarships are being awarded through the Illinois Electric Cooperatives Memorial Scholarship program.

High school seniors pursuing a college education in the state of Illinois are eligible to participate in the program and must be a child of an electric cooperative member, director or employee. Deadline for applications is Jan. 1, 2001.

"The purpose of the scholarship program is to assist electric cooperative youth

while honoring past rural electric leaders through memorial gifts," Cox said. "Spoon River Electric and the other Illinois electric cooperatives want to make a difference in their communities. One of the best ways we can do that is by lending a hand to our youth."

Candidates are judged on the basis of grade point average, college entrance exam scores, work and volunteer experience, school and civic activities, and a short essay that demonstrates their knowledge of electric cooperatives.

The IEC Memorial Scholarship program was established in 1994 by the board of directors of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives. For further information on the IEC Memorial Scholarship program, contact Spoon River Electric Co-operative Inc., at (309) 647-2700.

## Spoon River Electric participates in rodeo

A team of Spoon River Electric Cooperative linemen from Canton participated in the recent statewide Lineman's Safety Rodeo. The team consisted of Donnie Schrodtt, Ed Harper and Paul Moffitt, all of Canton.

The fourth annual Safety Rodeo, held at Lincoln Land Community College (LLCC) in Springfield on Friday, Oct. 6, coincided with a series of courses designed to help electric line personnel improve their work skills in safe and efficient ways. Several electric suppliers joined the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC), the Illinois Municipal Utilities Association and LLCC in co-sponsoring the event. The AIEC and LLCC are also working together to develop an associate's degree in power line technology.

Line personnel from 19 Illinois electric cooperatives and a municipal utility



competed in five team events and two individual events. Team events included transformer changeout, cross arm change, hurt man rescue, egg climb (linemen climbing a 30-foot pole with a raw egg in their mouths) and performing cardiopulmonary respiration (CPR). Pictured from left are Schrodtt, Harper and Moffitt.

# Changes to your billing cards

**Spoon River Electric Co-operative, Inc.**

930 South Fifth Ave., PO Box 340, Canton, IL 61520  
(309) 647-2700  
(877) 404-2572



PLEASE SUBMIT READING BY 4<sup>TH</sup> OF MONTH USING DROP BOX, PHONE, OR BY MAIL.  
IF YOU HAVE MOVED, OR EXPECT TO, PLEASE CONTACT OUR OFFICE DURING CO-OP OFFICE HOURS.  
OFFICE HOURS: MON.-FRI. 8 A.M. TO 4:30 PM.

Account # 231231

Location # 10734-21

Meter # 23432



**METER READING**

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Due to problems with the mailing system at the post office, please cross out your name and the presort stamp on this side of the meter card. (See Above)

Turn the card over and place a stamp on the card along with your return address and mail back to our office. (See Below)

Your return mailing address here

PLACE  
POSTAGE  
HERE

**Spoon River Electric Co-operative, Inc.**  
PO Box 340  
Canton, IL 61520

# SPOON RIVER ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

## Long Distance Service Offering

Spoon River Electric Cooperative, through an association with a large consortium of individuals and businesses, is able to offer the following wholesale long distance program. The underlying carrier for the plan is QWEST Communications, the nation's fourth largest carrier.

# 4.9¢

**PER MINUTE**  
All calls in Illinois

# 6.9¢

**PER MINUTE**  
All calls out of state

— No Codes to Dial —  
Long Distance & 800 Service At  
The Same Low Rate

- |                   |                       |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| • Free To Join    | • 6 Second Billing    |
| • No Monthly Fees | • No Monthly Minimums |
| • Major Carrier   | • No Term Agreement   |

All Calls Same Rate — 24 Hours A Day — 7 Days A Week  
Free NO Surcharge Calling Cards: 13.9¢ — 6 Second Billing



**To Sign Up By Phone...Dial: 1-800-268-0453, when prompted, enter  
Agent I.D. Number: 7331231234 and follow the instruction.**

For Additional Information Regarding This Service, Call: (877) 404-2572  
Mail To: Spoon River Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 340, Canton, IL 61520

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street \_\_\_\_\_ Estimated Monthly Usage \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Current Carrier \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone Numbers: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  
 Services Desired:  Outbound  800  Travel Cards  800 Number Requested \_\_\_\_\_  
 800 Service:  New  Existing To Ring To: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby authorize PowerNet Global Communications, or its designator, to transfer my long distance service. I agree to financial responsibility for all charges arising from all long distance services provided. The service requested will be provisioned only on the approval of credit for the application. A service charge may be assessed by the local telephone company when they make the carrier change.

Customer Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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