

The SOUTHEASTERN Light

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative Eldorado, Illinois

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner



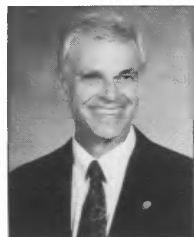
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Voluntary and open membership

SOUTHEASTERN
ILLINOIS ELEC COOP.

Voluntary and open membership

General Manager's Comments



James M. "Mick" Cummins

2006 Annual Meeting Location

Since its incorporation in 1938, SouthEastern has held its Annual Meeting at a number of locations including the Saline County Fairground and in a large canvas tent erected adjacent to the Cooperative's Eldorado Headquarters. Meeting accommodations were significantly improved when the decision was made to relocate the meeting to the Campus of the Southeastern Illinois Junior College in 1976.

Few areas of Southern Illinois are more scenic than the SIC Campus and the hospitality of Drs. Oldham and Cummiskey and their respective staff has just been tremendous over the years. There is no question that they have worked diligently to make each SouthEastern Annual Meeting held there a success.

However, despite the numerous advantages of the SIC Campus over previous locations, there have been a few issues our members have complained about over the years, including the difficulty of access for senior and handicapped individuals, the bleacher type seating, and the acoustic quality of the gymnasium.

To address those issues your Board of Trustees has been discussing the pros and cons of various other sites in the SouthEastern service area that might alleviate the above mentioned member complaints.

Recently a Committee of the Board visited one of the more

favorable potential locations and found it to have several advantages and opportunities for the membership, including improved access, acoustics, comfort, and location.

The facility has a covered entranceway, which will be a significant advantage in inclement weather conditions. It also has a large foyer (with restrooms) immediately adjacent to the meeting area which will allow members to enter the building, register, and walk just a few feet into a spacious auditorium with 1,500 padded floor mounted chairs. It offers superior acoustics and in addition has two large video screens, which can be used to project graphs, reports, and other data.

The facility is located approximately 3 miles north of Harrisburg, Illinois, adjacent to and on the west side of State Route 34 and is commonly known as the "Little Chapel Church" although the structure encompasses approximately two acres.

Vision Of A Perfect Cooperative

In my vision of a perfect cooperative each phone call would be answered by a live (and courteous) person on the first ring, 24 hours per day, seven days a week, 365 days per year, with nary a busy signal. However, since our normal daily call load at SouthEastern is in the range of 250 calls per day, a number which can soar into the thousands during major power supply failures, it would mean

■ (Continued on 16d)



Tree Trimming Is Essential For Reliable Power Delivery

Your electric co-operatives' lines, poles and substation structures are engineered to withstand many forces of Mother Nature. However, they may not withstand the force of a fallen tree or large branch, which could lead to a disruption of service. Trees touching power lines actually drain electricity off the electrical system, and in severe cases can cause your co-op's line-protection devices to take a circuit out of service. Voltage dips, caused when trees contact a power line, can damage appliances and sensitive electronics in homes and businesses in the area.

Vegetation management—including tree trimming—is an important aspect of your local electric cooperative's goal of delivering power to you that is safe, reliable, environmentally responsible and affordable. In fact, your co-op's vegetation management program can help reduce outages caused by things such as branches falling on lines during storms, shrubbery interfering with voltage levels or weeds in right-of-way areas making access to equipment difficult.

The final report of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission investigating the massive blackout in the Northeast and upper Midwest concluded that faulty vegetation management was largely to blame for the outages. Our linemen who helped out during this year's hurricanes found that co-ops with good right of way maintenance had less damage. We know from past ice storms and snow storms in our area that proper right of way is critical.

Here are some questions and answers about your co-op's tree trimming efforts. If you need more details, please call your co-op for help.

■ Can I trim my own tree?

Yes, but only if you can maintain a safe distance of at least 10 feet from power lines and other electrical equipment. There is a serious



risk for any tree trimmer working close to a high-voltage power line. In fact, tree trimmers who work in close proximity to power lines and other equipment are required to have special training to ensure their safety and that of others nearby. If you have a tree that is too close to power lines for you to safely prune, call your co-op.

■ My trees aren't touching the power lines, so why do you have to trim them?

Your co-op needs to take care of trees that could pose safety or reliability issues be-

fore someone is injured or experiences a power outage. This applies to trees with branches that could come into contact with power lines during heavy winds, as well as trees with branches that could bounce into power lines on windy days, causing blinking lights or momentary outages.

■ How will my trees be pruned?

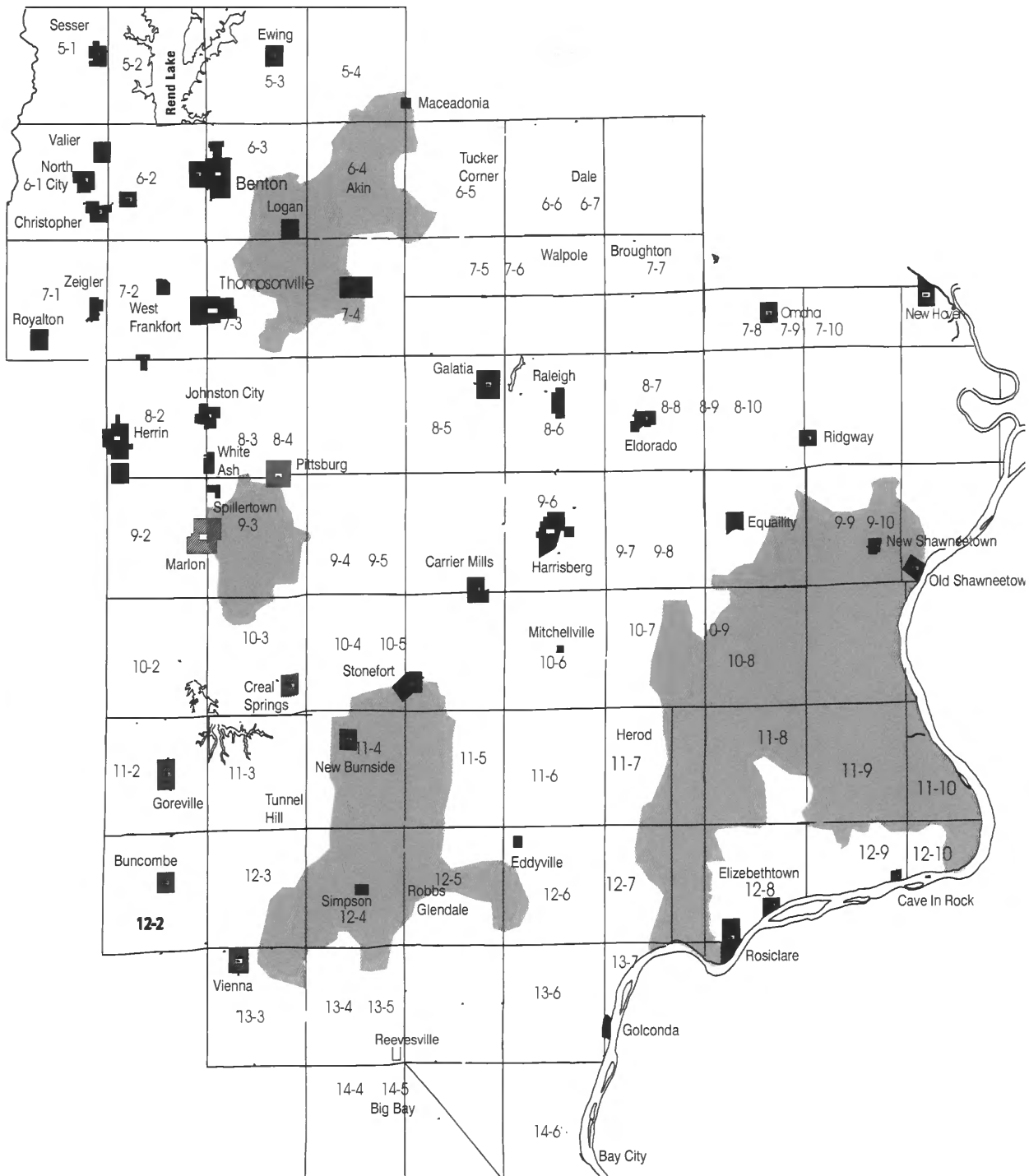
Your co-op will prune a tree only when the tree poses the safety and reliability risks of coming into contact with power lines. Your co-op carefully follows pruning guidelines according to recognized industry standards.

■ Why do you have to cut away so much of the tree?

Tree-trimming crews are very diligent in trimming only what is absolutely necessary. National standards require that a minimum distance of 10 feet from energized or potentially energized electrical equipment must be maintained. Trimmers also follow guidelines established by certified arborists and the federal Rural Utilities Service. The crews also identify expected growth patterns of trees between one pruning and the next pruning cycle; some faster-growing trees may require more clearance than others.

■ Where should I plant trees and shrubs?

When full-grown, trees and shrubs must be at least 10 feet away from power lines and other utility equipment such as transformers.



Throughout 2006 SouthEastern's forestry contractor will be trimming trees, applying chemical herbicide treatment, and mowing brush within the power line rights-of-way in the above blue shaded areas. Should any member have concerns regarding workers in the area, they should contact SouthEastern's Eldorado office at 1-800-273-2611, ext. 165.

We appreciate the cooperation of our members in allowing effective tree trimming, which should greatly help to alleviate future blinks and outages.

■ (Continued from 16a)

that hundreds of additional employees would have to be available at all times to provide perfect phone service. Obviously, that is not a viable situation, so we use automation to assist us in serving you better.

Typically we have 3-5 individuals on a daily basis answering calls live Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. through 4:00 p.m. During heavy call periods members calling the Cooperative will hear a recording asking them to hold for the next available Customer Service Representative and the record-

ing will also advise the caller as to how many other callers are waiting to talk to a CSR. Every 90 seconds or so the caller will be given the choice of continuing to hold or leaving a message. All messages are retrieved as soon as possible, even if it means our employees have to work after hours to do so.

Callers who contact the Cooperative outside of regular working hours to report outages or other emergency situations will typically have those calls answered by an Interactive Voice Response system, which identifies the caller's location by matching it to the member's

phone number in our data base. The system has the capability of allowing the caller to leave a message which will be retrieved by an operator. For the system to work properly, it is very important that members enter their permanent phone number in the space provided on their billing ticket. Please help us serve you better by taking the time to fill in this blank.

See you next year at the new Annual Meeting location and as always, "We'll keep the lights on for you"!

**READERSHIP PRIZE WINNER:
Rosie Duty, Pittsburg, IL 62974**

POWER OUTAGE

If your power goes off, we offer these suggestions

1. Check the fuses or circuit breakers in your service panels. If you have breakers, make sure they are in the "ON" position.
2. If you have a meter pole, check the main breaker panel just below the meter socket. If the breaker is in the "OFF" position, check all of your wiring from the meter pole to your various buildings. If the wiring appears to be okay, reset the breaker to the "ON" position.
3. If you still do not have power, check with neighbors to see if they have power.
4. To report a power failure or other emergency, please phone 1-877-399-8405. This phone number is monitored around the clock, 365 days per year to accept your outage and emergency calls.
5. Your phone call will be handled by SouthEastern's automated outage reporting system and will be identified automatically through ANI (Automatic Number Identification). An outage record will then be generated for your location. Please note that the phone number from which you place the call will be the number used to generate the record. If the system fails to recognize your phone number, members having touch-tone phones may simply enter their seven-digit phone number (without area code) in order to report the outage. Members not having touch-tone phones will be asked to leave a message. It is important you leave your name, phone number and location of the outage. Retrieving messages and entering them into the system is time consuming; therefore, please leave only a message that will help in restoration of electric service. Do not remain on the line for an operator because a live operator is not there to respond. In order to keep a current listing of all numbers, it is important that you notify the Cooperative of any changes in your telephone number.
6. Handling outage calls electronically allows you to report power failures very quickly. Once your outage has been reported, it will be dispatched to repair personnel who will restore your outage as soon as possible. Calling back repeatedly will not shorten the length of the outage, but may hinder the efforts of other members who are trying to report outages.

Outage Calls Only 1-877-399-8405

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative, Inc.

585 Highway 142 South • P.O. Box 251 • Eldorado, Illinois 62930
(618) 273-2611 or 1-800-833-2611 • Office hours: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. M-F

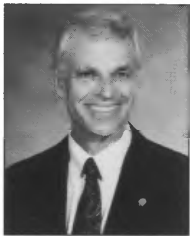
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General Manager's Comments



James M. "Mick" Cummins

Good, Better, Best Heating Choices

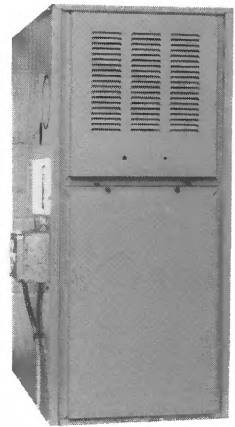
Many years ago, Sears, Roebuck & Company (just Sears for the younger folks) used to rate their catalogue items as "Good," "Better," and "Best." Those same descriptive terms can still be used today to compare heating systems. For example, propane is a GOOD heating choice. Older propane units (50-60 percent efficiency) have annual heating costs that are comparable to electric resistance heating (electric baseboard, ceiling cable and electric furnaces). Newer propane furnaces (85-95 percent efficiency) have annual heating costs that are comparable to the older (150 percent efficiency) heat pumps and in general, they are more efficient than electric resistance heat units. They are not, however, competitive with the newer 200 percent efficiency heat pumps. The disadvantages of propane include price volatility, and locating and refilling of the storage tank.

Natural gas is a BETTER heating choice. Newer, high efficiency natural gas furnaces have annual heating costs that are less than electric baseboard, ceiling cable or electric forced air. These units also hold a

■ (Continued on 16c)

GOOD:

Propane furnace

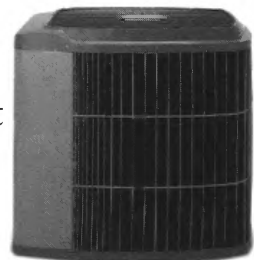


BETTER:

Natural gas furnace

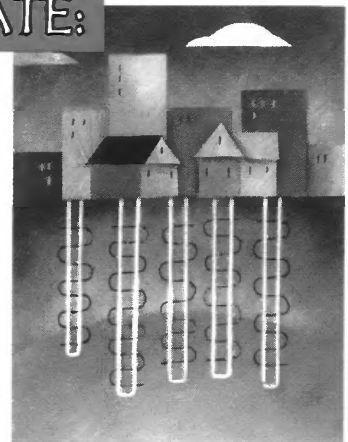
BEST:

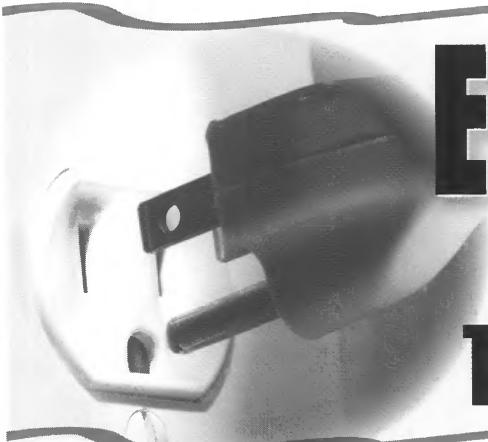
Electric heat pump



ULTIMATE:

Ground source heat pump





Electrical-Safety Quiz

Take this quiz adapted from the Underwriters Laboratories' Web site with your family to educate everyone on electrical safety practices. You can take the quiz online at www.ul.com.

- 1 To decrease the risk of burn or electrical shock for small children:**
 - A Keep small appliances out of reach.
 - B Avoid using extension cords when children are present.
 - C All of the above.
- 2 To use extension cords safely in your home:**
 - A Replace worn extension cords with new ones.
 - B Run cords through and around doors and windows, so you won't trip on them.
 - C Duct tape them to the floor.
- 3 If an electrical appliance falls into the water, the first thing to do is:**
 - A Unplug it, then take it to a service center.
 - B Call 911, then take it to a service center.
 - C Take it out quickly, and take it to a service center.
- 4 When buying an extension cord:**
 - A Get one at least 25 feet long.
 - B Make sure it has three prongs.
 - C Choose one based on how it will be used.
- 5 If your electrical outlet is hot to the touch:**
 - A Increase the size of the fuse.
 - B Unplug all appliances and have the wire checked as soon as possible.
 - C Wrap it with duct tape.
- 6 If you don't know what size bulb to use in a lamp:**
 - A Use a 25-watt bulb.
 - B Use a 60-watt bulb.
 - C Check with the manufacturer.
- 7 The UL Mark on a product means:**
 - A The product will perform to your expectations.
 - B The safety of a sample of the product has been evaluated by UL.
 - C The government has tested and approved the product.
- 8 When you need to use a three-pronged plug and you have only a two-pronged extension cord, you should:**
 - A Break off the third prong.
 - B Use the appliance with one prong exposed, keeping your hands dry.
 - C Avoid using the appliance until you can buy an appropriate extension cord.
- 9 If you damage an electrical appliance, you should:**
 - A Assume it's safe, as long as no electrical parts are exposed.
 - B Have it checked by a qualified service center.
 - C Duct-tape over any exposed electrical parts.
- 10 A simple, effective way to protect yourself from serious shock hazards is to use:**
 - A Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCIs).
 - B Rubber gloves.
 - C Circuit breakers.

See page 16c for answers >>

■ (Continued from 16a)

slight edge on newer high efficiency heat pumps. Disadvantages of natural gas include its limited availability, the increased maintenance requirements of the newer high efficiency units, and price volatility due to the ever-increasing worldwide demand for natural gas.

The **BEST** choice of heating systems is electricity. It's clean, safe and reliable. Heat pumps, for example, have a back-up system, which is activated automatically in the event of compressor failure. Electricity is a flameless heat, and unlike gas systems, no combustion occurs in or near your home; consequently, there is no need to vent toxic fumes. When electric space heating is combined with cooking and water heating, there is only one utility bill to pay, an advantage for today's busy families.

Sears never had an "**ULTIMATE**" classification, but the electric heat industry does. It's known as the "Ground Water" or "Ground

Source Heat Pump." These units are 350 percent efficient and have annual operating costs that are less than any natural or propane gas units available. They offer reliability and exceptionally quiet operation since there are no outside air exchangers. A bonus with these units is the fact that they can supply up to 60 percent of your water heating needs as they cool your home. The only disadvantage of these units is their higher initial cost, which can be quickly recovered through a few years of operational savings.

If you would like information on this system or additional facts or figures on any of the above systems, please phone **YOUR** Cooperative at (800) 833-2611 and they will be provided, and as always, "We'll keep the lights on for you".

READERSHIP PRIZE WINNER:
Stephen Evans, Galatia, IL 62935

ANSWERS:

1) C: All of the above.

These practices will all help decrease the risk of injury to small children. Children may see cords as toys and play with them in ways that adults would never imagine.

2) A: Replace worn extension cords with new ones.

Hiding cords or running them around doors and windows can present a serious fire hazard; it is safer to have a qualified electrician install outlets where you need them.

3) A: Unplug it, then take it to a service center.

When an electrical appliance falls into the water, first unplug it. Then, take it to a service center to make sure there is no damage that could cause injury.

4) C: Choose one based on how it will be used.

Many cords are listed by UL according to their intended use. Some are listed for "general use," which means they can be used for virtually any purpose. Ask your local hardware store dealer for help.

5) B: Unplug all appliances and have the wire checked as soon as possible.

If an electrical outlet becomes so hot that you can't leave your hand on it, you need to consult an electrician. However, keep in mind, most outlets feel a little warm after use.

6) C: Check with the manufacturer.

Check to see if your manufacturer has specified which size

bulb to use. All products Listed by UL are marked with wattage ratings. If no marking is available, do not use bulbs rated more than 60 watts.



7) B: A representative sample of the product has been evaluated by Underwriters Laboratories for safety.

The UL Mark tells you that representative samples of the product have met UL's rigorous requirements for safety.

8) C: Avoid using the appliance until you can get an appropriate extension cord.

Leaving the third prong of a plug open could expose you and your family to the threat of electric shock.

9) B: Have it checked by a qualified service center before you use it again.

Even if it functions normally, you should always have damaged appliances checked by a qualified service center. Be wary of older appliances, especially if you are not familiar with their history.

10) A: Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCIs).

These devices monitor the current flowing into and out of a product. If the product is receiving more electricity than it is giving back, the GFCI immediately cuts off the current.

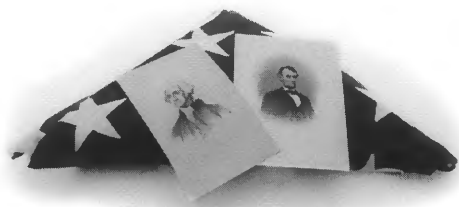
Is Your Home Losing Its Heat?

Heating and cooling your home uses more energy than any appliance, and insulating your attic may be the most cost-effective way to stop heat loss in your house. Newer houses may have enough insulation, but you should check to make sure the insulation hasn't become compressed, reducing its R-value.

According to the U. S. Department of Energy, homes in northern Illinois should be insulated to R-49 in the attic. In the rest of Illinois, attics should be insulated to R-38.

For information on installing insulation call your local electric co-op, home center or visit www.doityourself.com/insulate/insulationinstall.htm.

Office Closing



Our office will be closed
Monday, Feb. 20th,
for President's Day.

POWER OUTAGE

If your power goes off, we offer these suggestions

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2. If you have a meter pole, check the main breaker panel just below the meter socket. If the breaker is in the "OFF" position, check all of your wiring from the meter pole to your various buildings. If the wiring appears to be okay, reset the breaker to the "ON" position.
3. If you still do not have power, check with neighbors to see if they have power.
4. To report a power failure or other emergency, please phone 1-877-399-8405. This phone number is monitored around the clock, 365 days per year to accept your outage and emergency calls.
5. Your phone call will be handled by SouthEastern's automated outage reporting system and will be identified automatically through ANI (Automatic Number Identification). An outage record will then be generated for your location. Please note that the phone number from which you place the call will be the number used to generate the record. If the system fails to recognize your phone number, members having touch-tone phones may simply enter their seven-digit phone number (without area code) in order to report the outage. Members not having touch-tone phones will be asked to leave a message. It is important you leave your name, phone number and location of the outage. Retrieving messages and entering them into the system is time consuming; therefore, please leave only a message that will help in restoration of electric service. Do not remain on the line for an operator because a live operator is not there to respond. In order to keep a current listing of all numbers, it is important that you notify the Cooperative of any changes in your telephone number.
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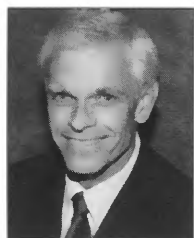
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Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

General Manager's Comments



James M. "Mick" Cummins

We're just one of a number of local Southern Illinois businesses that's "home grown and locally owned" and darn proud of it!

Contribution to Community

It's difficult to turn on the television or pick up a newspaper anymore without hearing or reading about some major corporate acquisition event. As a matter of fact the business world today is somewhat akin to a food chain where the bigger and stronger players are always swallowing up their smaller and weaker competition.

Obviously there are a number of distinct corporate advantages in being large, including increased market share and profits, both of which are essential elements for survival in today's global economy. Unfortunately what is good for the corporate world is not always best for local communities, many of which have been devastated by the triple punch of lost jobs, lost tax revenue and population migration.

The good news is there are still a number of locally owned businesses in our area that have been operating in Southern Illinois for decades and your Cooperative is one of them.

First founded in 1938 for the purpose of extending electric service into rural areas where there was none, your Cooperative has grown to be the largest in the State in the terms of energy distributed to its users, with annual sales expected to exceed 800,000,000 kilowatt-hours this year. Those energy sales are significantly larger than any other cooperative operating in the State,

and maximizing sales from our existing distribution system

is one way of keeping our rates as competitive as possible. Our success in this area is demonstrated by the fact that your Cooperative has the second lowest residential rate in the State, based on an average energy usage of 1,000 kilowatt-hours per month.

Local ownership also means the majority of the dollars our members spend for electric energy stay here in Southern Illinois and serve to enhance the area economy. Those dollars are spent with local merchants for fuel, tires, vehicles, gravel, hardware etc., as well as being used to hire other local area firms to assist the Cooperative with such items as tree removal and line construction projects, not to mention the continual maintenance required for the headquarters building in Eldorado and the District Operations Centers located in Franklin, Williamson and Pope Counties.

Local businesses also contribute to their communities by paying property and other local taxes and your Cooperative is no exception, paying well over \$4,000,000 in Local, State and Federal taxes in 2004.

In short we're just one of a number of local Southern Illinois businesses that's "home grown and locally owned" and darn proud of it!

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

**READERSHIP PRIZE WINNER:
Robert E. Fuller, Galatia, IL 62935**



Choosing the Right Tree and the Right Spot for Energy Efficiency

The U.S. Department of Energy says that trees planted in the right places can save up to 25 percent of your household energy consumption for heating and cooling. Landscaping your home correctly should provide enough energy savings to return the investment in less than eight years.

In the Summer

The air temperature under a yard's shade tree can be 25 degrees cooler than that of the nearby street. You can block a great deal of solar heat invading your home in the summer but still let the heat warm your home in the winter by planting deciduous trees. Trees with high leaves and branches should be planted to the south of your home to shade your roof from the hottest part of the day. Trees that have lower branches can be planted to the west to shade your home from the low afternoon sun.



A 6-8 foot tree planted near your home will begin shading windows its first year. It could shade your roof in as little as five years. And remember, shading your air conditioner can increase its efficiency by up to 10 percent.

In the Winter

Blocking cold winter winds will help reduce your heating costs. Evergreen trees and shrubs planted to the north and northwest make good windbreaks. You'll want to plant trees and shrubs together to provide a consistent wind block from the ground to the treetops. For greatest savings, plant windbreaks two to five times the mature height of other trees in your yard.

Be careful not to plant evergreens close to the south side of your home. This could block winter sunlight and prevent its warmth from entering your home.

Shrubs, bushes and vines planted next to your home can also help insulate your home in winter and summer. Leave at least one foot between full-grown plants and your home's outer wall.

Source: The U.S. Department of Energy - Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy at www.eere.energy.gov.

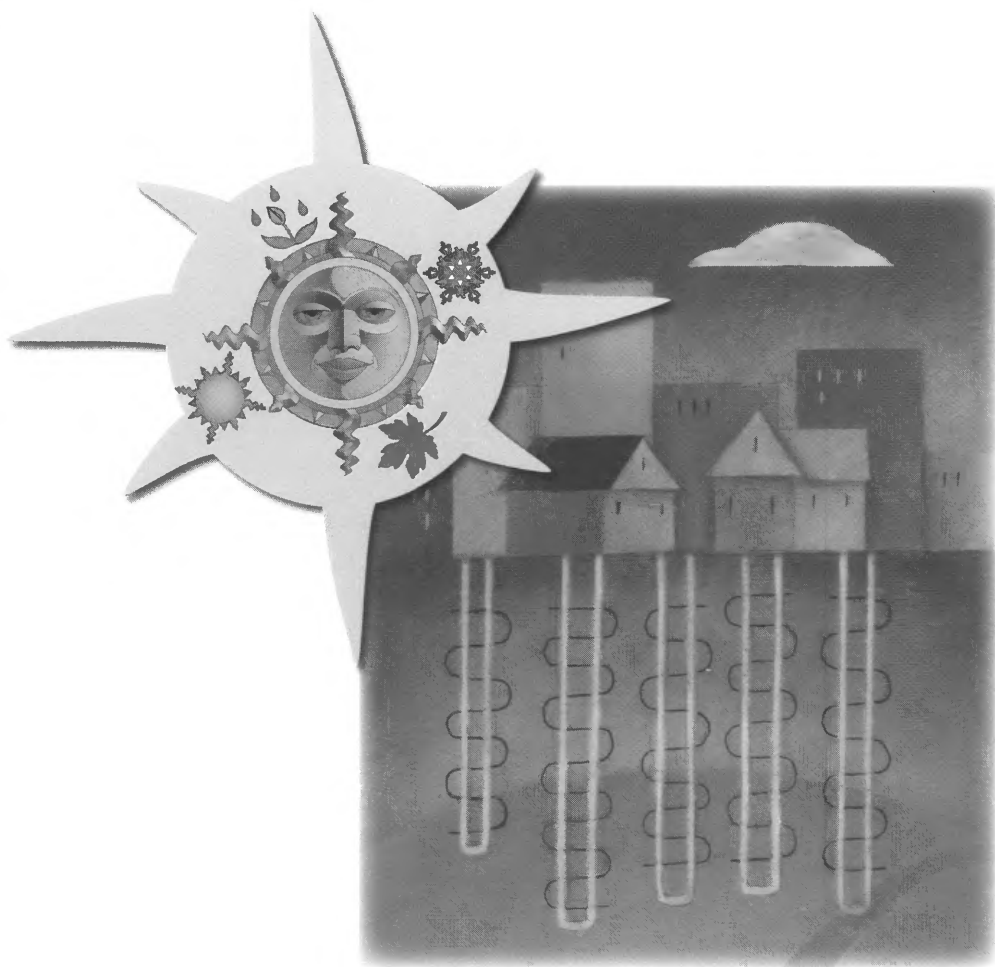
Want to Pay Online?

In today's hectic world, many of our members pay their phone, credit card and cellular bills online. And through our Ebill system on our Web site, busy members can pay their electric bill online too.

If you receive a monthly invoice from us, all the information you need to make a payment online is contained on your bill. If you are a self-billed member, the rate chart in your self-bill packet will help you figure out the amount to pay when you submit your meter reading.

Log onto www.seiec.com today to register with our Ebill system and start paying your bill online!





Geothermal **Could Be The Answer**

Spring has nearly sprung again, and summer heat is just around the corner. If your air conditioner is on its last leg, think about replacing it with an efficient and quiet geothermal heat pump. A geothermal system will give you years of cooling and heating comfort, and at a substantial savings each month. For more information about geothermal technology, contact your local electric cooperative.



Touchstone Energy®
The power of human connections



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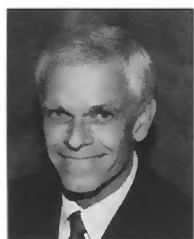
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General Manager's Comments



James M. "Mick" Cummins

The What and Why of Customer Charges

SouthEastern members who are still spreading their own meters and calculating their bills from rate schedule booklets may have noticed that the charge each month for zero energy usage is \$18.75 for residential accounts and \$19.80 for all-electric accounts. This charge, which is typically referred to as a Customer Charge or Facility Charge, is the minimum amount utilities charge for making service available to the property.

Such charges are sometimes higher in rural areas due to the extra expense of making service available, and the average rural water district user pays a minimum Customer or Facility Charge of about \$25.00 each month, whether or not any water usage is recorded on the meter. Likewise, telephone companies also have a basic fee, typically in the \$30.00 range each month, even if there are no phone calls made during the billing period.

SouthEastern's basic charge, which we refer to as a Customer Charge, like those of phone and water companies, includes the fixed costs of depreciation, interest, taxes, maintenance, operation and administration. Each customer class is allocated a portion of those expenses based on the total cost of making service available. Homes with electric heat and electric appliances, as a group, require larger transformers and higher capacity service conductors and therefore the monthly Customer Charge for "AH" or all-electric accounts is slightly higher than the residential monthly Customer Charge because of the extra cost of the larger transformers, ser-

vices conductors and associated labor installation of that equipment.

Many electric cooperatives, including SouthEastern, do not try to recover all of their monthly fixed expenses through the Customer Charge alone, but instead rely on a tiered rate structure to recover a portion of it, and that is why the first 1,100 kilowatt-hours used by each SouthEastern residential account every month are priced slightly higher than energy usage over and above the 1,100 kilowatt threshold.

SouthEastern members who have already had AMR (automated meter reading) installed on their account by the Cooperative and who are receiving an invoice bill each month will notice that we have broken their bills down in a number of segments to show the charge for the first 1,100 kilowatt-hours of usage, the charge for any usage above 1,100 kilowatt-hours, the Customer Charge, the Illinois Public Utility Revenue Tax charge and the charge for any options such as security lights or surge protection.

The AMR bill also contains a bar graph of the member's energy usage for previous months, the member's average kilowatt usage per day and the member's average electric energy cost per day, information which has been added to serve you better.

Thanks to those members who have called or written expressing their appreciation for the new invoice bill format and as always, "We'll keep the lights on for you!" 62931

READERSHIP PRIZE WINNER:
Larry Gustin, Elizabethtown, IL



Danger After A Storm

Tips to stay safe after the storm is over

Safe Electricity and South-Eastern Illinois Electric Cooperative cautions everyone to be mindful of the electrical hazards that tornadoes, storms and flooding can leave in their wake, and offers vital safety tips to avoid electrocution and serious injury when dealing with the aftermath of a major storm or disaster.

Stay away from downed power lines and be alert to the possibility that tree limbs or debris may hide an electrical hazard. Treat all downed or hanging power lines as if they are energized. Warn others to stay away and contact the electric utility.

If using electric yard tools in clean-up efforts, do not operate them if it's raining, the ground is wet, or while you are

wet or standing in water. Keep all electric tools and equipment at least 10 feet away from wet surfaces.

Turn off electric and gas before entering flooded or damaged rooms. If you can't reach your breaker box safely, call SouthEastern to shut off your power at the meter. We will send someone as soon as we can.

Never step into a flooded basement or other area if water is covering electrical outlets, appliances, or cords. Be alert to any electrical equipment that could be energized and in contact with water. Never touch electrical appliances, cords or wires while you are wet or standing in water. Have a professional check out all water damaged appliances before

using them.

If after a storm or disaster, the power to your home is out for a prolonged period, know important safety rules, such as never using a charcoal or gas grill to cook inside! And if you use a standby generator, make sure a transfer safety switch is used, or connect the appliance(s) directly to the generator output through an isolated circuit before you operate it. This prevents electricity from traveling back through the power lines, what's known as "back feed." Back feed creates danger for anyone near lines, particularly crews working to restore power.

For more information on electrical safety, visit www.SafeElectricity.org.



Save Money And Aggravation With Surge Protection

April showers bring May flowers, but they can also bring storms containing deadly lightning. To protect the electronics and appliances in your home from lightning strikes and spikes, consider installing a whole-house surge protector. You'll save both money and aggravation.

For information about surge protection, contact Don here at your cooperative at (800) 833-2611, ext. 160.



Touchstone Energy®
The power of human connections



Your Family Is Unique

A Real Energy Saver

By Stacy Slatton, ICL Intern

Has your electric bill ever caught you off guard? Have you ever wondered how to estimate your energy usage and cost? If so, the booklet *Your Family is Unique* could be just what you've been looking for.

Your *Family is Unique* is an eight-page booklet that includes:

- Tips on how to save energy.
- Plans for vacation and seasonal usage.
- An appliance energy usage guide.
- A formula to estimate the cost of your family's energy usage.
- "Did you know" facts about appliances, such as water pumps.
- "Try this and save" tips for cheap household maintenance ideas that can save you money.
- Answers to questions such as "Why is my electric bill higher than my neighbor's" and "Is the meter accurate?"

"The *Your Family is Unique* publication has been around for years, but it recently received a major renovation. It will continue to be a great tool for cooperatives to give to members who are concerned about high electric bills," says Rick Polley, Manager of Field Services from the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives.

Polley, along with three other local electric cooperative energy experts, recently updated the booklet to correspond with the current kilowatt/hour rates and newer household gadgets, such as cell phones and plasma televisions.

Some people aren't aware of just how much energy their family uses in a month. Things like phantom loads, appliances that consume small amounts of electricity even when turned off, and hot water usage are some of the surprising causes of high electric bills.

"Often-times the member thinks the meter is inaccurate and that they can't possibly be using that much electricity. This publication helps them realize that they may be using more than they think," Polley says.

Jerry Houser, Manager of Member Services at Wayne-White Counties Electric Cooperative, agrees with the usefulness of the booklet, "I have always used the *Your Family is Unique* pamphlet in helping resolve member concerns over electric usage. I believe the updated pamphlet will certainly improve its effectiveness for our members."

Contact your local cooperative to receive your copy of the *Your Family is Unique* booklet when it is available.





Dangers of Digging

Don't get shocked by what you find in your backyard - start every planting or building project with a call to J.U.L.I.E. Cable, phone, gas and electric lines can be buried just beneath the surface. When planting that tree or setting that post, you could dig into an earthworm, a cable line, or a 7,200-volt electric line. Call J.U.L.I.E. at (800) 892-0123 at least 48 hours before your work will begin to keep you and your family safe.



Our office will be closed Friday, April 14 in observance of Good Friday

POWER OUTAGE

If your power goes off, we offer these suggestions

1. Check the fuses or circuit breakers in your service panels. If you have breakers, make sure they are in the "ON" position. If you have a meter pole, check the main breaker panel just below the meter socket. If the breaker is in the "OFF" position, check all of your wiring from the meter pole to your various buildings. If the wiring appears to be okay, reset the breaker to the "ON" position.
3. If you still do not have power, check with neighbors to see if they have power.
4. To report a power failure or other emergency, please phone 1-877-399-8405. This phone number is monitored around the clock, 365 days per year to accept your outage and emergency calls.
5. Your phone call will be handled by SouthEastern's automated outage reporting system and will be identified automatically through ANI (Automatic Number Identification). An outage record will then be generated for your location. Please note that the phone number from which you place the call will be the number used to generate the record. If the system fails to recognize your phone number, members having touch-tone phones may simply enter their seven-digit phone number (without area code) in order to report the outage. Members not having touch-tone phones will be asked to leave a message. It is important you leave your name, phone number and location of the outage. Retrieving messages and entering them into the system is time consuming; therefore, please leave only a message that will help in restoration of electric service. Do not remain on the line for an operator because a live operator is not there to respond. In order to keep a current listing of all numbers, it is important that you notify the Cooperative of any changes in your telephone number.
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Outage Calls Only 1-877-399-8405

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative, Inc.

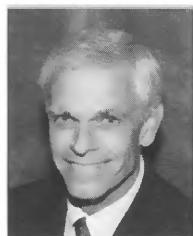
585 Highway 142 South • P.O. Box 251 • Eldorado, Illinois 62930
(618) 273-2611 or (800) 833-2611 • Office hours: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. M-F

The SOUTHEASTERN Light

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative Eldorado, Illinois

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

General Manager's Comments



James M. "Mick" Cummins

Keeping the Lights On

When I was a young boy, my family lived on the Cooperative's lines and Mom always kept a kerosene lamp setting on the closet shelf ready to go in the event of a power failure. Since power failures were rather common in that day and carried with them the double whammy of being without electricity and water, much of my career at SouthEastern has focused on providing a reliable source of power.

Comparing vital statistics of the Cooperative from the year 1989 through the present indicate we have elevated our total utility plant investment from \$51,881,350 to \$113,666,661, an increase of almost \$62,000,000 or 119 percent. In addition we have increased our total annual electrical distribution maintenance expense (which includes tree-trimming) from \$1,415,000 in 1989 to well over \$3,500,000 in 2005. Yes those are big numbers, but such a commitment is necessary in order to provide our members with the quality of service they deserve.

A Big Thank You!!!!

Wow! It doesn't seem possible but March 15th marked my 16th year of employment as your General Manager and my overall 39th or 41st year with the Cooperative, depending whether or not the two-year

absence from the Cooperative between 1968 and 1970 as a result of the Viet Nam Conflict is included.

Since I have informed SouthEastern's Board of Trustees that I plan to retire on or about July 3, 2006, I wanted to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to all the member/owners of this Cooperative who have been so kind to me over the years. It has truly been a blessing to work for and with such a great group of members, fellow employees and Board, not to mention being able to work in a technological field that has done more to improve our lives and life styles than any other invention in history.

This column is being written on March 17th well in advance of its appearance in your home or business around the last of April, but I wanted to inform our members that your Board of Trustees is using due diligence to select a new General Manager, and to date some 42 applications for the position have been received. Your Board met on March 13th and pared those applications down to four candidates, which they plan to interview April 4th and 5th, with the goal of selecting the new General Manager on the latter date.

Thanks once again for being so great to work with all of these years and as always, "We'll keep the lights on for you."

READERSHIP PRIZE WINNER:
Roy L. Hughes, Golconda, IL 62938



New Location for SEIEC's 2006 Annual Meeting



SouthEastern's August 1, 2006, Annual Members' Meeting will be held at Little Chapel Church located approximately 3 miles north of Harrisburg, adjacent to and on the west side of State Route #34



In inclement weather, the covered entranceway will be advantageous.



The two-acre structure will offer easy access for senior and handicapped individuals.

The large foyer, with restrooms, immediately adjacent to the meeting area will allow members to enter, register and walk just a few feet into a spacious auditorium with 1,500 padded chair seats.



This auditorium offers superior acoustics, as well as two large projection video screens.



There's more than one way to
light up your night.
As Touchstone Energy's national alliance
of 625 cooperatives...we shine as one.

See the Touchstone Energy Hot Air Balloon during the Annual Macomb Balloon Rally on September 8-9 and at the Galena Halloween Balloon Festival on Oct. 27-29.

And speaking of lighting up your night, contact your local electric cooperative for information about safe and inexpensive security lights.



Touchstone Energy®
The power of human connections

POWER OUTAGE

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The SOUTHEASTERN Light

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative Eldorado, Illinois

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner



New General Manager



Dustin Tripp is the new General Manager

Hiring a new manager is never an easy task and SouthEastern's Board of Trustees spent numerous hours evaluating the skills and qualifications of each of the 42 individuals who applied for the position of Executive Vice President and General Manager of this State's largest electric cooperative in terms of energy sales.

After much deliberation, four candidates were selected for interview. Two of those candidates were current SouthEastern employees and the other two were very highly qualified electric cooperative employees from other states who applied for the position. The Trustees conducted their interviews on the 4th and 5th of April, and by late afternoon on the second day had made their decision.

Dustin Tripp, who resides with his family near Creal Springs on SouthEastern's lines, is the new General Manager of your Cooperative.

However, Mr. Tripp is no stranger to SouthEastern and one might even say his career with us began way back in 1992 when he worked for your Cooperative while attending the University of Missouri at Rolla.

After graduating Magna Cum Laude, with a degree in Electrical Engineering from Rolla, Tripp worked with the Black & Veatch International Engineering Consulting Firm, where he specialized in power plant design and construction projects.

Next Tripp was employed by the Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative at Paxton, Illinois as their System Engineer initially and eventually moved up to the position Manager of Engineering & Operations for that Cooperative. Tripp managed to earn a Masters in Business Administration from the University of Illinois before returning home to Southern Illinois and SouthEastern Electric Cooperative in the fall of 1999.

He has served as SouthEastern's Engineering and Customer Service Manager since that time and officially assumed his duties as General Manager of your Cooperative on May 1, 2006.

Former General Manager Mick Cummins says, "I trust all SouthEastern members will give Mr. Tripp the same support and encouragement provided me over the years, and Dustin from me to you, keep the lights on for us!"

READERSHIP PRIZE WINNER:

Michael C. Irwin,
Eddyville, IL 62928



Youth Day

Senator Gary Forby met with two students representing SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative during the Illinois Electric and Telephone Cooperatives' Youth Day on Wednesday, April 5, in Springfield. Students had an opportunity to view state government in action, tour the State Capitol, Illinois Supreme Court, Old State Capital and the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum. From left are Erin Clark of Marion, Sen. Forby, Emmaline Archdale of Herod and chaparrone Sunday Whitlock.

The day was sponsored by the Illinois electric and tele-



phone co-ops and is designed to introduce young rural leaders to state government.



Nominating Committee Chosen

As provided by the bylaws of SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative, Inc., a Nominating Committee was chosen April 25, 2006, consisting of the following Cooperative members:

■ District No. 1

Beth A. Winget, 7311 Section Line, Mulkeytown, IL 62865

■ District No. 2

David E. Goss, 21695 Ewing Road, Macedonia, IL 62860

■ District No. 3

Carl L. Smith, R. #5 Box 164, McLeansboro, IL 62859

■ District No. 4

Jon Ward, 14777 Dillingham Road, Thompsonville, IL 62890

■ District No. 5

John M. "Jack" Jackson, 15750 IL R. #1, P. O. Box 541, Ridgeway, IL 62979

■ District No. 6

Robert L. Stricklin, 5141 Moake School Road, Marion, IL 62959

■ District No. 7

Michael D. Martin, 1010 Mitchellville Road, Harrisburg, IL 62946

■ District No. 8

Leroy Capeheart, 6175 Saline Mine Road, Shawneetown, IL 62984

■ District No. 9

Joseph C. Whitehead, 4845 Tunnel Hill Road, Tunnel Hill, IL 62972


■ District No. 10

Sandra L. Potts, R. #1 Box 59, Rosiclare, IL 62982

■ District No. 11

R. C. Davidson, Jr., R. #3 Box 136, Golconda, IL 62938

The Committee will meet at the office of the Cooperative on Tuesday, May 9, 2006, at the hour of 10:00 a.m., for the purpose of nominating candidates for three-year terms as Trustees of SOUTHEASTERN ILLINOIS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. Trustees whose terms are expiring include: W. S. Richardson, 15483 Snowflake Road, Ewing, IL 62836 (District #2); Kenneth Hathaway, 390 Lambert Road, Harrisburg, IL 62946 (District #7); Jack Logsdon, Jr., 9100 Buckeye Road, Shawneetown, IL 62984 (District #8); and Gary Hise, R. #1 Box 34C, Golconda, IL 62938 (District #11).


Joseph L. Marlo, Secretary
Board of Trustees

Marco! Polo!

Swimming Pool Safety

By Stacy Slatton, ICL Intern

The National Safety Council (NSC) celebrates Safety Month in June. This includes everything from driving safety to home and community safety. With the hot summer months already underway, it's no surprise that swimming pool safety is also a focus.

During the heat of the summer many people elect to spend their time cooling down and playing with friends and family in the pool. This can be a great way to relax and avoid the heat, but it's important to learn pool safety to avoid accidents.

According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, drowning is the cause of more than 4,000 deaths annually and is a leading cause of death for children under five. This doesn't mean you should tear down your pool or throw away plans for a future pool; it just shows you should be informed of the dangers that come with owning this recreational summer staple.

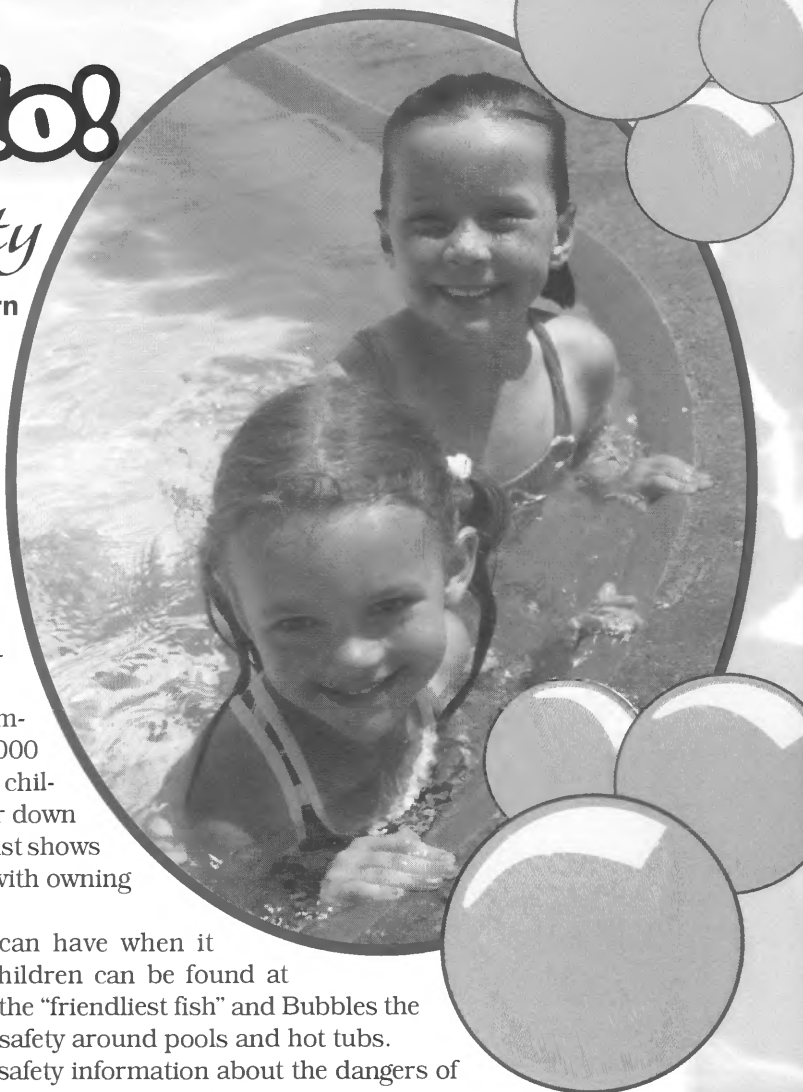
Being informed is the best protection you can have when it comes to pools. An informational Web site for children can be found at www.SplashZoneUSA.com. At Splash Zone Sonny the "friendliest fish" and Bubbles the "hot tub buddy" interactively teach children about safety around pools and hot tubs.

Many helpful Web sites give parents facts and safety information about the dangers of pools. It's important to remember that when a child falls into the pool there's no splashing around. Drowning is a silent death. If a child does fall into the pool it's imperative that the person who finds him or her starts CPR immediately.

The NSC and the American Academy of Pediatrics have useful tips to help childproof the pool and keep your children safe:

- Never leave children unattended. It takes adults about two minutes to drown, but it only takes a child 20 seconds. If you have to leave the area, take the children with you.
- Remove toys in and around the pool when not in use. Toys can attract children to the pool.
- Barriers can offer added protection against drowning. Put up a fence to block the pool from the house. The fence should be more than four feet high and have latches on gates higher than your children can reach. Power or manual covers will completely cover a pool and block access to the water.
- Keep rescue equipment (such as a shepherd's hook or life preserver) and a telephone within easy reach of the pool.
- Sign up your children for swimming lessons, but remember that this won't make them "drown-proof."
- Learn CPR and how to rescue a child if needed.
 - Watch for overhead power lines when swimming and using equipment to clean out the pool.
 - Keep electronics away from the water to avoid electrocution.

Although it sounds like owning a pool is very dangerous, with the right amount of safety awareness pools can be very enjoyable. So kick back and have fun in the pool this summer, but remember to put safety first.



★ Don't Forget!

**SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative's
Annual Meeting
Tuesday, August 1, 2006**



POWER OUTAGE

If your power goes off, we offer these suggestions

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SouthEastern Electric
Cooperative's

ILLINOISTM

COUNTRY LIVING

July 2006

The
SOUTHEASTERN
Light

Published by SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Attend the

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative

ANNUAL MEETING

TUESDAY, AUGUST 1, 2006

Little Chapel Church

(3 1/2 miles north of Harrisburg on route 34)

- Registration begins at 6 p.m.
- Entertainment by "Little Egypt Barbershop Chorus"
- Business meeting begins at 7 p.m.
- Numerous attendance prizes
- Four \$250 cash prizes
- Children's drawing for 10-\$25 "Toys R Us" gift certificates

Official Registration

Phone Number (____) _____
(Please provide current phone number)

Please Bring This Card To The Meeting

Please cut out and bring to the meeting for registration and drawing of prizes.

\$15 credit

on your next electric bill for all members attending the Annual Meeting!

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative, Inc.

P. O. Box 251, Eldorado, Illinois 62930

OFFICIAL NOTICE OF 2006 ANNUAL MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Annual Meeting of the Members of SOUTH-EASTERN ILLINOIS ELECTRIC CO-OPERATIVE, INC., will be held at Little Chapel Church, 3859 Highway 34 North, Harrisburg, IL on August 1, 2006; that the period of registration for said Meeting of Members will be from 6 p.m. until 7 p.m.; business meeting of said Members will convene at 7 p.m. for the purpose of taking action upon the reports of Officers, Trustees and Committees of said Cooperative, for the election of four (4) Trustees for terms of three (3) years each, for amendment of the Bylaws, and for such other matters as may properly be considered at such meeting.

You are further notified that the number of Trustees to be elected at the 2006 Annual Meeting is four and that one Member is to be elected from each of Districts 2, 7, 8 and 11.

Report Of Nominating Committee

As provided by the bylaws of SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative, Inc., a Nominating Committee, consisting of the following Cooperative members:

- Beth Winget (District #1)
- David E. Goss (District #2)
- Carl L. Smith (District #3)
- Jon Ward (District #4)
- John M. "Jack" Jackson (District #5)
- Robert L. Stricklin (District #6)
- Michael D. Martin (District #7)
- Leroy Capeheart (District #8)
- Joseph C. Whitehead (District #9)
- Sandra L. Potts (District #10)
- R. C. Davidson, Jr. (District #11)

met at the office of the Cooperative on May 9, 2006, at the hour of 10 a.m. for the purpose of nominating four (4) candidates for three-year terms as Trustees of SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative, Inc.

The undersigned served as Secretary of the meeting.

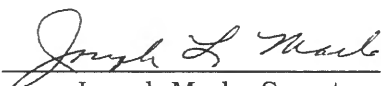
The following candidates were nominated:

- W. S. Richardson (District #2)
- Kenneth Hathaway (District #7)
- Jack Logsdon, Jr. (District #8)
- Gary Hise (District #11)



Secretary of the Nominating Committee Meeting

Official Notice dated at Eldorado, Illinois this 14th day of July, 2006.



Joseph Marlo, Secretary Board of Trustees

ENTERTAINMENT

Little Egypt Barbershop Chorus

Singing across southern Illinois, this Carbondale chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society organized in the fall of 2002. The Barbershop musical style is an American art form. The chorus has 30 members and provides entertainment that can be enjoyed by the entire family.

www.harmonize.com/littleegyptchorus



Proposed Bylaw Changes For 2006 Annual Members Meeting

At its regular meeting of April 25, 2006, the Board of Trustees considered and discussed various proposed changes to the SouthEastern bylaws to be recommended to the membership for approval at the annual meeting in August, 2006. These revisions had been prepared following direction and input from the Trustees. Following a thorough discussion of each proposed change and explanation thereof, Mr. Scherrer moved that the Trustees adopt a Resolution (copy below) recommending the proposed bylaw changes to the membership, for consideration at the 2006 annual members meeting, and that the notice of the 2006 annual meeting contain a copy of the proposed bylaw amendments. The motion was seconded by Mr. Richardson, and following vote, was unanimously approved.

RESOLUTION of April 25, 2006

Now, be it RESOLVED, by the Board of Trustees of SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative, Inc., that the following changes to the Bylaws be recommended for consideration and action by the Members of the Cooperative at its Annual Members Meeting to be held on August 1, 2006:

A. Resolved that Article I of the Bylaws of SouthEastern be amended to eliminate requirements of and references to Membership Certificates and Membership Fees, as follows:

-By removing and deleting Section 1.d), entirely; (which requires payment of a membership fee)

-By removing and deleting Section 2, entirely; (which covers membership certificates and fees)

-By removing and deleting the last sentence of Section 4.a), entirely; (which covers surrender and reissuance of membership certificates)

-By removing and deleting the first phrase from the last sentence of Section 4.b); (which covers surrender and reissuance of membership certificates)

-By removing and deleting the existing Section 5, entirely; (which covers the membership fee);

-By replacing Section 5 with new language to read as follows:

Section 5. Membership Fees. Effective August 1, 2006, the Cooperative has abolished any requirement for a membership fee. In no event shall a membership fee paid prior thereto be refundable.

-By removing and deleting the second phrase from the first sentence of Section 7.(b); (which requires surrender of the membership certificate upon termination of membership)

B. Resolved that Article VI of the Bylaws of SouthEastern be amended to eliminate requirements of and references to Membership Certificates, as follows:

-By removing and deleting from Section 4.b) the following phrase:

"certificates of membership, the issuance of which shall have been authorized by the Board of Trustees, and may sign"

-By removing and deleting from Section 6.c) the following phrase: "to all certificates for membership prior to the issue thereof, and"

-By removing and deleting Section 6.e) in its entirety;

Explanation of A and B: The Board believes that the Membership Fee and Membership Certificate should be eliminated entirely. New members will still sign an Application for Service/Membership Agreement. By proper accounting procedures prior membership fees (\$5.00/member) paid were classified as permanent equity and are not refundable, as provided in original bylaws.

C. Resolved that Article III of the Bylaws of SouthEastern be amended to modify the timetable for Notice of Member Meetings, as follows:

-By amending and changing in Section 3 the time period for notice from "not less than ten days nor more than twenty-five days before the date of the meeting" to "not less than ten days nor more than ninety days before the date of the meeting." (which covers time for advance notice of member meetings)

Explanation of C: The Cooperative uses the monthly magazine *Illinois Country Living* to give official notice of the annual members meeting. The publication deadline and mailing schedule requires submission of information a few months before the meeting. A separate mailing to members would be very costly.

D. Resolved that Article III of the Bylaws of SouthEastern be amended to increase the number of members required for a quorum at members meetings, as follows:

-By amending and changing Section 4 to provide that at least three hundred (300) of the members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. (which will increase the quorum from 150 members).

Explanation of D: Your cooperative now has in excess of 20,000 members with active accounts. Important decisions by the members at a business meeting should require attendance and participation by at least 300 members, a mere 1.5% of members. Recent annual meeting attendance has been around 800 in the last few years.

E. Resolved that Article IV of the Bylaws of SouthEastern be amended to remove the provision for and reference to nominations from the floor for Trustees at annual members meetings, as follows:

-By amending and changing Section 3 to remove and delete the following language: "Petitions filed less than ten (10) days prior to the meeting shall be treated as nominations from the floor. The Chairman shall at such meeting, after all nominations so made have been duly announced, call for additional nominations from the floor and shall ascertain and announce, after any nomination made from the floor, the particular Trustee District from or with respect to which any additional candidates have been nominated. No member may nominate more than one (1) candidate."

-By adding to Section 3 the following language:

"Nominations made by petition which are not filed and presented to the Cooperative at least ten (10) days before the meeting may not be considered and will not appear on the written ballot."

-By adding to Section 3 the following language:

"Nominations from the floor for the office of Trustee are expressly prohibited."

Explanation of E: Your bylaws now provide for Trustee nominations by a committee made up of at least five(5) and not more than eleven (11) non-Trustees and also by petition signed by at least fifteen (15) members (in addition to nominations from the floor). To permit and allow nomination of a Trustee from the floor at the meeting itself leaves the Cooperative open to a planned effort by a small group to elect a Trustee who is not known to many members, in what may be a surprise move, not anticipated by other members, when there should be reason and opportunity for members to take time to study, evaluate and compare Trustee candidates and their qualifications. Without floor nominations you will know in advance of the meeting all Trustee candidates to be considered.

F. Resolved that Article IV of the Bylaws of SouthEastern be amended to add a provision to allow declaration of a vacancy and removal of a Trustee when the Trustee fails to attend Board meetings for a period of six (6) months, unless excused by the Board, as follows:

-By adding to Section 5 the following language:

"Whenever a Trustee fails to attend Board meetings and otherwise fulfill the duties of a Trustee for a period of six (6) months, that Trustee's office shall be deemed vacant and the said Trustee shall be deemed to have resigned. The vacancy in such Trustee's office shall be filled as provided herein, unless upon an affirmative vote of a majority of the remaining Trustees, such failure to attend meetings and otherwise fulfill Trustee duties shall be excused upon

■ Proposed Bylaw Changes
Continued from page 3

good cause determined by the Trustees.”

Explanation of F: Each geographical district of the Cooperative has its own representative Trustee, one of eleven on the Board. If for any reason, any Trustee is unable or unwilling to fulfill Trustee duties and attend meetings as required, that Trustee's district is then without representation, and the Board is not at full strength. This change would expressly create a vacancy as to the absent Trustee, with a safeguard which enables the remaining Trustees to override the vacancy in appropriate and extenuating circumstances.

G. Resolved that Article IV of the Bylaws of SouthEastern be amended to add a provision that restricts: (a) the ability of a Trustee to serve as an employee of the Cooperative during the Trustee's tenure as Trustee and for a period of seven (7) years thereafter; and, (b) the ability of an employee of the Cooperative to serve as a Trustee, during the term of employment and for a period of seven (7) years after the employment terminates; as follows:

-By adding a new Section 9 which includes the following language:

Section 9. Eligibility of Trustees and Employees of the Cooperative. No Trustee shall be eligible to be hired or serve as an employee of the Cooperative during the Trustee's tenure as Trustee of the Cooperative and for a period of seven (7) years thereafter. Likewise, no employee of the Cooperative shall be eligible for election or service as Trustee during the term of the employment of the employee by the Cooperative and for a period of seven (7) years following the termination of that employment.

Explanation of G: The business model upon which your Cooperative operates excludes the Board from seeking to manage or run the Cooperative. The Trustees' job is to guide, govern and set policy. On the other hand, management and employees carry out policy set by the Board in the course of the day to day operation of the Cooperative business. These functions must be kept separate for the Cooperative to be successful. It is possible for Trustees to leave the Board position to seek formal employment with the Cooperative to carry out policies established by the Board, or for other less proper purposes, or because of personal dissatisfaction with management or employees. Likewise, an unhappy member of Cooperative management or a disgruntled or terminated employee may seek to become a Trustee with a view toward implementing some private purpose or agenda, or as a basis for some retaliatory action involving the Cooperative, an employee, or a Board member. This proposal protects the right of an individual to move from employee to

Board status, or from Trustee to employee, but only after a suitable interval or cooling off period.

H. Resolved that Article IV of the Bylaws of SouthEastern be amended to remove the provision that prohibits a Trustee from holding or running for elective salaried public office, as follows:

-By amending and changing Section 2 to remove and delete the following phrase: "and no person shall take or hold office as a Trustee who is the incumbent of or candidate for an elective public office in connection with which a salary is paid."

Explanation of H: Your Cooperative takes pride in keeping partisan politics out of the Cooperative, the workplace, the boardroom, and the Cooperative's business. There are many local and regional political positions such as road commissioners or municipal or county board members which are of vital importance to the members' communities, and which have a salary paid. The current bylaws restrict a Trustee from running for or holding such a position even though local community members and electors might want the Trustee to serve in such capacity, and even though ordinarily no real conflict of interest would exist if a Trustee accepted such position. It is often important for your Cooperative to have a good working relationship with local political officials. Mutual benefits to the Cooperative and to the local community can result. A Trustee holding such a political office or paid position would obviously need to take care to avoid any appearance of impropriety and all actual conflicts of interest which might result.

I. Resolved that Article V of the Bylaws of SouthEastern be amended to change the titles of the officers and references thereto from President to Board Chair, as follows:

-By amending Section 2 to substitute the term Board Chair for the term President, in every instance;

-By amending Section 3 to substitute the term Board Chair for the term President;

J. Resolved that Article VI of the Bylaws of SouthEastern be amended to change the titles of the officers and references thereto from President to Board Chair, from Vice President to Board Vice Chair and from Manager to President, as follows:

-By amending Section 1 to substitute the term Board Chair for the term President and to substitute the term Board Vice Chair for the term Vice President;

-By amending Section 4 to substitute the term Board Chair for the term President in every instance;

-By amending Section 5 to substitute the term Board Chair for the term President and to substitute the term Board Vice Chair for the term Vice President in every instance;

-By amending Section 7 to substitute the term Board Chair for the term President;

-By amending Section 9 to substitute the term President for the term Manager, in every instance, and to substitute the term Chief Executive Officer for the term Executive Vice President, in every instance;

-By amending Section 11 to substitute the term President for the term General Manager, and to substitute the term Chief Executive Officer for the term Executive Vice President;

K. Resolved that Article VI of the Bylaws of SouthEastern be amended to change the reference to and designation of the President (to be Board Chair) as the principal executive officer of the Cooperative, as follows:

-By amending Section 4.a) to remove and delete the phrase "be the principal executive officer of the Cooperative and" at the beginning of Section 4.a)

Explanation of I, J and K: When the Cooperative formed in the late 1930's, the first Board of Trustees held all the authority granted by the members, and not retained by the members, consistent with the bylaws. The Cooperative grew over the years to have many employees which are necessary to carry out the business of the Cooperative. Presently the Trustees select only the Manager (title to be changed to President) and the Attorney for the Cooperative. The Manager or management team select, hire and fill all other positions. Clearly the Manager (President) is, in fact, the principal operating and executive officer of the Cooperative. It has been this way for many years. Your Board President (title to be changed to Board Chair) is not properly qualified, educated or experienced to run and manage your Cooperative. He is not expected to do so, nor does he want to do so. The business world expects to deal with a Chief Executive Officer who is available full time, and who has authority to speak for and bind the Cooperative. It is not efficient or convenient to delay or defer day to day business decisions and actions to await the signature and approval of the Board President (Board Chair), as principal executive officer. Typically in the current business world the Chief Executive Officer is also the President of the Cooperative, company or entity, and holds both titles. This involves much more than simply being the Manager. Current titles for head of the Board are typically Chairperson, Board Chair, Chairman, Chairwoman, etc. Your Cooperative seeks to have the titles match the jobs, and to conform to the job titles currently used in electric cooperatives and the American business community. The Board retains the ability and responsibility to define the extent and scope of the authority, duties and power of the President/CEO. These revisions will not materially change the way your Cooperative presently operates.

The SOUTHEASTERN Light

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative Eldorado, Illinois

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

Manager's Comments




Dustin Tripp
General Manager

The theme of SEIEC's 2006 SEIEC Annual Members' Meeting is entitled "The People Behind The Promise" and you may be wondering what the promise is and who are the people behind that promise. In this month's column, please allow me to explain the promise and then focus on the people behind the promise.

First of all, please allow me to explain that the promise we are talking about is our promise that we will do our very best to provide you, our Cooperative Member/Owners with the highest level of reliable electric service at rates which are fair and equitable to all Members. This is the promise of your Cooperative.

The second part of this year's theme is the people behind the promise. These people behind the promise encompasses everyone involved in your Cooperative, including your Board of Trustees who are responsible for governing your Cooperative, the management/employees who are responsible for operating your Cooperative on a daily basis, and most importantly you, our Cooperative Member/Owners.

Your Cooperative is governed by local elected officials who serve collectively as your Board of Trustees. This is a very important and distinctive difference between your Cooperative and investor-owned utilities. Your Cooperative is governed by Cooperative members, just like you, who live and work in your communities, and pay the same rates as you. This means that people within your very own communities are making the decisions that govern your electric Cooperative.

 I have worked with the current Board of Trustees for almost

seven years and I can assure you they take their responsibility very seriously and work diligently to review all information available before making decisions which affect your Cooperative.

Your Cooperative is operated on a daily basis by a group of 80 management/employees who also reside and work in your communities. Not only is this group of people responsible for providing the service that you experience daily, but they are also the people responsible for building lines, trimming trees, installing meters, providing the billing services, answering your questions and restoring your outages on a 24/7 basis. The management/employee group is a very integral part of your Cooperative because without them, we could not provide the level of service that you experience today. I am very proud to be a part of this group of dedicated, hardworking people who are committed to providing you with reliable electric service. As your new manager, I can assure you we will do our very best to operate your Cooperative with your best interests in mind.

The final group of people I would like to include in this year's theme is you, our Cooperative Member/Owners. Cooperatives were established and continue to exist today to serve its Members. You, as members and owners of the Cooperative are the reason your Cooperative exists today and without you, none of this would be possible.

Hope to see you at this year's 68th Annual Meeting, and as always, "We'll keep the lights on for you."

READERSHIP PRIZE WINNER:
Kim Kremer, Goreville, IL 62939



Surplus Equipment For Sale

1979 Butler Tilt-top Trailer: Model LT1014, Serial #795617, 10,000 Lbs. capacity, pintle hook. Minimum Bid: \$150.00 UNIT #23T

1997 Six-Foot Rotary Cutter: Woods Cadet MD172-1, Serial #597370. Minimum Bid: \$150.00. UNIT #WM-1

The above surplus equipment is available for sale and may be viewed at the Eldorado Headquarters from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., from August 2 through

August 14, 2006. Sealed bids are to be submitted by 4 p.m., Monday, August 14, 2006.

Please designate the UNIT Number you wish to bid on, your bid price, name, address and telephone number. Bids are to be for an exact dollar amount.

Please mark "SEALED BID" on the outside of your envelope and send it to:

Don Allen, Surplus Equipment, SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative, Inc., P. O. Box 251, Eldorado, IL 62930.

Don Allen, Surplus Equipment
SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative, Inc.
P. O. Box 251, Eldorado, IL 62930.
SEALED BID

If You Depend On Life-Support Equipment We Need To Know

While SouthEastern Electric Cooperative strives to maintain the best possible service with a minimum of outage time, occasional outages, either planned or uncontrolled, do occur. Your Cooperative needs to know the names and location of Cooperative members who depend on life-support equipment. We keep a registry of members who are on life-support equipment, and it is important that this information be current and accurate. We will make every effort to give priority to restore service to members on life-support systems.

If you or a family member depend on life-support equipment, please fill out the form below and mail it to us at:

SouthEastern Electric Cooperative • P. O. Box 251 • Eldorado, IL 62930

NAME: _____

PHONE NO. (_____) ____ - ____ ACCOUNT NUMBER: _____

TYPE OF SUPPORT EQUIPMENT: _____

DAY(S) OF USE: _____

TIME(S) OF USE: _____

DO YOU HAVE AN EMERGENCY STAND-BY GENERATOR TO OPERATE THIS EQUIPMENT?

YES

NO

Mail this form to: SouthEastern Electric Coop. • P. O. Box 251 • Eldorado, IL 62930

Protect Your Home From **POWER SURGES**

A flash of light, a crack of thunder. You wake up with a start, realize that your family and house are safe, then go back to sleep, thinking everything's okay.

But is it? You really won't know until the next day, when you check to see if a power surge turned your computer, home theatre or sound system into a pile of fried microchips.

An Inside Job

As dangerous as lightning is, 80 percent of temporary power surges actually originate from inside the home. They're caused by motor-driven appliances like an air conditioner, dishwasher or refrigerator; or even something as small as a laser printer or coffee maker.

According to the Leviton Institute, three types of power surges can occur both inside and outside your home: destructive surges that "fry" your sensitive electronics; disruptive surges that cause you to have to reset or reprogram devices; and dissipative surges that degrade your sensitive electronic components over time.

The good news is that you can be more sensitive to your home's sensitive electronics. There are a wide variety of surge protection devices (SPDs) on the market to protect your valuable home electronics from these potentially destructive power surges.

First Line of Defense

Power strip SPDs are the simplest and cheapest form of protection. They are widely available, reasonably priced (typically between \$10 and \$50), and provide good protection

from temporary power spikes.

Most come with six to eight outlets, enough for the average home office or den.

Keep in mind that they protect not just expensive electronics but computers as well. Since even a minor power fluctuation can freeze up a program or corrupt a file, be sure your surge protector is up to the job – look for one with the UL 1449 label, which guarantees it meets tested and approved standards.

By the way, don't forget your phone, data and cable TV lines; they can carry a voltage spike into your home just as easily as a power line, with the same destructive results. Make sure your surge protector can also accommodate them.

A Network of Protection

Power strip SPDs, while effective at stopping most in-house spikes, can be overwhelmed by spikes caused by nearby lightning strikes that enter your home through the power line. For unparalleled protection, the Leviton Institute recommends whole-house network protection.

The network protection begins outside the house with a meter socket surge arrestor, which your co-op can install. Inside, a panel-mounted device installed near the circuit breaker box forms the second layer of defense. A final gauntlet of SPD outlets and power strip SPDs in each room protect at the point-of-use. With a whole-house network in place, you can rest easier knowing that, even if lightning strikes somewhere nearby, your home's electronics and appliances will be protected.



Source: The Leviton Institute.

Capital Credits for 2005

The most economical method of notifying members of their capital credit allocation is to furnish them with a multiplication factor, which when applied to the total electric bill for the year 2005, will determine the amount of patronage. Notices will be mailed to large commercial consumers who are not on self-billing.

Residential self-billing members may determine their capital credit allocations from South-Eastern by multiplying their bills paid (minus an estimated 5 percent for taxes) by a factor of 0.040182184.

For those paying accounts under the Small Com-

mmercial Schedule, a factor of 0.039909674 should be used.

If you are unable to determine your 2005 allocation, the amount credited will be furnished on request.

The bylaws of your Cooperative provide that each member shall be notified of the amount of patronage capital credited to his account.

A capital credit plan is an arrangement under which: (1) a cooperative and its members expressly agree that any payment by any patron over the cost of serving him is capital furnished by the patron to the cooperative; (2) the Cooperative credits such patronage capital on its books

to the patrons; and (3) such capital will be retired when, in the opinion of the Board of Trustees, such retirement will not impair the Cooperative's financial position.

Capital credits are not necessarily available in the form of cash, but are represented largely by investments in poles, wire, transformers and other equipment required to provide service. In general, no patronage capital can be retired until the Cooperative has obtained enough capital to take care of all its needs.

POWER OUTAGE

If your power goes off, we offer these suggestions

1. Check the fuses or circuit breakers in your service panels. If you have breakers, make sure they are in the "ON" position.
2. If you have a meter pole, check the main breaker panel just below the meter socket. If the breaker is in the "OFF" position, check all of your wiring from the meter pole to your various buildings. If the wiring appears to be okay, reset the breaker to the "ON" position.
3. If you still do not have power, check with neighbors to see if they have power.
4. To report a power failure or other emergency, please phone 1-877-399-8405. This phone number is monitored around the clock, 365 days per year to accept your outage and emergency calls.
5. Your phone call will be handled by SouthEastern's automated outage reporting system and will be identified automatically through ANI (Automatic Number Identification). An outage record will then be generated for your location. Please note that the phone number from which you place the call will be the number used to generate the record. If the system fails to recognize your phone number, members having touch-tone phones may simply enter their seven-digit phone number (without area code) in order to report the outage. Members not having touch-tone phones will be asked to leave a message. It is important you leave your name, phone number and location of the outage. Retrieving messages and entering them into the system is time consuming; therefore, please leave only a message that will help in restoration of electric service. Do not remain on the line for an operator because a live operator is not there to respond. In order to keep a current listing of all numbers, it is important that you notify the Cooperative of any changes in your telephone number.
6. Handling outage calls electronically allows you to report power failures very quickly. Once your outage has been reported, it will be dispatched to repair personnel who will restore your outage as soon as possible. Calling back repeatedly will not shorten the length of the outage, but may hinder the efforts of other members who are trying to report outages.

Outage Calls Only 1-877-399-8405

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative, Inc.

585 Highway 142 South • P.O. Box 251 • Eldorado, Illinois 62930
618-273-2611 or 800-833-2611 • Office hours: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. M-F

The SOUTHEASTERN Light

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative Eldorado, Illinois

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner



Manager's Comments



Dustin Tripp
General Manager

Commitment To Community:

In 1994, the Illinois Electric Cooperatives established what is known as the Illinois Electric Cooperative Memorial Scholarship Fund as a means of honoring deceased members of the electric cooperative family. Every year, SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative sends information to all of the schools in the 10 county service area with instructions on how students can apply for these scholarships. This year, the program awarded five scholarships in the amount of \$1,250 each that can be used at an accredited two-year or four-year college, university, or vocational/technical school in the United States. The scholarship must be used for educational costs, and the student must enter college within one year from the time the scholarship is awarded.

Scholarships are awarded based upon grade point average, college entrance test scores, work and volunteer experience, participation in school and community activities, biographical statement and knowledge of cooperatives, as demonstrated by a short essay.

This year, the IEC Memorial Scholarship program received 256 applicants for these five scholarships. With that much competition from across the state of Illinois, SouthEastern is very proud to inform you that one of these five scholarships was awarded to one of Goreville High School's graduating seniors, Mr. Ian Hardcastle. Ian currently resides in Creal

Springs, Illinois and has informed SouthEastern that he will be attending Southern Illinois University at Carbondale for the fall semester of 2006.

SouthEastern also invites all twenty three area high schools to participate in a program known as the "Youth To Washington Tour." Students are invited to participate by writing a one page essay on the subject, "Why I would like to visit Washington D.C." Participating schools select the best essay written by their students and forward that essay to SouthEastern for evaluation by staff personnel. The composers of the two best essays are awarded the opportunity to participate in a one day tour of the State's capital in Springfield, Illinois and then on to a one week, expense paid tour of our Nations capital in Washington D.C. This year, the Cooperative is proud to announce the two winners of this contest were Miss Emmaline Archdale from Herod, Illinois attending Hardin County High School and Miss Erin Clark from Marion attending Marion High School.

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative congratulates these three individuals on their accomplishments and wishes them the best of luck in the future. As you can see, your Cooperative is committed to the communities and the above are just a few examples of that commitment.

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

READERSHIP PRIZE WINNER:
Ronnie Loyd, Marion, IL 62939

Harvest Workers Urged Caution To Yield Fewer Electrical Accidents



Don't make this mistake. Stay clear of guy wires. Accidentally hitting guy wires weakens the support for utility poles. Know the height of all equipment and stay at least 10 feet away from overhead lines. Never attempt to raise or move a downed power line.

Harvest season can yield higher numbers of electrocution, shock, and burn injuries. Nationwide, an average 60 agricultural workers are electrocuted and hundreds more injured in electrical accidents each year.

"Equipment contacting overhead power lines is the leading cause of farm electrocution accidents in the Midwest," says Bob Aherin, University of Illinois Agricultural Safety Specialist. "Many of these accidents occur near grain bins, when augers make contact with power lines."

Dustin Tripp, General Manager at SouthEastern Illinois Electric Coeoperative says, "All farm workers need to be sure to keep equipment 10 feet from power lines at all times. That's 10 feet above, below and to the sides of the lines. Lower all equipment you can before moving it and use a spotter for large equipment."

Some equipment safety considerations:

- Always lower portable augers or elevators to their lowest possible level - under 14 feet-before moving or transporting; use care when raising them.
- When moving large equipment or high loads near a power line, always use a spotter, or someone to help make certain that contact is not made with a line.
- Be aware of increased height when loading and transporting larger modern tractors with higher antennas.
- Never attempt to raise or move a power line to clear a path!

If equipment comes in contact with power lines, stay inside the cab and call for help. Tell others to stay away until a co-op lineman arrives at the scene to make sure power is disconnected. If there is risk of fire and you must leave the area, the proper action is to jump – not

step – with both feet hitting the ground at the same time. Do not allow any part of your body to touch the equipment and the ground at the same time. Continue to hop or shuffle to safety, keeping both feet together as you leave the area.

Once you get away from the equipment, never attempt to get back on or even touch the equipment. Many electrocutions occur when the operator dismounts and, realizing nothing has happened, tries to get back on the equipment.

It is very important that all farm workers and seasonal employees are informed of electrical hazards, and trained in proper procedures to avoid injury. For more information on farm and home electrical safety, visit

www.SafeElectricity.org.



Test Your Electrical Savvy With This Quick Quiz

Most people know only as much about electricity as they need to get through their daily lives; in other words, not very much. A little knowledge can help prevent a shock, make your home safer, and save you money on your power bill. Here are a handful of true/false questions from the Leviton Institute to test your Electrical IQ:

1. It's cheaper to leave fluorescent lights on when exiting a room than it is to turn them back on when you return.
2. House wiring never needs replacing.
3. A circuit breaker is not designed to protect against a ground fault.
4. A two-parter: Computer screen savers save energy, and your computer will last longer if you leave it on all day, instead of shutting it off when you're not using it.
5. You can damage a power tool by using the wrong size extension cord.

ANSWERS

1. False. This is a commonly held belief, based on the erroneous notion that fluorescent bulbs use a lot of power to get started. While it is true that a compact fluorescent bulb does require a brief surge when switched on, it works out to be around the same amount of energy as five seconds of normal use, according to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). So turning the lights off for more than five seconds will save more energy than leaving them on.

2. False. Depending on the amount of use, insulation on house wires can become frayed or broken, creating a fire hazard. If you have any doubts about your wiring, have a qualified electrician perform a complete inspection. Houses built between 1965 and 1973, in particular, are at risk because many were built with aluminum wiring, which the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission says is 55 times more likely to reach "fire hazard conditions" than regular copper wire.

3. True. Circuit breakers are designed to protect against high levels of electrical current caused by a short circuit. Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCIs) protect against ground faults, when current leaking from an appliance goes to ground through a person touching the appliance. Even a small amount of current passing through a person this way can be lethal; a GFCI will trip if there's a ground fault, whereas a circuit breaker won't.

4. False and False. Screen savers only save screens, not energy. If you want to save energy, turn the monitor off. In fact, the EPA recommends you turn the computer off, too, if you aren't going to use it within a half hour. They claim the lifetime of the hard disc is limited by use, rather than start-ups.

5. True. If your electric lawn mower, hedge trimmer or leaf blower doesn't get enough power, either because the extension cord is too thin or too long to deliver it, it can damage and eventually destroy the motor. Also, overloading an extension cord can cause a fire or shock hazard.

*The cooperative
office will
be closed
Monday, Sept. 4
in observance of
Labor Day.*



POWER OUTAGE

If your power goes off, we offer these suggestions

1. Check the fuses or circuit breakers in your service panels. If you have breakers, make sure they are in the "ON" position.
2. If you have a meter pole, check the main breaker panel just below the meter socket. If the breaker is in the "OFF" position, check all of your wiring from the meter pole to your various buildings. If the wiring appears to be okay, reset the breaker to the "ON" position.
3. If you still do not have power, check with neighbors to see if they have power.
4. To report a power failure or other emergency, please phone 1-877-399-8405. This phone number is monitored around the clock, 365 days per year to accept your outage and emergency calls.
5. Your phone call will be handled by SouthEastern's automated outage reporting system and will be identified automatically through ANI (Automatic Number Identification). An outage record will then be generated for your location. Please note that the phone number from which you place the call will be the number used to generate the record. If the system fails to recognize your phone number, members having touch-tone phones may simply enter their seven-digit phone number (without area code) in order to report the outage. Members not having touch-tone phones will be asked to leave a message. It is important you leave your name, phone number and location of the outage. Retrieving messages and entering them into the system is time consuming; therefore, please leave only a message that will help in restoration of electric service. Do not remain on the line for an operator because a live operator is not there to respond. In order to keep a current listing of all numbers, it is important that you notify the Cooperative of any changes in your telephone number.
6. Handling outage calls electronically allows you to report power failures very quickly. Once your outage has been reported, it will be dispatched to repair personnel who will restore your outage as soon as possible. Calling back repeatedly will not shorten the length of the outage, but may hinder the efforts of other members who are trying to report outages.

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The SOUTHEASTERN Light

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative Eldorado, Illinois

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Manager's Comments



Dustin Tripp is the new General Manager

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative experienced a record attendance with 1,298 registered members at its 68th Annual Meeting of Members held Tuesday, Aug. 1st at the Little Chapel Church. For those members who were unable to attend, this month's column will provide you with an update on what is happening with the business you own.

Your Cooperative accomplished a great deal in the year 2005 in order to provide electric service to new members and also increase the level of reliable service to all Cooperative Members. These accomplishments included the installation of approximately 524 new services, 189 service upgrades, replacing approximately 30 miles of older distribution line, testing more than 11,850 distribution poles and trimming trees in more than 871 miles of distribution line. Your Cooperative is also investing in the future of your Cooperative by deploying new technologies that include the new Automated Meter Reading (AMR) system and state of the art computer systems and software that will benefit all members by providing a higher level of service and increasing operating efficiencies. In summary, your Cooperative has invested more than \$114 million dollars in the distribution facilities that provide your service and spends more than \$5.5 million dollars annually in operating and maintaining your distribution facilities.

Your Cooperative, like you, is also

experiencing significant price increases in all forms of energy and raw materials. One major reason for the rising costs of all forms of energy is the increased global competition for the world's limited natural resources. Developing nations such as China and India, which are transitioning to an industrialized economy at a very rapid rate, are causing dramatic increases in the demand for these resources and the supply of these resources simply can't keep pace with the surge in demand.

SouthEastern's power supplier, which is Southern Illinois Power Cooperative at Marion, has experienced these dramatic increases in the price of coal, carbon and natural gas that are used to generate your electricity. In fact, the average cost of coal has increased 61 percent in the last three years and the cost of carbon has increased by 50 percent in the last three years. In addition, the power purchased from other generating plants during peak periods has increased in price as well. As a result, your Cooperative is experiencing significant increases in the cost of wholesale power.

Your Cooperative's Board of Trustees and management team have reviewed these cost increases and developed a plan to minimize the increases necessary to cover these increased costs. This plan includes a 5.5 percent general rate increase that will not be implemented until Jan. 1, 2007 which will be 23 months since the last rate increase.

(Continued on page 16b)

Readership Prize Winner:
Gladys Moye, Omaha, Illinois



(Continued from page 16a)

In addition, your Cooperative will restructure all retail rates to reflect a change in our wholesale power rate structure. This restructuring includes the implementation of a wholesale power cost adjustment charge that will allow your Cooperative to only pass along any incremental increases that are passed along from our power supplier. This plan will allow your Cooperative to only collect what is needed in your rates to

cover the necessary costs.

Your Cooperative knows and understands that no rate increase is desirable but given the significant global issues that are impacting your Cooperative's environment, we feel very fortunate to be a member of an electric cooperative that puts the member's interest first. Your Cooperative does not operate like other utilities that strive to produce profits for investors. Your Cooperative

is here to provide you, as cooperative members and owners, with reliable energy solutions at rates that are just high enough to cover the necessary costs. Your Cooperative is owned by the people it serves and will continue to be an electric cooperative that is truly operated "for the people and by the people."

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

POWER OUTAGE

If your power goes off, we offer these suggestions

1. Check the fuses or circuit breakers in your service panels. If you have breakers, make sure they are in the "ON" position.
2. If you have a meter pole, check the main breaker panel just below the meter socket. If the breaker is in the "OFF" position, check all of your wiring from the meter pole to your various buildings. If the wiring appears to be okay, reset the breaker to the "ON" position.
3. If you still do not have power, check with neighbors to see if they have power.
4. To report a power failure or other emergency, please phone 1-877-399-8405. This phone number is monitored around the clock, 365 days per year to accept your outage and emergency calls.
5. Your phone call will be handled by SouthEastern's automated outage reporting system and will be identified automatically through ANI (Automatic Number Identification). An outage record will then be generated for your location. Please note that the phone number from which you place the call will be the number used to generate the record. If the system fails to recognize your phone number, members having touch-tone phones may simply enter their seven-digit phone number (without area code) in order to report the outage. Members not having touch-tone phones will be asked to leave a message. It is important you leave your name, phone number and location of the outage. Retrieving messages and entering them into the system is time consuming; therefore, please leave only a message that will help in restoration of electric service. Do not remain on the line for an operator because a live operator is not there to respond. In order to keep a current listing of all numbers, it is important that you notify the Cooperative of any changes in your telephone number.
6. Handling outage calls electronically allows you to report power failures very quickly. Once your outage has been reported, it will be dispatched to repair personnel who will restore your outage as soon as possible. Calling back repeatedly will not shorten the length of the outage, but may hinder the efforts of other members who are trying to report outages.

Outage Calls Only 1-877-399-8405

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative, Inc.

585 Highway 142 South • P.O. Box 251 • Eldorado, Illinois 62930
618-273-2611 or 800-833-2611 • Office hours: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. M-F

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative's 68th Annual Meeting

Members of SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative learned despite significant increases in the price of coal, carbon and natural gas are all utilized to generate electricity; the Cooperative has developed a plan to minimize the rate increases necessary to cover the increased cost. This announcement and other reports were made at the co-op's 68th Annual Meeting of Members held Tuesday, August 1 at Little Chapel Church.

Members also re-elected board trustees Gary Hise of Golconda, W. S. Richardson of Ewing, Kenneth Hathaway of Harrisburg and Jack Logsdon, Jr. of Shawneetown to three-year terms.

Treasurer Joseph Marlo reported the co-op added 416 new members and 22 miles of new power line during 2005. "Despite rising expenses we had a positive margin of \$1,692,000. Our total assets are now \$115,944,000 and our total equity is at 58 percent. So you can see that SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative is in sound financial condition."

President Richard Rister of Harrisburg highlighted the difference between the electric co-op and oil giant Exxon, which reportedly returned record profits last year. By contrast the member-owned co-op returned capital credits to its members totaling \$2.1 million. Rister said, "This is a great organization that has the best interests of you, the members, at heart."

President/CEO Dustin Tripp said that coal prices have increased from approximately \$23 a ton in 2003 to approximately \$37 in 2006. Carbon also climbed from approximately \$10 a ton to approximately \$15 in the same period. The cost of materials used by the co-op such as copper, aluminum and steel have also increased because of the growing world economy's demand for raw materials as well as energy. "The supply of these resources simply can't keep pace with



President/CEO Dustin Tripp congratulates the four re-elected Trustees. From left are Dustin Tripp, Gary Hise, W. S. Richardson, Kenneth Hathaway and Jack Logsdon, Jr.



Employees registering members at Annual Meeting



Members enjoying the Little Egypt Barbershop Chorus

the surge in demand,” said Tripp.

It has been nearly two years since the co-op’s last rate increase. Tripp said the co-op currently has the second lowest rate of all Illinois electric co-ops. Ameren and other power suppliers are expected to pass on major double-digit increases in January when a rate freeze is lifted.

Providing quality service is equally important to the co-op leaders. Tripp said, “Your cooperative spends more than \$5.5 million annually in performing operating and maintenance activities. We must maintain a balance between the amount of money spent on providing the most reliable service possible and the amount of money that must be collected in your rates. The co-op trustees you’ve elected represent your best interests as members. Your cooperative’s 79 employees also provide the service you deserve and expect on a daily basis.”

The co-op is also investing in new technologies to better serve members and increase efficiency.

Tripp said one example of this new technology is the automated meter reading (AMR) system that is currently being installed.

This new AMR system not only allows us to read your meter monthly, it also allows us to monitor your account for outages or blinks, monitor your voltage level and increase operating efficiency.” said Tripp.

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative serves members in Franklin, Gallatin, Hamilton, Hardin, Johnson, Massac, Pope, Saline, White and Williamson counties. The cooperative is a Touchstone Energy®- an alliance of more than 600 local, consumer-owned electric utilities around the country, committed to providing superior service based on four core principals: integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community.



This future lineman had his photo taken “climbing a pole”. Everyone attending the meeting could receive a photo of themselves as a lineman.



These Grand Prize Winners received \$250. From left are Julie Triplett, Mrs. Kenneth Slyder, George Turner and Oma Walton.



These lucky winners received a \$25 gift certificate to Toys R Us. From top row left are Dylan Rister, Elijah Bond, Gretchen Mills, Kayla Halleran, Shelby Bayler, Logon Fowler, Bailey Crisp, Justin Bailey, Daisey Bond and Andrea Stricklin.

The SOUTHEASTERN Light

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative Eldorado, Illinois

Your Touchstone Energy Partner 

Manager's Comments




Dustin Tripp
General Manager

Due to the new Automated Meter Reading (AMR) System, many SouthEastern members are now receiving an invoice for the first time in the history of their service with the Cooperative. These invoices provide the member with more information than was historically available through the self-read, self-billed system. This month, I would like to explain the individual charges that appear on an invoice and also explain a new charge or credit that will begin appearing on invoices beginning in January 2007.

The first charge I would like to explain is the customer charge. This is not a new charge and has always been included in the amount paid in the past although you didn't see the charge broken out separately. This charge is the minimum amount charged by the Cooperative to make electric service available to the property regardless of the amount of energy used.

Your Cooperative invests in facilities such as substation equipment, transformers, distribution line, distribution poles, voltage regulators, meters, etc. and incurs additional expenses such as interest expense, billing expense and administration expense that are all required to make service available at any location whether energy is consumed or not. The customer charge is not high enough to cover all of these fixed costs and the remaining fixed costs are recovered in a tiered energy rate. Your Cooperative is currently reviewing

 the customer charges in all rate classes and will be increasing

this customer charge as part of the general rate increase beginning January 2007.

The next charge I would like to explain is the energy charge. The largest cost component of the energy charge is the wholesale power cost, which is what your Cooperative pays its power supplier, Southern Illinois Power Cooperative, to generate the energy and deliver it to SouthEastern's substations. As mentioned above, the energy charge is tiered to help recover a portion of the Cooperative's fixed costs as well. This explains why the first block of energy is charged at a slightly higher rate than subsequent energy blocks. As the monthly energy consumption increases, the cost per kwh begins to decrease.

Another charge that can be seen on the invoice is the public utility tax. Again, this is not a new charge but members have not seen the charge broken out separately on an invoice. This tax is collected and paid by SouthEastern to the Department of Revenue.

One additional charge or possibly a credit that will be added to all invoices received starting in January 2007 will be titled the wholesale power cost adjustment charge. SouthEastern's power supplier, Southern Illinois Power Cooperative in Marion, does not have enough generating capacity during peak periods of the year to serve its members and must purchase additional power from other generating plants. The price of this power purchased during peak

(Continued on 16b)

READERSHIP PRIZE WINNER:
Larry J. Naas, Galatia



(Continued from 16a) periods is market driven and can be very difficult to predict. Driving forces such as weather, generating unit outages, price of natural gas, price of coal, etc. all contribute to the volatility in the price of this purchased power. The cost of this purchased power is passed along to your Cooperative and now your Cooperative has created a way to only pass along any unexpected changes in the costs of this purchased power to its members.

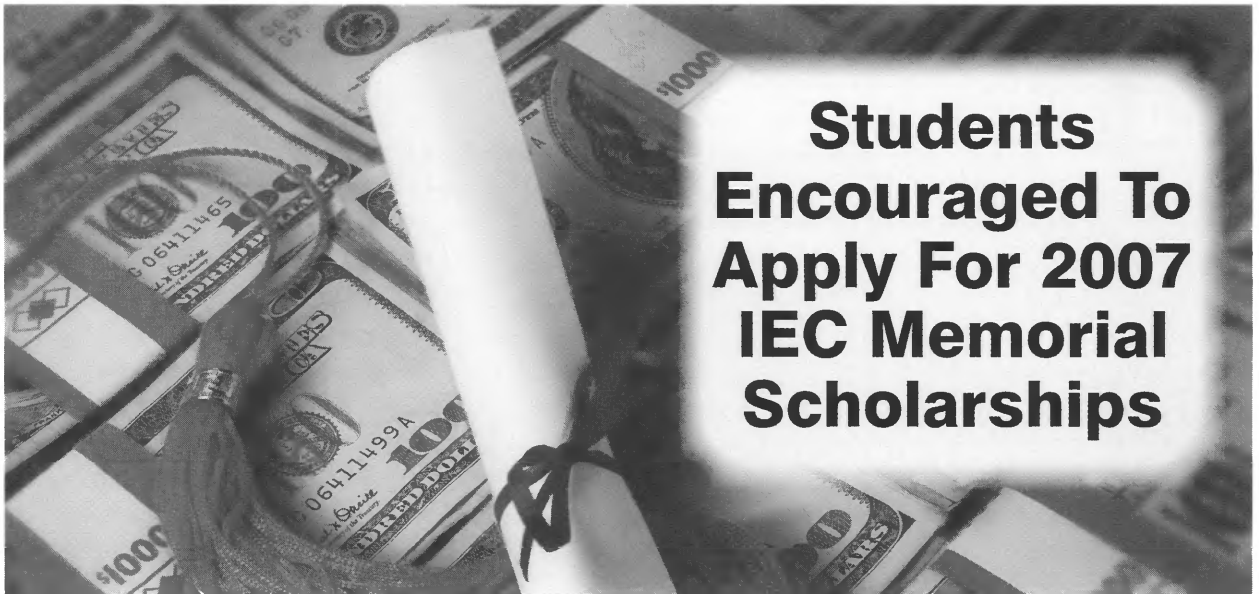
By creating this wholesale power cost adjustment charge,

your Cooperative will only pass along incremental changes in the price of its wholesale power. This wholesale power cost adjustment charge may be a small charge if the wholesale costs are higher than anticipated or a small credit if the wholesale costs are lower than expected. This will allow your Cooperative to only collect what is needed to cover these changes in wholesale power costs.

There are additional charges that appear on invoices for business and large commercial accounts. I will explain these charges

in a future column. I hope this helps explain the charges that many of you are seeing for the first time although these charges have always been there with the exception of one new charge that you can expect to see starting in January 2007. The invoices contain a lot of valuable information that we think you will find helpful in understanding your electric bill.

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



Students Encouraged To Apply For 2007 IEC Memorial Scholarships

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative, Inc. President Dustin Tripp has announced that for the twelfth consecutive year the Illinois electric cooperatives will award academic scholarships to high school seniors. Five scholarships in 2007 will be awarded through the Illinois Electric Cooperative (IEC) Memorial Scholarship Program. Each of the scholarships will be worth \$1,250.

High school seniors pursuing college education are eligible to participate in the program. Three of the five scholarships will be awarded to the son or daughter of an electric cooperative member. A fourth award will go to the son or daughter of an electric cooperative director

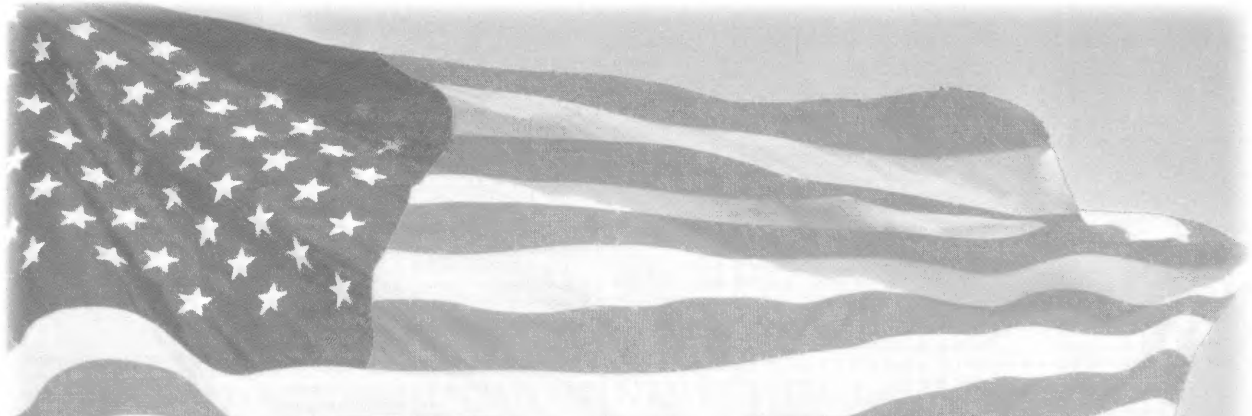
or employee. A fifth scholarship will be reserved for use at a two-year Illinois community college, and sons and daughters of electric cooperative members, employees and directors are all eligible. Deadline for applications to be returned to the cooperative is January 1, 2007.

"The purpose of the scholarship program is to assist electric cooperative youth while honoring past rural electric leaders through memorial gifts," said Dustin Tripp. "SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative, Inc. 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. With the cost of tuition and books going up scholarships like this one can help."

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, which 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, contact SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative at 618-273-2611 or ask your high school guidance counselor.



Remembering the Protectors of Our **FREEDOM**

By Laura Camper

As families gather for their evening meal, many are faced with an empty seat at the dinner table, a reminder that they have a father, mother, son, or daughter serving in the military. The soldier's contribution to the family's nightly conversation may be an e-mail dashed off before attending to duties, a quick phone call, or a letter written in precious, spare time.

This scene has been played out countless times, as men and women have served our country from the American Revolution to our current war in Iraq. In peacetime and in war American soldiers have given up their lives, time with their families, and their everyday living in order to protect our freedoms, and their valor should be remembered and honored.

On Nov. 11, we celebrate Veterans Day to honor all veterans who have served their country in the armed forces. The holiday is often marked with a local parade or memorial service at a military cemetery. In Arlington, Va., a national memorial service is held at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery.

Originally Armistice Day, Nov. 11 was the day that Germany and the Allied Forces

signed a peace treaty ending World War I in 1918. In 1919, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed Nov. 11 a day to honor World War I veterans. In 1954, the name was changed to Veterans Day to honor all veterans, living and deceased, who served during war or peacetime.

This year, as you sit down to dinner with your family on Veterans Day, remember all those who can't be with their families because they are serving our country. Think about all the people who sacrificed their lives to protect our freedom and add them to your list of things for which you are thankful.

Reflect on Woodrow Wilson's words from 85 years ago proclaiming Armistice Day - words that are still true today.

"To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nation."

On Veterans Day, remember all those who can't be with their families.



OFFICE CLOSING

Our office will be closed Friday, November 10 in observance of Veteran's Day and Thursday and Friday, November 23-24, for Thanksgiving.

POWER OUTAGE

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The SOUTHEASTERN Light

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative Eldorado, Illinois

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

Electric Rates In Illinois



Dustin Tripp
President / CEO

I'm sure that many of you have read reports and newspaper articles about the substantial rate increases that are scheduled to take affect January 2, 2007, for consumers of Ameren and Commonwealth Edison (ComEd). In this article, I would like to provide some background information regarding this issue and assure you as a Co-operative Member, this does not have a direct effect on your Cooperative.

The Electric Utility Deregulation law of 1997 was enacted in an effort to reduce electric rates to Illinois consumers by providing customers with a choice of where their electricity was generated. During this transition period, this law mandated some rate reductions for residential customers and also "froze" these resulting rates initially through the year 2004. However, when it became apparent there would be no real choice for residential customers in Illinois, the rate "freeze" was extended through the year 2006.

This same law also changed the way the state's investor-owned utilities (Ameren and ComEd) are regulated. This law allowed investor owned utilities to sell their generation assets or roll them into subsidiaries. Both ComEd and the Ameren companies did that and therefore no longer own generation facilities. This means that their current power supply contracts expire at the end of 2006 and

they have had to find a new source for power to sell to their customers. The Illinois Commerce Commission unanimously approved the holding of power auctions as the means for investor owned utilities to secure a new source for the power to sell to their customers.

Based upon the results of these power auctions along with other factors, rate increases of approximately 40 percent are predicted for residential customers of the Ameren utility companies. At the time this article is being written, Ameren and ComEd hope to be granted the authority to phase-in these cost increases over a period of years. In the event this authority is granted, the phase-in cost would be borne by their customers.

Due to the fact that Cooperatives are not-for-profit entities owned and controlled by the consumers themselves, Cooperatives were treated differently than investor-owned utilities under the 1997 deregulation law. SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative still owns its share of the generation assets at Southern Illinois Power Cooperative in Marion and did not have to secure a new source for power during the power auctions. Therefore, your Cooperative will not be passing along the substantial rate increases to its members that you are

Continued on page 16b

READERSHIP PRIZE WINNER:
Mike O'Brien, Marion, Illinois



Electric Rates In Illinois (cont.)

Continued from page 16a
reading about in the newspapers and other reports.

Your Cooperative will implement a 5.5 percent general rate increase on January 1, 2007. In addition, your Cooperative will restructure all retail rates to reflect a change in our

wholesale power rate structure. This restructuring includes the implementation of a wholesale power cost adjustment charge that will allow your Cooperative to only pass along incremental increases or decreases that are passed along from our power supplier. Due to the restructur-

ing of the rates, the actual rate increase experienced by each member will vary somewhat based upon each member's energy consumption.

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

How Do You Know Your GFCIs Are Working?

GFCIs are extremely reliable devices but like any electronic device they can become damaged over time. Because many GFCIs provide power even after they are damaged and are unable to trip, they work as live receptacles without offering your family protection from dangerous ground faults.

Without regular testing, you can't confirm that your GFCIs are providing this important protection. This is why it's so important to regularly test the GFCIs.

Testing a GFCI Takes Less Than a Minute

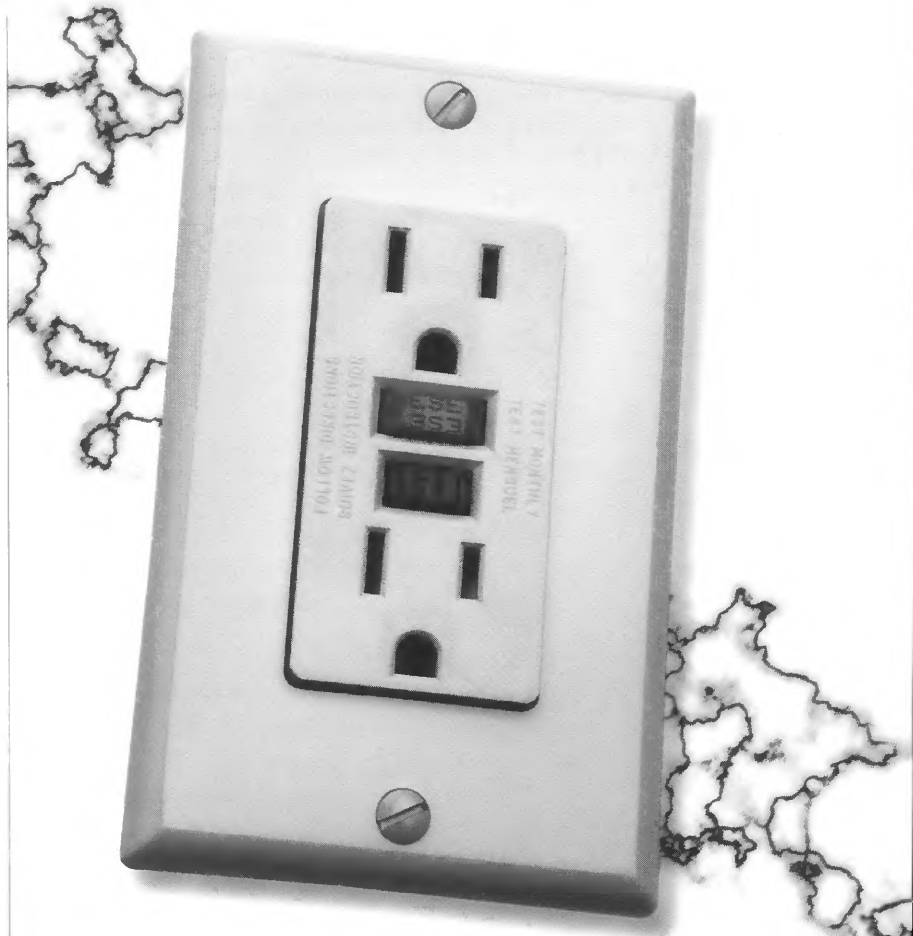
Testing to determine whether a GFCI works properly is an easy procedure that takes less than a minute and may save your life:

1. First plug a lamp or radio into the GFCI and turn the lamp or radio On.
2. Press the TEST button and see if the lamp or radio goes Off.
3. Press the RESET button and the lamp or radio should go back On.
4. If the lamp or radio doesn't go Off when you push the TEST button, the GFCI isn't working properly and should be replaced.

Note: *If you have a Leviton Smart-Lock® GFCI or other manufacturer's GFCI with lock-out feature (adds extra level of protection because it can't be reset if it's not working properly), it's the same test procedure, except for step 4.*

- 4A. If the lamp or radio doesn't go On when you push the RESET button, the GFCI isn't working properly and should be replaced.

Source: Leviton Institute





Keep Holiday Celebrations Bright and Safe!

"Don't let electrical accidents darken your holiday celebrations," says Molly Hall, Director of the Safe Electricity program. "As you prepare for special holiday and family celebrations, look for and eliminate potential threats posed by holiday lighting, decorating and entertaining."

Cooking

According to the National Fire Protection Association, cooking has been the leading cause of home fires since 1990. Safe Electricity offers these tips to avoid shocks and fires in the kitchen year round:

- Inspect all small appliances and electric cords to make sure they are in good repair, and read operating instructions before use.
- Never plug more than one high-wattage appliance into a single outlet.
- Stay focused and attentive to baking, brewing and simmering foods.
- Keep cooking areas clean and free of grease.
- Make sure a working fire extinguisher is on hand, and know how to operate it.
- Make sure that the outlets near sinks are equipped with ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCI's) to prevent shocks.

Lighting and Decorating

"Before decorating for the holidays, take some simple steps to avoid potential safety hazards," says Dustin Tripp. "We've all read about tragedies resulting from holiday lighting mishaps. Safeguard yourself and your home so that you're not among those."

- Only use lights that have been safely tested and have the UL label.
- Check each light string for broken sockets, frayed cords or faulty plugs.
- Always unplug lights when replacing a bulb.
- Don't string together more than three standard-size sets of lights.
- Place fresh-cut trees away from heat sources and water frequently.

• Do not overload outlets. If necessary, use surge protector strips that have circuit breakers to prevent overloads when multiple outlets are needed.

• Keep electric cords away of high-traffic areas. Do not run them through doorways, staple, nail or tack cords to the wall or hide them under rugs or carpets.

• Outdoors, use only lights, cords, animated displays and decorations rated for outdoor use. Cords should be plugged into outlets equipped with GFCIs. Use a portable GFCI if your outdoor outlets don't have them.

• Always unplug lights before going to bed or leaving your home.

For more information visit the Web site www.SafeElectricity.org.

Office closing

**Our office will
be closed Monday,
December 25
for Christmas and
Monday, January 1 for
New Year's Day.**

\$30 \$30 \$30 \$30 \$30 \$30 \$30 \$30 \$30 \$30 \$30 \$30 \$30 \$30 \$30 \$30 \$30 \$30 \$30 \$30



Readership Prize



Starting with the April 1999 issue, each month we print the name of a SouthEastern member who is eligible to receive a \$30 monthly "Readership" prize. If your name and address appear in the "Readership Prize Winner" section of the SouthEastern Light, please contact me by the 15th of that month and I'll see that you receive a check in the amount of \$30.

To claim your prize, call me at (800) 273-2611, extension 169



Practice electric safety this Christmas and ensure all your holiday seasons to come will be merry and bright.

Happy holidays from your Touchstone Energy electric cooperative!

POWER OUTAGE

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