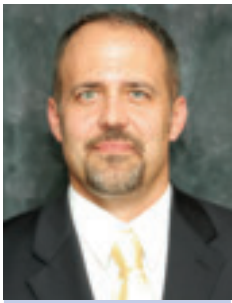


# The SOUTHEASTERN Light

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative Eldorado, Illinois

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

## President's Comments



**Dustin Tripp**  
President/CEO

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

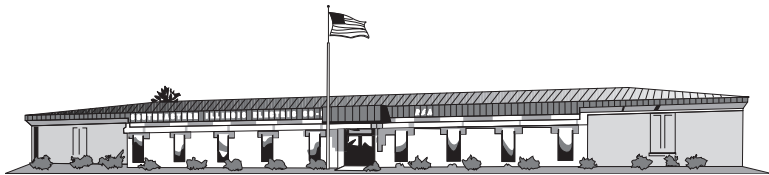
As the electric utility industry continues to evolve and face continual change, we can all be proud that we are part of the electric cooperative program. Electric cooperatives have a very unique business model that provides many benefits for its members and has proven the test of time for over 80 years. Your electric cooperative is a not-for-profit, member-owned business and exists for the sole reason of serving members. Your electric cooperative sets the rates just high enough to cover the cost of doing business unlike investor-owned utilities that strive to maximize profits for investors or shareholders. Any money that is collected by the cooperative above the cost of operations is allocated back to you as capital credits. This allocation becomes your equity ownership in the cooperative, and when the financial condition of the cooperative permits, the capital credits are returned to you in the form of cash. Over the past eight years, your cooperative has paid back over \$14 million in capital credits as cash to members.

Electric cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by the members who actively participate in electing representatives, setting bylaws and making decisions. The members of a cooperative have equal voting rights – one member, one vote. Each customer of the cooperative is a member and owner of the business with an equal say as every other member, unlike investor-owned utilities where the amount of governance is determined by the number of shares held in the company.

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

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

In summary, from start to finish, your electric energy is generated, transmitted and delivered to you by local cooperatives with a very unique business model that benefits all of us as cooperative members. As the utility industry continues to evolve and explore different ways to serve its customers, all of us can be very proud to be member-owners of our electric cooperatives, what we stand for, how we operate and how we truly make a difference in our own communities. See you next month and as always, "We'll keep the lights on for you."



**READERSHIP PRIZE WINNER:**  
Michael White, West Frankfort, IL

# Farmers urged to be aware of electrical hazards

**F**armers and farm family members face dangers every day. Although tragedies such as tractor rollovers and grain bin suffocation receive the most attention, electrocution and electrical burn accidents are frequent on farms. Electrical safety is one of the priorities during National Farm Safety and Health Week.

The simple movement of a portable grain auger from one bin to another can have tragic results if the individuals involved are not extremely careful. The use of tractors with large cabs and antennas and oversized grain wagons can also result in preventable electrocution incidents.

Electrical equipment around fields, such as power lines in the end rows, may get overlooked during such a hectic time of year as harvest. However, failure to notice overhead power lines can be a deadly oversight.

Most farmsteads could use a very careful overhead visual inspection of electric lines. The service may no longer meet the proper height codes because of age and/or damage to poles and pole guy wires. The sag may have increased over the years, while the height of the machinery being used today may be much higher.

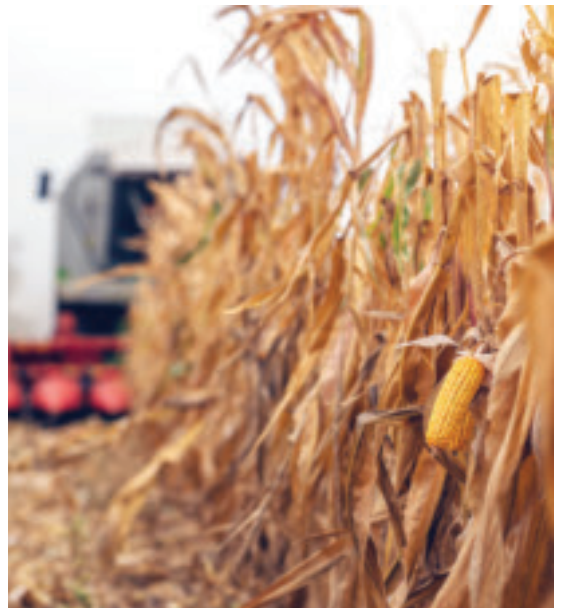
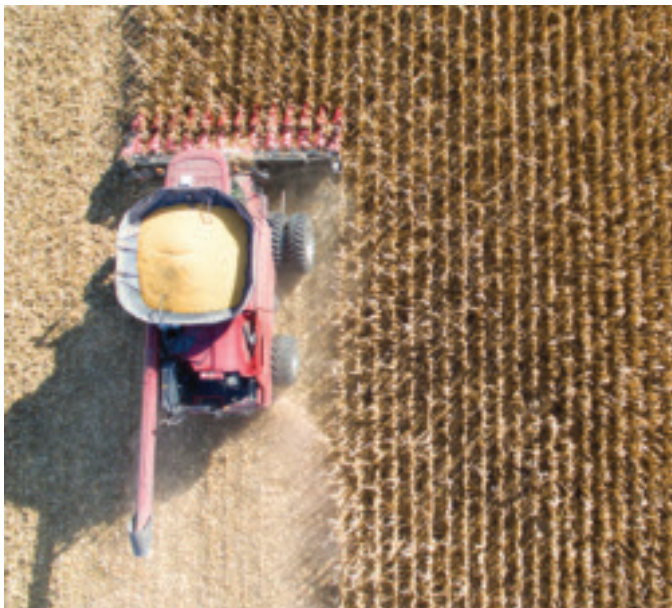
However, today's farm equipment has a long reach when extended; and even when collapsed for roadway

transport, many pieces of equipment may exceed the height of power lines. A daily check should be made of where equipment will be moving to ensure that it will clear power lines. But don't take matters into your own hands. They may not be as high as they look. Always use a spotter, someone with a broad vantage point, when working near power lines.

Maintain a 10-foot separation from a power line completely around it, whether you are driving underneath or passing a grain auger near it. A 53-year-old Michigan truck driver who was cleaning sugar beets out of his truck unknowingly raised the bed into a 4,800-volt overhead power line. As he stood in the wet field and touched the energized truck bed, he was fatally burned.

In addition to conducting a field survey of power lines to locate potential hazards, employers should obtain safety information from utility companies for the benefit of their workers, if the lines are to remain energized.

Where possible, install electrical safety warning signage to prevent equipment and personnel contact with power lines. This will also be beneficial to your suppliers who may be making deliveries to your farm. Always keep in mind that electricity doesn't allow mistakes. And neither should you.





## Cooperative month

October is cooperative month, and we salute you, our consumer-member. You matter to us. When you call our office, you talk to people who attend your church, whose kids attend school with your kids and whose homes lose power when yours does. We celebrate when you celebrate and grieve when you grieve. We are right here where we always have been, and always will be. We are your local electric cooperative, and our only purpose is to serve you.

*Brought to you by your Touchstone Energy Cooperative.*



Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

# 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.

100 Cooperative Way • Carrier Mills, IL 62917-2275  
618-273-2611 or 800-833-2611 • Office hours: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. M-F



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