

The SOUTHEASTERN Light

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative Eldorado, Illinois

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

President's Comments



Dustin Tripp
President/CEO

I wanted to take this opportunity to provide an update on the energy industry in Illinois. Since the November 2018 elections, there have been several legislative proposals in Illinois to transform the energy industry. There are at least four major proposed legislations that are currently circling in Springfield that could have dramatic results in the Illinois energy future.

The general theme of the recent energy proposals in Illinois is to close carbon related generation facilities, including coal and natural gas baseload generation facilities, and rely on nuclear, solar and wind. In fact, the most aggressive proposal calls for all coal and simple-cycle natural gas generation facilities to close by 2021, which is only a few years away, and then close all combined-cycle (most efficient) natural gas generation facilities by 2026. Just to put this into perspective, during the coldest winter weather encountered in January of this year – approximately 66 percent of the needed energy in the Midwest was supplied by coal generation facilities, and 17 percent of the needed energy in the Midwest was supplied by natural gas generation facilities. That means approximately 83 percent of the needed energy was supplied by coal and natural gas.

There's no question that non-hydro-electric renewable energy, primarily solar and wind, are becoming a larger part of our energy portfolio in Illinois. However, these resources currently generate only 7 percent of our energy needs in Illinois. These resources are considered intermittent resources due to the simple facts of nature

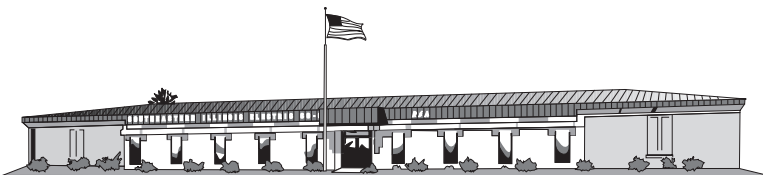
that the sun doesn't shine and the wind doesn't blow 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. More specifically, studies have revealed that utility scale solar generation in Illinois varies due to several variables but has an average capacity factor in the range of 22-25 percent. One way to understand this is that solar systems operate at full capacity only 22-25 percent of the time. Wind generation capacity factor varies by location in the state, height of the tower and other factors but average in the range of 35 percent. Therefore, another way to look at this is that wind generation operates at full capacity only 35 percent of the time. It is also interesting to note that southern Illinois has less average wind speed than any other part of the state.

Given that our demand and need for electricity in Illinois occurs 24-hours per day, 365 days per year, the obvious question is how and where will the needed energy come from to serve Illinois? If Illinois were to close the coal generation facilities and simple cycle natural gas generation facilities, what would generate the energy that we all need all the time? Is nuclear the answer? The answer is obviously no. It would take approximately 10 years from the date of conception to the date of operation for any new nuclear generation facility. It takes several years to obtain the numerous permits required to operate a nuclear facility and

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READERSHIP PRIZE WINNER:
William Dowdy, Harrisburg, IL



then several years of construction to bring these facilities to a reality. Is combined cycle natural gas the answer? Again, the answer is obviously no. Some of the proposals call for the closure of combined-cycle natural gas as early as 2026 and others by 2030. An investment in constructing a new combined-cycle natural gas plant would not happen given that the owners would only have a few years of operation before legislation would require closure. Is battery storage the answer? The answer currently is obviously no. The size and scale of battery storage that would be required is currently technologically unachievable and certainly not affordable.

If legislation is passed in Illinois

that would require the premature closure of coal generation facilities and natural gas generation facilities, the question that remains unanswered is how and where will the needed energy be generated to serve Illinois? Many believe the only reasonable answer would be to import the need for energy in Illinois from surrounding states. States that surround Illinois would supply the additional energy required given the lack of energy produced from intermittent resources like solar and wind given the absence of sufficient energy storage. States surrounding Illinois would serve the additional energy through transmission lines constructed and connected to their generation facilities.

This means that Illinois would lose all of the numerous jobs, tax base and tremendous economic impact created by coal and natural gas generation facilities for the people of Illinois while other states would operate coal and natural gas facilities, gain the jobs, tax base and other tremendous economic impacts in their states while serving Illinois the needed energy.

As stated earlier in this article, these are only proposed legislations at this point. Your cooperative has been actively engaged in discussions in Springfield about these proposals and I will provide additional updates as they develop.

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

5 OUTDOOR ELECTRICAL HAZARDS

1. Power Lines – Always look up and out for power lines. Keep you and your equipment at least 10 feet away from power lines.

2. Outdoor outlets – These should be powered by a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI), which turns itself off if it senses a current leak or a short circuit.

3. Pools – Use battery-powered electronics around the pool. Have an electrician inspect your pool, spa or hot tub before the beginning of each swim season to avoid electrical hazards.

4. Extension Cords – Use extension cords that are rated for outdoor use. Using an indoor cord, which cannot withstand the weather conditions, could result in a shock or fire hazard.

5. Electric Garden Tools – Never use electric garden tools in wet or damp conditions. Check for cracked or frayed cords before use and replace if damaged.

Safe Electricity®

Safety starts with you

Tips for spotting potential electrical hazards in your home

By Derrill Holly, NRECA

Electricity plays many roles in our lives, from powering baby monitors, cell phones and lighting, to running HVAC systems and appliances. No wonder we get so comfortable with its instant availability that when we flip a switch, we expect most systems or devices to do the job.

May is National Electrical Safety Month, and here at SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative, Inc., we think it's a great time to look around your home and check for potential safety hazards.

Remember, every electrical device has a purpose and a service lifespan. While we can extend their operations with maintenance and care, none of them are designed to last or work forever. When electricity is involved, failures can present electrical hazards that might be avoided with periodic inspections.

Ground fault circuit interrupters

Outdoor outlets or those in potentially damp locations in a kitchen, bathroom or laundry room often include GFCI features. They are designed to sense abnormal current flows, breaking the circuit to prevent potential electric shocks from devices plugged into the outlets.

The average GFCI outlet is designed to last about 10 years, but in areas prone to electrical storms or power surges, they can wear out in five years or less. Check them frequently by pressing the red test button. Make sure you hit the black reset button when you are done. Contact a licensed electrician to replace any failing GFCI outlets.

Loose or damaged outlets or switches

Unstable electrical outlets or wall



switches with signs of heat damage or discoloration can offer early warnings of potential shock or electrical fire hazards. Loose connections can allow electrical current arcing. If you see these warning signs, it may be time to contact an electrician.

Surge protectors

Power strips with surge protectors can help safeguard expensive equipment like televisions, home entertainment systems and computer components from power spikes. Voltage spikes are measured in joules, and surge protectors are rated for the number of joules they can effectively absorb. That means if your surge protector is rated at 1,000 joules, it should be replaced when it hits or passes that limit. When the limit is reached, protection stops, and you're left with a basic power strip.

Some surge protectors include indicator lights that flicker to warn

you when they've stopped working as designed, but many do not. If your electrical system takes a major hit, or if you don't remember when you bought your surge protector, replacement may be the best option.

Extension cords

If you use extension cords regularly to connect devices and equipment to your wall outlets, you may live in an underwired home. With a growing number of electrical devices connecting your family to the electricity you get from SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative, Inc., having enough outlets in just the right spots can be challenging. Remember, extension cords are designed for temporary, occasional or periodic use.

If an extension cord gets noticeably warm when in use, it could be undersized for the intended use. If it shows any signs of frayed, cracked or heat-damaged insulation, it should be replaced. If the grounding prong is missing, crimped or loose, a grounded cord will not provide the protection designed into its performance. And always make sure that extension cords used in outdoor or potentially damp locations are rated for exterior use.

According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, approximately 51,000 electrical fires are reported each year in the United States, causing more than \$1.3 billion in annual property damage.

Electricity is an essential necessity for modern living, and SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative, Inc. is committed to providing safe, reliable and affordable power to all our members. We hope you'll keep these electrical safety tips in mind so that you can note any potential hazards *before* damage occurs.



May is Electrical Safety Month.

Safety Starts with You.



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.

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