

President's Report



William R. Dodds
President/CEO



What you're missing at the annual meeting

By Adam Schwartz

Did you know every cooperative is required to conduct an annual meeting of the membership? The purpose is to hold the election for the board of directors, share important financial information, occasionally vote on other matters such as by-law changes and of course—the great door prizes!

Spoon River Electric's annual meeting is a community gathering where neighbors can meet new neighbors—or catch up with old acquaintances. As our lives get busier with the “errands of life” and more of our interactions with others are online (via social media), we must renew the value of face-to-face human connections. Very few organizations are uniquely positioned like Spoon River Electric to bring together all members of our local communities.

While rural Americans probably do a better job of staying connected to our neighbors (in part because we need to), it is not something we should take for granted. The simple act of smiling, saying hello and shaking someone's hand truly lifts both parties.

Our country and community face many challenges. Our economy feels like it has been stagnant for years. Overcoming these challenges will only happen if we come together.

Spoon River Electric's annual meeting is designed to take care of the important business of your co-op and the equally important business of building a real sense of community. All cooperatives serve both an economic and social purpose. While safe, reliable and affordable electric power is crucial to our mission, improving the quality of life for all members is at the core of what we do every day.

If you have not attended the annual meeting in the past or if it has been a few years, we urge you to take the time to be with your fellow co-op members.

We get out of life what we put into it. Spoon River Electric is connected to you by more than just powerlines. We are your neighbors, and we look forward to seeing you at your annual meeting, June 6, 2019!



*You're invited to
Spoon River Electric
Cooperative's Annual
Meeting on June 6!*

Spoon River Electric Cooperative

930 South Fifth Ave, PO Box 340,
Canton, IL 61520
8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
309-647-2700 • www.srecoop.org

President/CEO

William R. Dodds
bdodds@srecoop.org

Chairman

Bernard Marvel, Browning

Vice Chairman

Terry Beam, Cuba

Secretary

Jack Clark, Lewistown

Treasurer

Lyle Nelson, Abingdon

Assistant Treasurer

Robert Lascelles, Ipava

Board of Directors

James Banks, Canton
Wesley Strode, Marietta
JoDee Pedigo, Canton
John Spangler, Marietta


Editor of Spoon River News

Taryn Mellert
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Spoon River Electric Cooperative – By the Numbers

Miles of line energized: 1,272
Number of members served: 5,022
Number of power poles
in territory: 29,361

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.

Learn more at SafeElectricity.org



*Our office will be closed
Monday, May 27 in observance
of Memorial Day.*

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 Spoon River Electric, 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 Spoon River Electric, 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 Spoon River Electric 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.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Avoid placing items like lamps and televisions near your air-conditioning thermostat. The thermostat senses heat from these appliances, which can cause the A/C to run longer than necessary.

Source: energy.gov





ATTENTION 2018-2019 SENIORS!

Spoon River Electric Cooperative Is Awarding Three \$1,000 Scholarships to High School Seniors

High school students who are seniors during the 2018-2019 school year and are the son or daughter of a Spoon River Electric member are eligible to apply for a \$1,000 Scholastic Scholarship, a \$1,000 Honorary Scholarship, and the \$1,000 Scott Parrish Memorial Scholarship, which will be awarded at this year's Annual Meeting on June 6, 2019.

Please fill out the form at the bottom of the page and return it to the Cooperative to participate. Applications must be turned in by **May 10, 2019** to be considered. Please see official rules and descriptions of scholarships below.

OFFICIAL RULES

- **Applying students and their parent/legal guardian must be present at the Annual Meeting June 6, 2019 to win.**
- Students must be a son or daughter of a Spoon River Electric Cooperative Member.
- Students must be a high school senior during the 2018-2019 school year and begin college undergraduate studies in the 2019-2020 school year. Students must plan on attending a two-year or four-year accredited college or university, including vocational/technical schools.
- Scholarship winners must be full-time students (at least 12 hours) during the 2019-2020 academic year.
- Scholarships are for one year and are non-renewable.
- Past Spoon River Electric Cooperative scholarship winners are not eligible to receive another one.

SCHOLASTIC AND SCOTT PARRISH MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIPS

- The Scholastic and Scott Parrish Memorial Scholarships will be awarded based on an application detailing GPA, college entrance test scores, work and volunteer experience, participation in school and community activities, and a biographical statement.
- Semi-finalists will be notified by mail with a time and place for a personal interview.
- Those not chosen as semi-finalists for the Scholastic and Parrish Scholarships will be automatically placed in the Honorary Scholarship drawing.

HONORARY SCHOLARSHIP

- The Honorary Scholarship will be awarded by a drawing as students are recognized at the Annual Meeting.
- All applicants are eligible for the Honorary Scholarship drawing except the Scholastic and Parrish Scholarship winners.



Scholarship Participation Request

Name of Student _____

Address of Student _____

Name of Parent/Guardian _____

Telephone Number _____

Return To: Taryn Mellert
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Canton, IL 61520
647-2700