

The SOUTHEASTERN Light

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative Eldorado, Illinois

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

President's Comments



Dustin Tripp
President/CEO

81st Annual Meeting of Members Report

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative held its 81st Annual Meeting on Tuesday, Aug. 6, 2019 with approximately 887 members registered and 1,100 in attendance. For those who were unable to attend your cooperative's annual meeting, this article will summarize the report members received at the annual meeting.

The cooperative sold approximately 963.8 million kwh in 2018 resulting in a decrease of 1.9 percent from 2017. This decrease in kilowatt hours sold was primarily due to a decrease in large industrial load.

Your cooperative ended the year 2018 in sound financial condition. As a not-for-profit, your cooperative does not strive to produce profits for shareholders and investors but must maintain a sound financial position for the membership. In 2018, your cooperative's board of trustees approved the retirement and return of \$1.37 million of capital credits, and the checks were mailed

to members in December 2018. This means that over the past eight years, your cooperative has retired and returned over \$15 million of capital credits to the members.

Cooperative members learned that over the past decade, the U.S. discovered new sources of shale oil and natural gas and developed technological advances in oil and natural gas drilling techniques that we know today as hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling. These developments have led to more economical extraction methods and created an abundance of supply in these resources. In 2009, the U.S. became the world's largest producer of natural gas and in 2018, the U.S. became the world's largest producer of oil. Natural gas has become a low-cost fuel for electricity generation and for the past three years, natural gas has surpassed coal as the leading fuel source for electricity generation. Just a decade ago,

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READERSHIP PRIZE WINNER:
James Holbrook, Elizabethtown, IL





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coal was the fuel source for 48 percent (almost half) of our nation's energy. Next year, it is projected that coal will provide 23 percent of our nation's electric generation while natural gas will provide 37 percent.

For the first time since the 1950s, the U.S. is projected to become a net exporter of energy in the coming year. As the U.S. becomes the world's largest producer of oil and natural gas and the world's second largest coal producer, there is a significant and transformational shift in social and public policy to move the U.S. electricity generation industry away from these carbon-based fuels to renewable energy. The public policies that are moving the industry in this direction include federal and state tax incentives, credits, subsidies and government mandates. Federal and state tax credits and incentives have been the driving force for the deployment of more renewable energy development. Another driving force is government mandates, more specifically known as renewable portfolio standards, which require utilities to have a certain percentage of their generation from renewable sources. There are currently 29 states that have renewable energy portfolio standards. There's no question that change is coming in the generation of electricity and the movement to transform the energy industry in the U.S. is developing at a rapid pace.

In addition, there were several major energy legislation proposals

introduced during the 2019 Spring Congressional Session. The general theme of the recent energy proposals in Illinois is to decrease or close carbon related generation facilities, including coal and natural gas baseload generation facilities, and rely on nuclear, solar and wind. Some of the legislation proposals call for higher renewable portfolio mandates and others call for even more aggressive action with carbon-based generation facilities.

While there was no substantive action on these proposals during the spring session, it is likely that there will be further discussions in the fall session. It is likely that we will see another major energy legislation acted upon in the coming year.

In summary, the electric utility industry experienced a significant shift over the past decade with greater production of oil and natural gas which resulted in natural gas becoming the leading generation resource in the U.S. However, over the past few years, we have experienced an even greater transformational shift in the generation of electricity. Social and public

policy are driving and funding more renewable energy development in the generation industry.

Lastly, the members were informed that your cooperative will not implement a rate increase for the rest of 2019 and currently does not anticipate the need for a rate increase in the year 2020.

Your cooperative was formed 81 years ago to bring electricity to rural areas of southeastern Illinois. The founders of the electric cooperative program developed a unique business structure that by its very nature makes electric cooperatives accountable to the members it serves. Your cooperative is governed by local people that live and work in your very own communities. Your cooperative is also managed and operated by a group of local employees that live and work in your very own communities. 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."

HAPPY
LABOR
DAY

Our office will be closed on Monday, September 2
in observance of Labor Day.

Attention Local Teachers!

Apply for your 2019/2020 Touchstone Energy®
Classroom Empowerment Grants



Does your school or classroom need new materials? Can your students benefit from new programs and educational resources? We thought so.

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative is once again coordinating this grant program with Touchstone Energy for our local teachers and administrators. The grants will be provided for innovative, unfunded projects or materials. Qualifying projects are those that improve the learning environment or increase educational resources for the school.

A panel of judges will determine which projects will be awarded the grants. Grant applications are due by November 8. Grant awards will be announced on January 10. For a grant application and guidelines, please visit our website at www.seiec.com or contact Stefanie Tripp at 1-618-273-3806. It only takes a few minutes to apply.

Since 2006, SEIEC has distributed a total of \$50,000 Touchstone Energy Classroom Empowerment Grants throughout the Cooperative's service area.

Farmers: Remember electrical safety this harvest season

In 2017, farmers ranked eighth in the list of the most dangerous jobs (civilian jobs with highest fatality rates) according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics/U.S. Dept. of Labor. Unfortunately, farmers, ranchers and other agricultural managers rank right below other hazardous jobs such as logging, roofing, and steel work.

It is no wonder farmers make that list. As agriculturists are well-aware, many dangers are present in their long and arduous workdays.

Safe Electricity and **SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative** remind farmers that accidents related to power and electricity are also possible but, in most cases, they can be prevented. Especially during the busy harvest season, take the following steps to decrease the chances of an electrical-related incident:

- Always use a spotter when operating large machinery near lines.
- Use care when raising augers or the bed of grain trucks around power lines.

- Keep equipment at least 10 feet from lines — at all times, in all directions.
- Inspect the height of the farm equipment to determine clearance.
- Always lower extensions to the lowest setting when moving loads.
- Never attempt to move a power line out of the way or raise it for clearance.
- If a power line is sagging or low, call us right away.
- If your equipment does hit a power line, do not leave the cab. Immediately call 9-1-1, warn others to stay away, and wait for the utility crew to cut the power.

Although harvest season is a time filled with tight deadlines and heightened work stress, take the time to consider electrical safety. It could save your life or the lives of others.

For more information about electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

HARVEST SAFETY TIPS FOR FARMWORKERS

Maintain a 10-foot clearance around all utility equipment in all directions.

Use a spotter and deployed flags to maintain safe distances from power lines and other equipment when doing field work.

If your equipment makes contact with an energized or downed power line, contact us immediately by phone and remain inside the vehicle until the power line is de-energized. In case of smoke or fire, exit the cab by making a solid jump out of the cab, without touching it at the same time, and hop away to safety.

Consider equipment and cargo extensions of your vehicle. Lumber, hay, tree limbs, irrigation pipe and even bulk materials can conduct electricity, so keep them out of contact with electrical equipment.

Source: Safe Electricity



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

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



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