

President's Report



William R. Dodds
President/CEO

Harvest workers urged to take time to reap safe harvest

Harvest can be an exciting and exhausting time – the culmination of a season of hard work. However, the rush to harvest can also yield tragic outcomes. Each year, dozens of farm workers are killed and hundreds are injured in accidents involving power lines and electrical equipment.

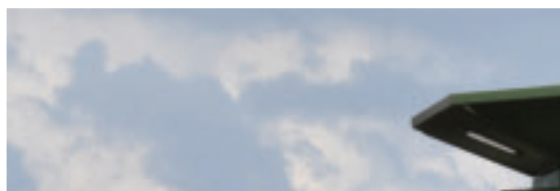
“Things people see every day can fade from view, and in the busyness of harvest time, it’s easy for farm workers to forget about the power lines overhead,” says Matt Eisenmenger of the Safe Electricity Advisory Board. “But failure to notice them can be a deadly oversight.”

Review with all workers the farm activities that take place around power lines. Inspect the height of farm equipment to determine clearance. Keep equipment at least 10 feet away from power lines – above, below and to the side – a 360-degree rule.

“Always lower grain augers before moving them, even if it’s only a few feet,” says Bob Aherin, University of Illinois professor. “Variables like wind, uneven ground, shifting weight or other conditions can combine to create an unexpected result.”

Farm workers should take these steps to ensure a safe harvest season:

- Use care when raising augers or the bed of grain trucks around power lines.



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

— ★ ★ ★ —
Labor Day

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

Continued on 20b



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
tmellert@srecoop.org

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

Safe harvest continued from 20a

- Use a spotter when operating large machinery near power lines. Do not let the spotter touch the machinery while it is being moved anywhere near power lines.
- As with any outdoor work, be careful not to raise any equipment such as ladders, poles or rods into power lines. Remember, non-metallic materials such as lumber, tree limbs, ropes and hay will conduct electricity depending on dampness, dust and dirt contamination.
- Never attempt to raise or move a power line to clear a path!
- Don't use metal poles to break up bridged grain inside bins. Know where and how to shut off the power in an emergency.
- Use qualified electricians for work on drying equipment and other farm electrical systems.

Operators of farm equipment or vehicles must also know what to do if the vehicle comes in contact with a power line: Stay on the equipment, warn others to stay away and call 911. Do not get off the equipment until the utility crew says it is safe to do so.

“If the power line is energized and you step outside, touching the vehicle and ground, your body becomes the path and electrocution is the result,” Aherin said. “Even if a power line has landed on the ground, the potential for the area nearby to be energized still exists. Stay inside the vehicle unless there's fire or imminent risk of fire.”

If this is the case, jump off the equipment with your feet together, without touching the ground and vehicle at the same time. Then, still keeping your feet together, hop to safety as you leave the area.

Once you get away from the equipment, never attempt to get back on or even touch the equipment. Some electrocutions have occurred after the operator dismounts and, realizing nothing has happened, tries to get back on the equipment.

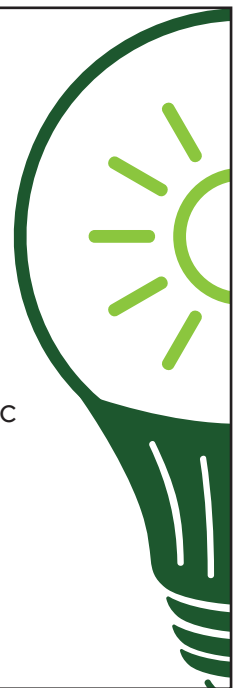
It is important that all farm workers and seasonal employees are informed of electrical hazards and trained in proper procedures to avoid injury.

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

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Cookware Tip: Copper-bottomed pans heat faster on the stove. In the oven, ceramic and glass dishes are better than metal. With ceramic and glass dishes, you can turn the oven down about 25 degrees, and your meal will cook just as quickly.

Source: energy.gov



WHY DO THOSE TREES LOOK FUNNY?

Trees directly beneath power lines may appear to be in a 'V' or 'U' shape with power lines passing through the opening, while trees growing alongside a power line may appear to be in an 'L' shape. There's a good reason they are professionally pruned that way: to protect people around them.

The shape of the tree will be different, but it's essential to providing safe and reliable service. Learn more at:



Operation Round-Up helps support local ballpark

During the summer of 2018, Spoon River Electric's Operation Round-Up program gave grant money to many deserving organizations, one being the Vermont Ballpark Playground Fund. We were able to donate \$1,500 to the fund for new toddler playground equipment.

Early this summer, we met up with Laura Holmes, who spearheaded the project, and this is what she had to share:

In spring 2018, the Vermont Memorial Ballpark removed most of the toddler playground equipment from the sand area next to the picnic shelter because it was weathered and broken in some areas and had become unsafe for children to play on. It was removed in order to allow room for a more updated and durable set to be installed. However,

the ballpark did not have the funds to replace the equipment, so that left this area empty. A group of parents came together to raise funds in order to restore the toddler play area to a safe and fun place for children in our community to play while at the ballpark. The goal for this group of parents, called the Vermont Ballpark Playground Fund, was to raise enough money to purchase a new toddler appropriate play structure.

Throughout the summer of 2018, the Vermont Ballpark Playground Fund worked tirelessly to raise as much money as possible in order to buy new equipment for the toddler play area. The original goal was to try and raise \$2,000, which we thought would be a challenge. We expected to be able to buy a new slide or small piece of equipment.

We never imagined it would be possible to raise as much money as we did, and it wouldn't have been possible without the help and dedication from community members and parents.

It all started with a small group of parents in the spring who were willing to donate their time and energy. We sat down and brainstormed different ways to raise money and each of us took responsibility for one of the fundraising efforts. Through selling fan shirts, collection jars in area businesses, Butch's Pizza fundraiser, GoFundMe page, a Night at the Ballpark fundraising event and private donations, we were able to raise a total of \$10,000 to purchase new equipment. It started with something

Continued on 20d

Ballpark continued from 20c

so small, just an idea and a couple parents willing to volunteer their time. We were absolutely amazed at what we were able to accomplish.

The outpouring of community support really helped to keep our efforts going. Everything we did was well received and supported by the community. The ballpark is a place where a lot of families spend time in the summer and we wanted the new playground to be a place where kids in the community were excited to go. A place where everyone can be safe and have fun, and I think we really achieved that goal. We are very happy with what we were able to accomplish in such a short amount of time.

With the \$10,000 the Vermont Ballpark Playground Fund raised, we were able to purchase a large piece of equipment, along with two swings, new playground border and ground covering. All the installation was done by members of the community who volunteered their time, services and equipment. In the coming years, we plan to hold an annual Night at the Ballpark fundraiser event to continue to raise money for additional upgrades to the ballpark.

The Vermont Memorial Ballpark is a non-profit organization in Vermont, Ill. The ballpark currently provides youth (ages 4 years) to adult baseball and softball summer leagues, hosts events and provides the property and structures for family parties and gatherings for community residents. All events and use of the property are free to the community and general public. In the past few years, the ballpark has completed various renovations in order to benefit the entire community.

If your group or organization is interested in learning more out Spoon River Electric's Operation Round-Up Program, please call Taryn at 309-647-2700. Grant applications can be found online at srecoop.org and are due the first Monday of each quarter.

