

JAMUP

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Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

The season of gratitude

November is the month to be thankful – the season of gratitude. However, it seems that decking the halls has taken precedence over giving thanks. Don't get me wrong, I adore all things Christmas! But whatever happened to Thanksgiving? Has the simplicity of gathering with family and friends and giving thanks for your blessings been forgotten?

In the hustle and bustle of life, it's easy to get in a rush and difficult to slow down. We are more connected than ever with cellphones and other electronic devices. Constantly rushing to the next task, text or email. I am just as guilty as the next person. But sometimes, I wish that I could rewind time to relive the simpler holidays of the past.

As a kid, I loved Thanksgiving when our large, extended family gathered



Bree Hileman
Director of HR &
Administrative Services

for a delicious meal. The mouth-watering smells of turkey and dressing, sweet potatoes, and hot buttered rolls are still vivid in my mind. Although the meal was wonderful, the time with family was even better. The day was full of laughter, football games, and, of course, a nap or two. There were no smartphones to divert attention from those around us. Instead, we focused on one another. Memories were made. And those memories will forever hold a special place in my heart, especially as I miss those loved ones who are no longer here to celebrate Thanksgiving this year.

As we enter this season of gratitude, try to slow down and enjoy each holiday to the fullest. Turn off those cellphones. Pay attention to your family and friends. Let them know how important they are to you while they are still here. Make lasting memories with your kids. And, above all, be grateful for all the blessings in your life. There is always, always something to be thankful for.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to say how thankful I am for continued good health, a loving family, amazing friends and co-workers, and my awesome job serving the member-owners of Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative (SIEC). Without you, there would be no SIEC. We appreciate each of you and value your support.

*Happy Thanksgiving
from all of us here at SIEC.*



**Our office will be closed
November 28 and 29
for Thanksgiving**



Twelve 2020 IEC Memorial Scholarships available

Illinois electric cooperatives will award 12 scholarships in 2020 to financially assist deserving students in the electric cooperative family. The 12 scholarships, \$2,000 each, will be awarded through the Thomas H. Moore Illinois Electric Cooperatives (IEC) Memorial Scholarship Program.

Six scholarships will be awarded to high school seniors who are the sons or daughters of an Illinois electric co-op member. A seventh scholarship, the Earl W. Struck Memorial Scholarship, will be awarded to a student who is the son or daughter of an Illinois electric cooperative employee or director. Four additional scholarships are reserved for students enrolling full time at a two-year Illinois community college who are the sons or daughters of Illinois electric cooperative members, employees or directors.

The 12th scholarship, the LaVern and Nola McEntire Lineworker's Scholarship, will help pay for costs to attend lineworker school conducted by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives in conjunction with Lincoln Land Community College, Springfield, Ill. Sons and daughters of co-op members, relatives of co-op employees or directors, and individuals who have served or are serving in the armed forces or National Guard are all eligible for this scholarship.

Lindsey R. Kinser
 “We hope to assist electric cooperative youth while honoring past rural electric leaders with these scholarships,” says David A. Johnston. “Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative (SIEC) and the other Illinois electric cooperatives are always seeking ways to make a difference in our communities. One of the best ways we can do that is by helping our youth through programs like this one. In addition, we are very pleased to offer the electric lineworker's scholarship. It will benefit not only electric cooperative youth but also those fine men and women who have served their country through their military service and may now be wanting to become a trained lineworker.”

For more information regarding the scholarships, contact SIEC at 618-827-3555. Information has also been shared with area high school guidance counselors and is available online at <https://siec.org/scholarship-information>.

IEC Memorial Scholarships available

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1 Earl W. Struck Memorial Scholarship awarded to a student who is the son or daughter of an Illinois electric co-op employee or director.

1 LaVern and Nola McEntire Lineworker's Scholarship awarded to a student attending lineworker school conducted by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives in conjunction with Lincoln Land Community College, Springfield, IL.

Deadline to apply is Dec. 31, 2019. The lineworker scholarship deadline is April 30, 2020. For more information, go to aiec.coop/iec-scholarship or siec.org/scholarship-information.

Make sure your water heater is safe

One home appliance that seldom gets much of a thought or even a passing glance is the water heater. However, neglecting the appliance that we depend on to turn cold water into hot can cause serious havoc.

You may only notice issues with this underappreciated appliance at the prospect of a cold shower, but a water heater that's improperly installed or maintained could cause much more serious consequences than that.

Once it blows, it could blast off like a missile with enough force to lift your house off its foundation. Or, you could be sitting on the couch binge watching Netflix when suddenly it bursts and your ceiling caves in (depending on its location) and you have an instant flood and massive mess on your hands.

A water heater could explode or malfunction for the following reasons:

1. Sediment buildup in the tank
2. Rust corroding the tank; or
3. Too much internal pressure

How will you know if your heater suffers from one of these maladies?

If your hot water makes a popping or knocking noise, there could be water trapped under the sediment. It is like when you boil water and it puts pressure on the lid from the inside out. To prevent this from happening, flush and drain your water heater tank once every year.



Photo source: "New Water Heater" by Daniel-Crookston / CC BY 2.0

If your tap water is a brown, rusty color, you may have rust in the water tank. Although water heaters have something called an anode rod to prevent this, it can deteriorate over time. Be sure to inspect the rod every two years and at least annually once your

warranty has expired. The rod itself should be replaced every four to five years; sooner if you have a water softener.

Don W. Wittig
If your water heater's temperature and pressure relief valve (aka T&P) keeps opening to release water or it leaks (a sign that your valve is bad), you could have a potential bomb-projectile combo on your hands. To help prevent too much pressure in your tank:

1. Set the temperature at 120 to 125 degrees. Setting it too high (140+ degrees) causes pressure to build in the tank. (Additional benefit: this will help lower your energy bill.)
2. Test your T&P twice a year (or have it tested by a professional) to make sure it is working properly. You can find the valve on the top or side of your tank (be careful—the water will be extremely hot; it is not like the sink or shower when you wait for hot water to make its way through the pipes).

For additional information, consult a qualified service technician. For more information about electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

HAPPY VETERAN'S DAY
★ Honoring all who served ★

**Our office will be closed
November 11**

Member prize

In this issue of the JAMUP, we printed the names of three SIEC members who are eligible to receive a \$10 credit toward their utility bill. If you find your name printed in this center section and it's not part of the story, call Bree with your account number at **800-762-1400** to claim your prize.

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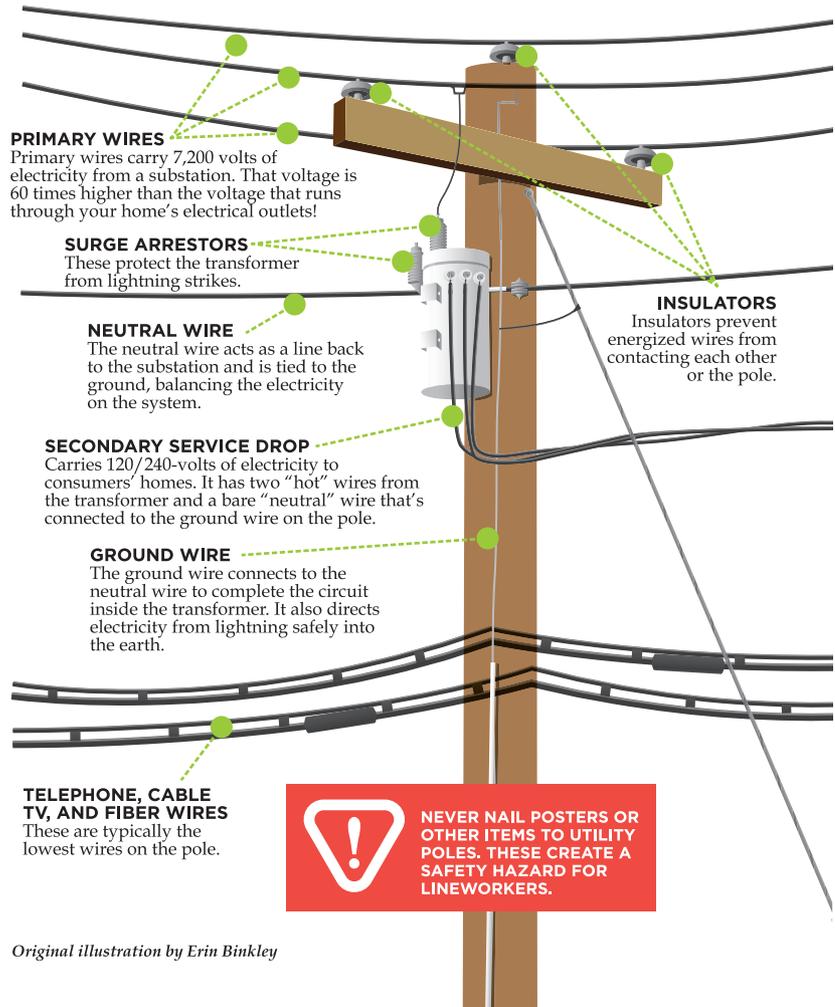
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Office hours: 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

www.siec.coop

WHAT'S ON THAT POLE?

This illustration shows the basic equipment found on electric utility poles. The equipment varies according to the location and the service they provide.



Original illustration by Erin Binkley

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Trim your holiday energy costs by choosing energy efficient LED lights! LED holiday lights use less energy and can last up to 40 seasons. They're also easier to install – you can connect up to 25 LED strings without overloading a wall socket!

Source: energy.gov

