

President's Report



William R. Dodds
President/CEO

We love our community

With Valentine's Day approaching, we can't think of a better time to express how much we love this community and serving you, the members of the co-op.

We know when we helped to bring electricity to rural Illinois many years ago, the quality of life improved for all. Through the years, other issues needed to be tackled, and we have been at the forefront of helping to address some of those issues. We want to help meet the long-term needs of our community to ensure it continues to thrive – because just like you, we live here too.

While our top priority is to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to you, equally important is our mission to enrich the lives of the consumer-members (that's you!) that we serve. This focus to benefit the larger community is central to the way we operate as a cooperative. Spoon River Electric Cooperative (SREC) knows that electricity is a critical need for modern-day life, but it takes more than poles and power lines to make a community.

Over time, our co-op has evolved to meet the changing needs of our community, thereby improving the quality of life for everyone. And that can mean many different things. It can mean scholarships to help local students with their education or programs like Operation Round-Up.

Operation Round-Up is a program that helps replenish food supplies for local food pantries, helps support senior citizen hospice programs, purchases supplies and equipment for rural fire departments and emergency response services, provides funds for community programs and helps children of all ages by supporting community youth activities and school programs. Funds are provided by SREC members who choose to round up their electric bill to the nearest dollar to donate to the charitable program. We all benefit from this program because of you and your neighbors.

You empower SREC through your membership and through your participation in and support of these programs.

As a local business, we are proud to power your life and bring good things to our community. We hope you will continue to guide our efforts by sharing your perspective as we plan for the future. The energy landscape is undergoing dramatic change fueled by evolving technology and consumer desires for more options. While the larger environment in which we operate is constantly changing, one thing remains the same. By working together, I'm certain that we can continue to do good things for our community.



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



Keep your furry friends safe around electricity

You do all you can to keep your pets healthy: you take them to the vet for checkups, feed them and ensure they are up to date on vaccinations. After all, pets are part of the family.

Two-thirds (67 percent) of U.S. households, or about 85 million families, own at least one pet, according to the 2019-2020 National Pet Owners Survey. The survey was conducted by the American Pet Products Association, and the numbers are up 11 percent from 1988.

There is something else you can do for your pets, and that is to keep them safe around electricity. Spoon River Electric Cooperative and Safe Electricity offer these tips:

- Puppies and other pets love to chew on electrical cords. Keep cords out of sight or hidden with a cord cover. Provide teething or play alternatives.
- Watch your pet around dangling or sagging cords, including phone or tablet charging cables. Unplug charging cables once your devices are charged. Not only do they draw a small amount of energy when not in use, but the dangling cords are just crying to be played with.
- Watch where you place lamps and other plugged-in items. Lamps can be a fire hazard if they are knocked over, especially if they have halogen bulbs.
- Do not leave your pet alone around items that get hot: curling irons and straighteners, an outdoor grill, a portable heater and other electric appliances, including cooktops.

Pet proof your home much like you would for a baby or toddler. If you suspect your pet has been shocked or burned, take it to the vet right away. Owners may not realize a pet has been shocked until a few hours later when it has trouble breathing. Other symptoms include ulcers in the mouth and lesions on the tongue and gums.

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

Smart home devices that can save you money

Some smart devices for your home can save money. Others are designed for convenience – like phone apps used to remotely to close the garage door or see who is on the front porch. Using smart devices that can impact your energy bill won't make you rich, but they can help lower bills each month, which adds up over time. Here are some devices to consider:

■ Smart thermostat

A smart thermostat studies your heating and cooling trends over time and can help reduce your energy bill by optimizing energy-saving tactics. You can adjust the temperature of your home remotely and know how much energy you use to heat or cool your home. While a programmable thermostat can help save money, a smart version earns its name by all the extra features it has beyond programming.

In either case, adjusting your thermostat just one degree, depending on the time of year, can make a difference in your utility bill. Households can save up to 3 percent on heating and cooling by making that simple adjustment.



■ Smart light bulbs/lighting

The first way to save money on lighting comes from good old-fashioned smarts and not a literal smart bulb, per se. Look around and see what kind of light bulbs are in your house. By replacing your home's five most frequently used light fixtures



or bulbs with Energy Star versions, you can save \$75 a year, according to energy.gov.

By upgrading your light bulbs, you won't have to replace them as often. A 60-watt incandescent bulb lasts an average of 1,000 hours, while a 12-watt LED bulb has an average life span of 25,000 hours.

Then there are actual smart bulbs that allow you to "schedule" lights and control them remotely. This could save a little money if you or someone in your house is always leaving the lights on.

■ Smart window coverings

Smart window coverings are pricey, but they can help save money on energy bills over time. For example, they allow you to lower blinds on hot, sunny days even if you're not home, which may prevent your air conditioner from kicking on. About 76 percent of sunlight that falls on standard double-pane windows enters your home to become heat, according to energy.gov. Conversely, about 30 percent of a home's heating energy is lost through windows, and the efficient use of window coverings can reduce energy loss when it is cold outside.

■ Smart water valves

According to the U.S. EPA, an average household's water leaks can account for 10,000 gallons of water wasted every year. Collectively, that's 1 trillion gallons of water each year in the U.S.! Smart leak sensors monitor leaks under sinks, behind

toilets and near other water sources in your home. Like most smart home devices, the sensors can be linked to a smartphone to alert leaks. There are also smart water valves designed for the main water line for catastrophes like bursting pipes, although these are pricey and require professional installation.

■ Smart plugs

This device plugs into an outlet and allows you to control appliances remotely via a phone app. Most smart plugs track energy use so you can see how efficient (or inefficient) an appliance is. Some have a convenient away feature that allows you to program lights to make it look like someone is home.



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



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Are you using your fireplace efficiently? Remember to turn down the thermostat when burning a fire, and close the damper when a fire is not burning.

Source: energy.gov



ATTENTION 2019-2020 SENIORS!

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

High school students who are seniors during the 2019-2020 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 4, 2020.

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 15, 2020** 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 4, 2020 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 2019-2020 school year and begin college undergraduate studies in the 2020-2021 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 2020-2021 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
Spoon River Electric Cooperative
PO Box 340
Canton, IL 61520
647-2700