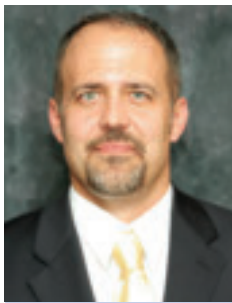


# The SOUTHEASTERN Light

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative Eldorado, Illinois

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

## President's Comments



**Dustin Tripp**  
President/CEO

The digital age of communication and automation has provided some opportunities for all of us to simplify some of the routine and ordinary tasks that we perform on a monthly basis. One example of this is the various methods that are available for members to pay their monthly electric bill. Your cooperative offers a variety of options that you can select that best suits your preferences, lifestyle and your needs. In this article, I would like to briefly explain the various options that are available for members to pay their bill.

SEIEC offers an automated payment plan that automatically draws the necessary funds from your checking or savings account to pay your monthly electric bill. With this option, you will still receive a statement in the mail that is virtually identical to the invoice you receive now, but the funds necessary to pay the total amount due will automatically be withdrawn from your checking or savings account on the due date. Please contact the office if you would like an enrollment form for this option.

SEIEC also offers online payments through SmartHub. SmartHub offers members quick and easy access to perform functions including view bill, pay bill, schedule a future payment, review past payments, receive bill reminders, update your account and view daily and monthly electric use. Please visit our website [www.seiec.com](http://www.seiec.com) to see how you can sign up for SmartHub.

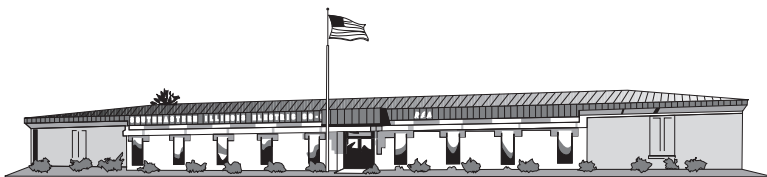
SEIEC also offers a pay by phone option. This option allows you to make your payment by calling the toll-free number 800-833-2611. Once you have dialed this number, select the menu option for account information, then select the pay by phone option to make a payment using your debit card or credit card.

SEIEC also offers reoccurring credit card payments which will automatically charge your credit card to pay your monthly electric bill. With this option, you will still receive a statement in the mail that is virtually identical to the invoice you receive now but the funds will be automatically charged to the credit card on the due date. Please contact the office if you would like to receive an enrollment form for this option.

These automated options were implemented to give members a choice in selecting the most appropriate and convenient way to pay their bill. It is great to see that members are taking advantage of these automated options. In fact, SEIEC currently receives approximately 12,000 payments per month thru these additional options.

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READERSHIP PRIZE WINNER:  
Gerald Norris, Galatia, IL



# Stay safe after an accident

## Knowing what to do around utility equipment could save your life.

**Q:** My vehicle has struck a pad-mounted transformer “green box” or other utility equipment or lines: now what?

**A:** First, assess the situation. If your car is not smoking or on fire, stay in your vehicle. If you are in an accident or incident involving electrical equipment, remain in your vehicle or cab until the local utility arrives to de-energize power. Stepping out of your vehicle while touching it at the same time or trying get to safety can cause serious burn injuries or death.

Utility equipment includes pad-mounted transformers (metal boxes—usually green or grey), equipment such as a switching cabinet or junction box for underground utilities, overhead power lines or poles, and substations.

If you are in a multiple-car accident, yell to others (from your car) to warn them not to leave their vehicle. Also warn those who might stop to help to not approach the



scene. Call 9-1-1 to report the accident location and clearly state to the dispatcher that electrical lines or equipment is involved.

**Q:** What if I see smoke or fire?

**A:** Stay calm. Make a clear jump (without touching any part of the vehicle) and hop or shuffle with both feet together at least 30 feet away to safety. Just like downed power lines, ANY damaged utility equipment such as pad-mounted transformers or cabinets that house electrical equipment can send electrical current through the pavement or ground.

If you walk across the energized ground or touch an energized

vehicle and ground at the same time, something called “difference of potential” (also called step potential) can occur. When you pass from one current to another by taking regular steps and cross varying voltages of electricity (think of how a water ripples—each ring represents a different voltage), this is difference of potential and it can cause extreme burn injuries or death. If you hop or shuffle, you are less likely to expose yourself to different voltages at the same time.

**Q:** Can there still be damage to equipment even if I don’t see anything?

**A:** Yes, there can be damage to a pad-mounted transformer or other equipment that cannot be seen, even if metal boxes or cabinets look intact or appear to have minimal damage. When it comes to above-ground power lines, it is a fallacy that downed wires are insulated to the touch or that power is automatically cut once a power line is down or damaged. Treat all downed power lines as if they are live. They don’t have to be arcing or sparking to be fully energized.

**Q:** If I see damaged equipment or downed lines, should I report it to my utility?

**A:** Yes. Call us at **618-273-2611** to report any damaged utility equipment you see. Most damage is reported, but not always. For example, a feed truck hits a transformer and the driver did not notice. Although we routinely check equipment for safety and maintenance, unreported damage can occur between checks. We want to be alerted of any problems so we can promptly address them. **DO NOT** go near or touch electrical equipment. **DO NOT** attempt to move a downed wire. For more information about electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Placing hot food in the refrigerator makes the appliance work harder than necessary, using more energy. Allow food to cool down before you place it in the fridge.



# When it comes to severe weather... hope for the best, *but prepare for the worst.*



You can begin your preparation by assembling an emergency preparedness kit, which includes items to help keep your family safe and comfortable during a power outage. Your kit should include items such as water, non-perishable food, flashlight, batteries, blankets and a first aid kit.



- \_\_\_ Drinking water & food
- \_\_\_ Blankets, pillows & clothing
- \_\_\_ Basic first-aid supplies
- \_\_\_ Medications
- \_\_\_ Basic toiletries
- \_\_\_ Flashlights
- \_\_\_ Battery-operated radio
- \_\_\_ Extra supply of batteries
- \_\_\_ Cell phone with chargers
- \_\_\_ Cash and credit cards
- \_\_\_ Basic tools (duct tape, wrench, etc.)
- \_\_\_ Important documents & numbers
- \_\_\_ Toys, books & games
- \_\_\_ Baby supplies
- \_\_\_ Pet supplies



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## President's Comments

In addition to these automated payment options, your cooperative offers budget billing. Budget billing, also known as “levelized” billing, allows eligible members to pay the same or slightly varied amount each month so that you know exactly how much your monthly payment will be regardless of the current month’s actual usage and charges. This plan provides 11 “fixed” budget months with one “settlement” month each year. Budget billing does not reduce your overall energy expense; it simply allows you to spread out your annual energy expense over a 12-month period.

Last but certainly not least, your cooperative still offers the traditional methods of paying invoices including receiving your checks in the mail, at the front counter of the headquarters facility and with our new facility you are conveniently able to make your payment through our drive thru. We certainly understand that these automated options for paying invoices may not be appropriate for everyone, but they are available so that members can select the option that best suits their needs.

See you next month and as always, “We’ll keep the lights on for you.”



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SouthEastern  
IllinoisElectric

# 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

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative, Inc.

100 Cooperative Way • Carrier Mills, IL 62917-2275  
618-273-2611 or 800-833-2611 • Office hours: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. M-F