

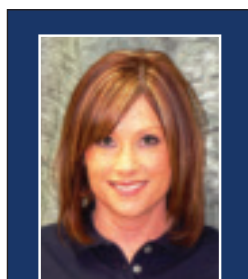
JAMUP

published by Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative, Dongola, Illinois

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Power On: October is National Co-op Month

At Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative (SIEC), our mission is to responsibly and safely provide services to empower our members and communities—and this mission has never been more critical than in recent months. One of the seven principles that guides all co-ops is “concern for community.” This principle drives everything we do at SIEC, and it sets us apart from investor-owned utilities.



Bree Hileman
Director of HR & Administrative Services

October is National Co-op Month, and electric cooperatives across the country are highlighting the many ways we “Power On.” During the coronavirus pandemic, SIEC has worked diligently to continue providing essential services to the communities we serve.

Who would have fathomed in March that the COVID-19 virus would amount to a test of our community and our nation? The changing circumstances due to the pandemic have created both challenges and opportunities. Over the past several months, SIEC has operated differently to navigate these unprecedented times and continue serving our member-owners.

As an essential service, and to ensure the reliability of your power supply, we modified our operations to safeguard business continuity. Our line crews and other employees began reporting to off-site locations

to maintain separation and reduce exposure. Some staff worked remotely. In the office, we implemented frequent sanitization, requiring masks in common areas, and emphasizing the importance of social distancing to employees. We also adjusted our lobby availability and

in-person service calls to encourage contactless options for SIEC business.

For the health and safety of all involved, we think these measures were the necessary course of action for the times. In addition, we also worked with our member-owners

affected by COVID-19 who needed help with their electric bills to waive late fees and make special payment arrangements. **Dusty K. Newman**

I tell you about all these efforts not to boast about SIEC but to explain how much we care about this community – because we live here too. I am proud to be part of an organization that never stops seeking out ways to serve our member-owners and community. The pandemic may have changed the way we work, but make no mistake, it has not changed our commitment to all of you. In 1938, SIEC was built by the community to serve the community, and that’s what we’ll continue to do – Power On.

Then. Now. Always.
We’re proud to power your life.
October is National Co-op Month.



#PowerOn



Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative supports Cybersecurity Awareness Month

Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative is committed to National Cybersecurity Awareness Month, held in October. This year's Cybersecurity Awareness Month theme is "Do Your Part. #BeCyberSmart," aimed to empower individuals and organizations to own their role in protecting their part of cyberspace.

National Cybersecurity Awareness Month is spearheaded by the National Cyber Security Alliance and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Agency of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The overarching message of this year's theme, "If you Connect it, protect it," dives into the importance of keeping connected devices safe and secure from outside influence.

With more people spending time at home due to COVID-19, now more than ever before, connected devices are an integral part of how we communicate and access services essential to our

well-being. Data collected from these devices can include highly-specific information about a person or business, which can be exploited by bad actors for criminal gain.

Cybersecurity Awareness Month aims to shed light on these security vulnerabilities, while offering guidance surrounding simple security measures to limit the susceptibility of threats for common devices.

This year, the Cybersecurity Awareness Month focuses on the following areas:

- Understanding and following general security hygiene for connected devices and home networks
- The importance of maintaining the security of connected devices for remote workers
- How connected devices play a pivotal role in the future of healthcare

- The future of connected devices for consumers, professionals and the public domain

If everyone does their part – implementing stronger security practices, raising community awareness, educating vulnerable audiences or training employees – our interconnected world will be safer and more resilient for everyone.

Now in its 17th year, Cybersecurity Awareness Month continues to build momentum and impact with the goal of providing everyone with the information they need to stay safe and secure online. **James E. Wilkins**

For more information about Cybersecurity Awareness Month, visit staysafeonline.org/cybersecurity-awareness-month/. You can also follow and use the official hashtag #BeCyberSmart on social media channels.



Consider electrical safety when preparing for the big hunt

As you prepare for hunting season, keep in mind along with general hunting safety, electrical safety should also be top of mind.

You might be preoccupied and excited about the big hunt but be sure to look up and out for power lines. Never place a tree stand near a power line. Contact with the power line, utility pole or related equipment can alter the path to ground, sending electricity through anyone or anything that comes too close or in direct contact with the power source. Even coming within 10 feet can cause an arc, transferring energy from the power line/source to an object or person.

In addition, don't shoot near or toward power lines, utility poles, transformers or substations. Stray bullets or pellets could damage equipment, possibly interrupting electric

service. Even more concerning, they could drop a power line to the ground, causing a hazardous scenario: those who get within 50 feet of the downed line could be shocked or electrocuted.

Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative and Safe Electricity remind hunting enthusiasts of these electrical safety tips:

- Familiarize yourself with the area before heading out to hunt. Take note of power lines and equipment, especially when hunting in densely wooded areas.
- Observe all signs or postings that advise electrical safety, especially when scouting out a location for your tree stand.
- Do not use power poles to support a tree stand.
- Do not locate a tree stand near a power line or pole.

- Be in the habit of looking up and out for power lines and do not come within 10 feet of an overhead line or pole when setting up or taking down a stand.
- Never climb a utility pole.

Please report any damage to a line or other related equipment to us so we can address it. Although we perform routine maintenance, damage may not be noticed for weeks or months, unless an outage occurs, due to the vast amount of lines in our service area. Of course, always take the time to observe general hunting safety measures as well. Stay safe out there!

For more information about safety around power lines and other sources of electricity, go to SafeElectricity.org.



Knowing what to do around a downed power line could save your life

Mother Nature can be unpredictable. Whether it's a thunderstorm or blizzard, severe storms can interfere with power distribution or bring down lines. The most important thing to remember about a downed power line? **DO NOT GO NEAR IT** for any reason.

After a storm has caused damage, be alert and slow down. Do not attempt to drive over downed lines or through water or over snow or debris that could be covering downed lines. Driving over a line can pull more lines or related equipment down. If you encounter a downed line, pull over and report the location to 9-1-1.

Here is some additional information about downed lines, which can occur after a severe storm or an accident involving a power pole.

Q: Can I tell if a downed line is energized by looking?

A: No, there's no way to tell. Always assume a downed line is live even if it's not buzzing or sparking.

Q: What should I do if I am in an accident involving a power line or electrical equipment?

A: DO NOT get out of your vehicle. It is always safer to remain inside, which acts as an insulator and keeps you out of

the path of stray electricity. Call 9-1-1 and tell the dispatcher a downed line or electrical equipment is involved. Co-op personnel will be dispatched to the scene to de-energize power.

Q: Is there any reason I should get out of the vehicle?

A: Yes, but only if your vehicle is on fire or you see smoke. If that's the case, make a clean jump from the vehicle without touching it (cross your arms closely to your chest), and hop with feet together as far as you can—preferably 50 or more feet away.

Q: What happens to the electrical current when a line is down?

A: Once a power line is in contact with a vehicle, the ground or other objects, it energizes the area. The electrical current spreads to the vehicle and ground, and it ripples out. Each "ring" of the ripple represents a different voltage. Stepping from one voltage to another causes your body to become a path for electricity and electrocute you. That's why you must hop or shuffle once you make a clean jump from the vehicle. Always keep your feet together – think

of hopping like a bunny or shuffling like a penguin.

Q: What else can I do?

A: Put your window down and yell to others not to approach the scene. They could be shocked or electrocuted if they walk or run to the energized area or touch anything that's energized.

Q: What if I can't tell what type of line is down?

A: It doesn't matter – still stay in your vehicle and wait for the utility personnel to arrive.

Q: Are there any other instances when these same safety tips apply?

A: Yes, the same rules apply to any type of equipment in contact with overhead lines or electrical equipment. *Anna M. Boyett*

Q: Why am I safe in my vehicle?

A: Because you are not a path for electricity while in a vehicle.

Q: What should I do if the windshield is broken and the downed wire is in my vehicle?

A: Stay in the vehicle and do not touch the wire or attempt to use other objects to move it.

Q: What if I hit a pad-mounted transformer in a yard?

A: Pad-mounted transformers house electrical equipment connected to underground power lines. The same safety precautions apply to all to these cabinets as the voltage could stray if it's damaged.

For more information about staying safe around electricity, go to SafeElectricity.org.



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.

SIEC Board of Directors

David Martin
(President).....Massac Co.
Randall Rushing
(Vice President).....Massac Co.
Bill Littrell
(Secretary-Treasurer).....Union Co.
Lamar Houston, Jr.....Alexander Co.
Carole J. Kelley.....Johnson Co.
Scott Miller.....Alexander Co.
Jerry P. ThurstonPulaski Co.
Scott L. UryUnion Co.

Ronald E. Osman (Attorney)
General Manager David A. Johnston
Bree D. Hileman (Editor)

For Outages Call:
800-762-1400 • 618-827-3555

Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative

7420 U.S. Highway 51 South
P.O. Box 100
Dongola, Illinois 62926

618-827-3555

Office hours: 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.
www.siec.coop

HOW SMART IS A Smart Thermostat?



MYTH VS FACT

My thermostat automatically saves me money.



That depends on how it's programmed and your preferences. It still uses the same amount of energy to reach and maintain temps.

A smart thermostat is smart straight out of the box.



The thermostat needs a little time to learn your heating and cooling preferences.

My thermostat is only as smart as I am.



Sort of. Most models are independent thinkers and adjust the temperature if no one's home.

It's creepy, my smart thermostat seems to know when I'm home.



It's smart for a reason! Geotechnology syncs your thermostat with your arrival. Some models use geofencing technology that tracks your smart phone location and kicks on when you're nearby.

My smart thermostat makes me smarter.



We'll give you this one! It can help you save money and make your home more efficient.

LEARN MORE

