

NEWS, NOTES & VIEWS 11/20



5,000 and Counting

Internet Technicians Cameron Kemper and Michael McDade working on our Werries Farm wireless broadcast point near Chapin.

Since 1993, Illinois Electric Cooperative has been an internet service provider as well as an electric provider. As of October 2020, we're proud to have surpassed the 5,000 internet consumer mark.

The reason the co-op initially became an internet service provider was to offer rural residents and businesses internet service. At the time, there were no other options for rural internet service, so the co-op stepped up to provide this increasingly important service to members.

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Illinois Electric Cooperative

P.O. Box 80, Two South Main Street
Winchester, Illinois 62694

www.e-co-op.com
1-800-468-4732

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Working to improve the quality of life in the communities we serve since 1936.



Internet Technicians Drew Klingele (above) and Kaiden Davis (right) working at members' homes in Pike County.



Over the years, we've worked to improve our internet offering while increasing bandwidth speeds and coverage.

Every day, our internet technicians and member service representatives work hard to take care of our consumers around the clock, as wireless internet service requires constant monitoring. We now have 72 wireless broadcast points across our service territory, 47 of which include co-op owned wireless towers. This type of infrastructure has many constantly communicating pieces as well, including 1,057 different servers, radios, and various devices that are active on our end to provide internet service.

With COVID-19 and the near overnight switch to remote work and school, we've been reminded just how important and critical reliable internet service is for families and businesses. The co-op is always looking to improve our internet reliability

and speeds in a financially responsible way, which is why we continue to seek out grants and funding to expand operations.

As we cross the 5,000 mark for internet consumers, we would like to thank those of you that subscribe to our internet service. If you're interested in getting our internet service, we'd be more than happy to do a site survey. Please give us a call at 1-800-468-4732.



Crews Head South to Assist

Photo courtesy of Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives

Part of being an electric co-op is being there for other co-ops in their times of need. This is especially true during mass outages caused by natural disasters. When these arise, an electric co-op puts out a national call for help and then covers the time and expense for borrowed crews and support from external co-ops.

Over the past couple months, the South has been ravaged by multiple hurricanes. As a result, our crews made multiple trips to Louisiana to assist Jeff Davis Electric Co-op and one trip to Alabama to aid Baldwin Electric Co-op.

Joe Killday, an area serviceman that's been with the co-op for 30 years, traveled to Alabama last month to assist with restoration efforts. "This was my first time ever traveling out of state for storm aid. I'm grateful I was able to help."

Joe was especially taken back by the hospitality of those they were helping. "In Alabama, we were putting line back up and trimming trees, and there was a mother and her five-year-old boy who brought us coffee every morning. Her husband is a state trooper and they were without power, but they still took care of us. On the last day we were there, the mother told me the little boy now wants to be a lineman."

Since the last week of August, 15 crew members from our co-op have traveled to Louisiana and Alabama, with some of our crew members making multiple trips to assist. The crews spend two weeks away at a time and sleep in temporary tent "cities" as well as mobile sleeping quarters. With health and safety concerns due to the current pandemic, the sleeping arrangements are filled to about 50% occupancy. We ask that you keep all the line crews and those affected by the hurricane in your thoughts and prayers.

Twelve 2021 IEC Memorial Scholarships Available

Illinois electric cooperatives will award 12 scholarships in 2021 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.

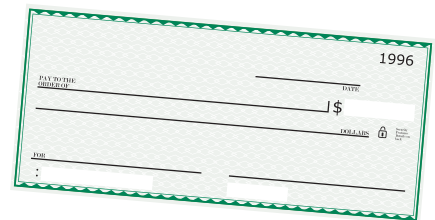
"We hope to assist electric cooperative youth while honoring past rural electric leaders with these scholarships," says Randy Long, Manager of Illinois Electric Cooperative. "Our co-op and the other electric cooperatives in the state are always seeking ways to make a difference in our communities. One of the best ways we can do that is by helping our youth and investing in them through programs like this one."



Deadline to apply is Dec. 31, 2020. The lineworker scholarship deadline is April 30, 2021. For more information regarding the scholarships, students should contact their guidance counselor. Information is also available online at aiec.coop/iec-scholarship.

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