

President's Report



William R. Dodds
President/CEO

Tree trimming improves service for all

One of the things I love best about our community is the natural beauty that surrounds us. We are fortunate to have so many trees that offer beauty, shade and a habitat for all sorts of wildlife. We know you appreciate our community for many of the same reasons.

At Spoon River Electric, we strive to balance maintaining beautiful surroundings and ensuring a reliable power supply by keeping power lines clear in rights of way (ROW).

While we recognize and appreciate the beauty of trees, there benefits to tree trimming in ROW areas. However, before touching on the main reasons, let me explain what a "right of way" is and how it may impact you.

A right of way is the land used to construct, maintain, replace or repair underground and overhead power lines. Rights of way enable the co-op to provide clearance from trees and other obstructions that could hinder the power line installation, maintenance or operation. ROW areas are typically on public lands or located near a business or home.

Regardless, Spoon River Electric must be able to maintain the power lines above and below the ROW. The overall goal of our vegetation management program is to provide reliable power to our members while maintaining the beauty of our community. Proactive vegetation management benefits co-op members in three tangible ways.

Safety

First and foremost, we care about our members and put their safety and that of our lineworkers above all else. Overgrown vegetation and trees pose a risk to power lines. For example, if trees are touching power lines in our members' yards, they can pose grave danger to families. If children can access those trees, they can potentially climb into a danger zone. Electricity can arc, or jump, from a power line to a nearby conductor like a tree. A proactive approach also diminishes the



chances of fallen branches or trees during severe weather events that make it more complicated and dangerous for lineworkers to restore power.

Reliability

Of course, one of the biggest benefits of a smart vegetation management program is reliability. Strategic tree trimming reduces the frequency of downed lines causing power outages. Generally speaking, healthy trees don't fall on power lines, and clear lines don't cause problems. Proactive trimming and pruning keeps lines clear to promote reliability.

We also use data and the technology to maximize the efficiency of our operation.

Affordability

As you know, Spoon River Electric is not-for-profit, and that means we strive to keep our costs in check to keep our rates affordable. This extends to our approach to vegetation management. If trees grow too close to power lines, the potential for expensive repairs also increases. Effective tree trimming and other vegetation management efforts keep costs down for everyone.

Our community is a special place. We appreciate the beauty trees offer, but we also know our community depends on us to provide reliable energy. Through vegetation management, we are able to keep the power lines clear, prepare for weather events and secure the grid's reliability.

Office Closing
Monday, May 31
for Memorial Day

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
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Chairman

Bernard Marvel, Browning

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Terry Beam, Cuba

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John Spangler, Marietta
Wesley Strode, 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

ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH WORD SEARCH

May is Electrical Safety Month!
Read the safety tips below, then find and circle all the bolded words in the puzzle.



WORD BANK:

- Do not use any electrical **cords** that feel warm to the touch or are **damaged** in any way.
- Remind parents or adults in your home to test **smoke alarms** every month. Alarms should be installed in every **bedroom**, outside each sleeping area and on every level of your home.
- Do not overload electrical **outlets**. Overloading creates a potential fire **hazard**.
- Keep all **liquids** away from **electronics**, including TVs, computers and gaming consoles.
- Do not run **electrical** cords under rugs or carpet. This creates a **fire risk**.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Avoid placing items like lamps and televisions near your thermostat.

The thermostat senses heat from these appliances, which can cause your air conditioner to run longer than necessary.

Source: www.energy.gov



Improving your yard? What to know before you start

When the temperature warms with the arrival of spring, many begin planning improvements to outdoor spaces. This could include adding or maintaining a swimming pool, building a deck, adding a patio or assembling play equipment. However, be sure to plan for safety prior to any improvement project.

Being aware of power line locations near your home is vital for your and your family's safety. Always look up and around for power lines, recognizing that electricity can jump or transfer even without direct contact, before starting any outdoor project. Also know what's below before starting any digging job. Here are tips to remember while working in your yard:

- Assume power lines are always energized and keep at least 10 feet between a power line and you or any item you are holding.
- Perform a hazard assessment of the work area, noting all power line locations.
- Call 8-1-1 to mark underground utilities as part of planning and before any digging. The service is free. Please note that utility locators do not mark private lines. Private underground lines need to be marked by an independent locating service.
- Once underground utilities are marked, the 8-1-1 "Call Before You Dig" service recommends the area within 18 to 24 inches of either side of the marked lines be dug by hand with a fiberglass-handled shovel, not by machine.
- Don't install tree houses, playsets, pools or decks, and any associated structures within 25 feet of a power

AVOID LADDER MISSTEPS



At the workplace and at home, many injuries are preventable. A well-thought-out work plan, setting aside enough time for the task at hand, and committing to safety can all play a role in preventing injuries.

Injuries and deaths associated with ladder use are no exception. Thousands of ladder-related injuries and about 100 fall deaths happen each year.

In addition, always look up and look out for power lines before transporting a ladder outdoors. Carry the ladder horizontally instead of vertically.

According to the American Ladder Institute, the **five most common mistakes** people make when using ladders are:

- **Overreaching.**
- **Missing the last step** when coming down.
- Not keeping **three points of contact.**
- Using the **wrong type or size** ladder for the job.
- Placing it on **uneven ground.**

Learn more at:

**Safe
Electricity.org**[®]

line. Consider the height and reach of play equipment (including the arc of a swing) and all deck and pool structures in relation to power lines.

- Educate children about power line safety. Teach them to never touch a power line or get too close to one—either directly or with a toy. This is especially important if they climb trees, fly kites or use remote control devices, such as drones.
- Use caution when moving ladders and operating long-handled tools, such as pool skimmers, around trees and power lines.
- Look up and around for power lines

when you are elevated, whether on a ladder, a boom lift, scaffolding or a roof.

- When planting and trimming trees, keep in mind that specialized tree trimming experts certified by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration in utility clearance are the only persons legally allowed to trim within 10 feet of power lines.

Contact us with questions about power line clearance recommendations concerning decks, pools and play structures in your yard. For more information about electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.



ATTENTION 2020-2021 SENIORS!

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

High school students who are seniors during the 2020-2021 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.

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 14, 2021** 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 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 2020-2021 school year and begin college undergraduate studies in the 2021-2022 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 2021-2022 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.

	<h2>Scholarship Participation Request</h2>
Name of Student _____	Return To: Taryn Mellert Spoon River Electric Cooperative PO Box 340 Canton, IL 61520 647-2700
Address of Student _____	
Name of Parent/Guardian _____	
Telephone Number _____	