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Getting to know your Member Services Department

When you call the co-op office and hear, "Thank you for calling EnerStar. How may I help you?" you are most likely talking to an employee in our Member Services Department. They work hard for our membership, and each day brings a new opportunity to serve the co-op membership.

Your first question when reading this might be why we call it a "member service" instead of "customer service." The answer is simple, and it explains the cooperative difference ... something we are quite proud of!

If you get your electricity from EnerStar Electric Cooperative, you are not just a customer. You are a member-owner and have equity, or ownership, in the cooperative. You vote on co-op bylaws at our annual meeting and elect the board of directors, members just like you, who help guide and direct the cooperative.

Greeting visitors at the front counter is Britta Baker. Britta's employment

began through Manpower in 2018 and she officially joined the team the next year. She brings years of experience from her previous employer, Cell One, where she served as a store coordinator for 14 years.

Kayla Foos began working part-time through Manpower in 2017 and joined the co-op full-time in 2018. She was previously employed at State Farm and Simonton Windows and brings to the co-op a broad background in customer service and administrative functions.

Paris native Susan Watson began her career at Ameren and joined the EnerStar team in 1998. For over 20 years, Susan has seen the Member Services Department through multiple software upgrades, updated technologies, and new services to better serve the co-op membership.

So next time you call the co-op or stop by the office, know that the Member Services Department is here to serve you, the co-op membership!



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

11597 Illinois Highway 1
Paris, IL 61944
800-635-4145
Monday through Friday
7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



Britta Baker, Kayla Foos and Susan Watson serve cooperative members with a wide variety of requests in the Member Services Department.

Annual Meeting set for September 9

All signs are pointing to the fact that it looks like the EnerStar Annual Meeting is a go this fall. We can't tell you how excited we are about that!

The annual meeting will be held at the Paris High School Complex on Thursday, September 9. An evening meal will be served in the school's cafeteria and the business meeting will be conducted at the Paris Center of Fine Arts (PCOFA), attached to the high school.

If you are not familiar with the facility, the PCOFA is a state-of-the-art performing arts venue that is perfect for our annual meeting. The school and the 500-plus seat theatre, were opened in 2015 and are served by EnerStar.

So, mark your calendars and watch for more details to come! We look forward to seeing you there!



To learn more about the upcoming performances at the PCOFA, visit www.pcofa.net.

Hey SmartHub Users – New Texting Number!

EnerStar's SmartHub app is a great tool for members to stay connected to the co-op. And part of that, the use of text messaging, is an important method for us to communicate with you. From billing alerts to outage updates, text messaging is an effective way for us to help keep you updated on your service and news regarding EnerStar.

We wanted to let you know of a small change to our text messaging. When you receive a text message from EnerStar, in the past, it has come from a "short code." In June, due to changes with wireless providers, text messages from EnerStar will start coming from 1-844-975-2473. We're making this change to help ensure we continue to

A graphic showing a smartphone displaying text messages from SmartHub. The messages include: 'SmartHub Registration is complete; reply HELP for assistance or STOP to cancel all notifications. Recurring messages will be sent. Msg&data rates may apply.', 'SmartHub Your bill for is ready.', 'SmartHub Your payment is due on Jul 15, 2020.', and 'SmartHub Payment of \$100.00 has been submitted.' To the right of the phone is a purple banner with the text 'SMARTHUB TEXT MESSAGES ARE NOW COMING FROM A NEW NUMBER. 1-844-975-2473' and the SmartHub logo. Below the banner is the text 'Not using SmartHub and ready to get connected? Visit www.smarthubapp.com to download!'.

communicate effectively with you through text.

This change will not affect your service or communication

from us in any way. If you have any questions, please contact the Member Services Department at 1-800-635-4145.

Stay in the know

At EnerStar Electric Cooperative, we are constantly striving to improve our operational efficiency so we can provide the most reliable electric service possible for our member-owners (that's you!).

We rely on data for nearly every aspect of our operations, which is why we need your help. By making sure we have your most accurate and complete contact information, we can continue to provide the high level of service that you expect and deserve. Accurate information enables us to improve member service and enhance communications for reporting and repairing outages. It also allows co-op members to receive information about other important programs, events and activities.

Up-to-date contact information can potentially speed up the power restoration process during an outage. For example, the phone number you provide is linked to your service address to our outage management system. This means when you call to report an outage, our system



The banner features three circular icons on an orange background: a telephone, an envelope, and a laptop. Below the icons, the text reads: "Update Your Contact Info" in white and orange, followed by "If updates are necessary, email us at billing@enerstar or call the office at 800-635-4145, or on your SmartHub app." in white.

recognizes your phone number and matches it with your account location. Accurate information helps our outage management system predict the location and possible cause of an outage, making it easier for our crews to correct the problem.

Keeping the co-op updated with your information also helps us when there's a question about energy use or billing. Emails and text messages are also used to notify registered members of any changes in co-op event details. In addition, discrepancies on your account can be taken care of promptly if EnerStar has accurate account information.

Many of you have been members of the co-op for years, and it's

likely that your account information hasn't been updated for some time. We recognize that many members now use a cell phone as their primary phone service, and we might not have that number in our system.

"It is important for our members to know, and I want to emphasize that in providing your contact information to the co-op, we will never share this information with any third parties," said EnerStar's Angela Griffin. "It is only used by EnerStar to send important information to you." Griffin encouraged members to take a moment to confirm or update their contact information on their electric statement or by using the co-op's SmartHub app.

EnerStar Electric Cooperative Luck of the Draw Scholarship

EnerStar Electric Cooperative is offering five lucky winners a \$250 scholarship to be used toward their continuing education! The scholarship is open to college students who are co-op members or are dependents of EnerStar members.

It's easy to qualify for the scholarship.

- Visit www.enerstar.com to download the scholarship application and answer a few questions about the co-op. (Don't worry, all the answers are there!)
- Mail (or hand deliver) the completed application to: EnerStar Electric Cooperative, Attn Scholarship, 11597 IL Highway 1, Paris, IL 61944
- **Submission deadline is September 1, 2021.**

Scholarships will be awarded to students attending an accredited institute of higher education. This includes a 4-year college or university, vocational-technical trade school (offering associate degrees), community college or junior college and business college (offering associate degree). The scholarship must be used for educational costs, and the student must enter the accredited institute in the fall of the school year for which the scholarship is given.

It is important to note, dependents of co-op members must reside in the home where EnerStar provides the electricity.

Scholarship winners are responsible to provide EnerStar with a copy of their class registration for the first quarter/semester. Once correct documentation has been received and paperwork has been verified, checks will be made payable to the school and sent to the home address on record with EnerStar.

Suds and Savings

10 ways to save energy in the laundry room

Your clothes washer and dryer account for a significant portion of energy consumption from major appliances, and let's face it—laundry is no one's favorite chore. Make the most of your laundry energy use! There are several easy ways you can save energy (and money) in the laundry room. The U.S. Department of Energy recommends the following tips for saving on suds:

- 1. Wash with cold water.** Switching from warm water to cold water can cut one load's energy use by more than half, and by using a cold-water detergent, you can still achieve that brilliant clean you'd normally get from washing in warm water.
- 2. Wash full loads when possible.** Your washing machine will use the same amount of energy no matter the size of the clothes load, so fill it up if you can.
- 3. Use the high-speed or extended spin cycle in the washer.** This setting will remove more moisture before drying, reducing your drying time and the extra wear on clothing.
- 4. Dry heavier cottons separately.** Loads will dry faster and more evenly if you separate heavier cottons like linens and towels from your lightweight clothing.
- 5. Make use of the "cool down" cycle.** If your dryer has this cycle option, you can save energy because the clothes will finish drying with the remaining heat in the dryer.
- 6. Use lower heat settings to dry clothing.** Regardless of drying time, you'll still use less energy.
- 7. Use dryer balls.** Dryer balls, usually wool or rubber, will help



Switching from warm water to cold water can cut one load's energy use by more than half, and by using a cold-water detergent, you can still achieve that brilliant clean you'd normally get from washing in warm water.

keep clothes separated for faster drying, and they can help reduce static, so you can eliminate dryer sheets.

- 8. Switch loads while the dryer is warm.** This allows you to take advantage of the remaining heat from the previous cycle.
- 9. Clean the lint filter after each drying cycle.** If you use dryer sheets, remember to scrub the filter once a month with a toothbrush to remove excess buildup.
- 10. Purchase ENERGY STAR-rated washers and dryers.** When it's time to purchase a new washer or dryer, look for the ENERGY STAR label. New washers and dryers that receive the ENERGY STAR rating use about 20 percent less energy than conventional models.

To learn about additional ways you can save energy at home, visit the Department of Energy's home efficiency page, energy.gov/energysaver.

