



I thought you would want to know

As we begin a new year, I'd like to take a moment to explain a few regulatory charges that are governed by the State of Illinois and are part of your monthly electric bill. These charges are collected from you through your electric bills and passed on to the Illinois Department of Revenue (IDOR) after being accounted for by Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative (SIEC).

Energy Assistance Charge

You may have noticed information at some point about the Illinois Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). This program aims to provide financial help to low-income households who can't afford to pay their energy bills as well as other energy related household expenses.

SIEC collects \$0.40 for each account to which it delivers residential electric service. Each nonresidential account is charged \$4.00 if it had less than 10 megawatts of peak demand during the previous calendar year or \$300.00 if it had 10 megawatts or more of peak demand during the previous calendar year. These charges are referred to as Energy Assistance Charges.

Once these charges are collected by SIEC, they are paid to the Illinois Department of Revenue (IDOR) where they are used to assist low-income residential customers with energy services.

Renewable Energy Charge

Renewable energy has made solid advances in the power generation fuel mix over the last several years. As members of SIEC, you are helping obtain a cleaner environment.

SIEC charges \$0.05 to each account to which it delivers residential electric service. Nonresidential accounts that had less than 10 megawatts of peak demand during the previous year are charged \$0.50 and those with 10 megawatts or more of peak demand during the previous year are charged \$37.50. These charges are termed Renewable Energy Charges.

Like the Energy Assistance Charges, SIEC collects and then pays the charges to the IDOR to foster investment in and the development and use of renewable energy resources. *Kevin Brunleve*

Electricity Excise Tax

Because SIEC is in the business of distributing electricity for use and consumption, it is also required to collect from its members and remit to IDOR the Electricity Excise Tax. This tax rate is \$0.0032 per kilowatt-hour (kwh).

Other Taxes

When SIEC sells electrical parts to consumers, sales tax is collected (unless the purchaser is tax-exempt). Likewise, if SIEC

purchases material for use and either no sales tax or the improper sales tax is charged by our vendors, a self-assessed use tax must be recorded.

Here at SIEC, we bill and remit both charges on a monthly basis as required by law.

If you would like to find out more about these charges, please visit the www.illinois.gov.



by David A. Johnston,
SIEC's Director
of Administration
& Finance

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 Cathy with your account number at 800-762-1400 to claim your prize.



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Classroom Empowerment Grant winners

Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative recently awarded Classroom Empowerment Grants to several area schools. The winners of the grants were teachers Ryan O'Shea from Cairo High School, Jennifer Osman representing Lincoln Elementary School, Melissa Thomasson from Jefferson Elementary, Renee Brown representing Egyptian High School, Brandy Thurston from Anna District #37, Terri George representing Meridian Elementary, and Maryanne Boren from the Grand Chain Learning Center.

The grants will be used for special projects that may not have been funded otherwise due to increasing school budget cuts. These projects include such things as a family

reading night, a science mystery festival, school field trips, and the purchase of new technology for the classroom. Presenting the grant checks is Director of Member Services, Chris Boyd.



Jefferson Elementary grant winner



Anna CCSD #37 grant winner



Cairo High School grant winner



Egyptian CUSD #5 grant winner



Grand Chain Learning Center grant winner



Lincoln Elementary grant winner



Meridian Elementary grant winner

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ENERGY EFFICIENCY WORD SCRAMBLE



Are you energy efficient? Test yourself by completing the word scramble below – and share these tips with your family and friends!

1. Tell an adult about a leaky _ _ _ _ _ . You don't want the water bill to rise from it. **(efacut)**
2. Wash your full loads of clothes in _ _ _ _ water when possible. **(oldc)**
3. Make sure that _ _ _ is not escaping through cracks in your windows. **(ira)**
4. Set your _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ to 68° or lower, and put on a sweater if you begin to feel cold. **(tasmroteht)**
5. Use _ _ _ _ _ _ _ fans to cool down instead of pumping up your air conditioner. **(gclinei)**
6. Use a _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ oven instead of the regular oven whenever you can. **(vacimorew)**
7. Turn on the oven _ _ _ _ _ to check on a dish rather than opening the oven door. **(ltihg)**
8. Replace incandescent bulbs with _ _ _ lights. They last much longer! **(DLE)**
9. When you _ _ _ _ _ your homework, do it the efficient way and use both sides of the paper. **(intrp)**
10. When possible, take the bus or ride your _ _ _ _ _ _ _ instead of using a car. **(bccleyi)**



America's Electric
Cooperatives

ANSWERS: 1. faucet 2. cold 3. air 4. thermostat 5. ceiling 6. microwave 7. light 8. LED 9. print 10. bicycle

**Help
save
lives**



SIEC Announces Blood Drives for 2015:

Below you will find the dates and times for three of the five SIEC Blood Drives scheduled for 2015. Currently details are being worked out for the Massac and Union County blood drives, be sure to read the JAMUP for details. Remember if you are a member of SIEC and you donate blood at any one of these locations, you will receive a \$10 credit to your utility bill. So, won't you please consider donating?

Johnson County: . . . Weds., March 11 (1:00-6:00) at Cypress Grade School
Alexander County: . Fri., April 10 (12:00-5:00) at Egyptian School
Pulaski County: . . . Tues., May 26 (1:00-6:00) at Cross Road United Methodist Church, Ullin
Barbara Keller-Youngblood

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Voluntary and Open Membership

Why this principle still applies to electric co-ops

By Adam Schwartz

When electric co-op members look at the seven co-op principles, many may question if they really live up to the first principle: **Voluntary & Open Membership**. It is a fair question. There is a two-part answer.

First, it is important to remember that when Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative (SIEC) was first being formed back in 1938, every potential member had the option to refuse service. While it may be hard to believe today, there are numerous stories from electric co-ops throughout the country where the farmer said, "No thanks. We are doing fine with kerosene." Of course over time they changed their minds and eventually became members of the co-op.

Due to the incredible cost of offering electric service, the vast majority of people and businesses only have one choice if they want to connect to "the grid" and receive electricity. While that may change in the future due to rooftop solar or other generation sources, the best

option for most people for safe, reliable and affordable power is from your electric co-op.

Today, electric co-ops focus on the second part of the principle, "Open Membership." All residents and businesses in the service territory of SIEC are welcome to receive power. Co-ops continually strive to ensure that your membership has value to you not just through the service of electricity but by being an active part of our community.

Co-ops offer and welcome your participation in the governance of the organization through a democratically elected board of directors. As a locally owned and controlled utility, co-ops are in a better position to understand the needs of its members and can be quicker to react to help ensure the membership receives the best service possible.

Members are welcome to suggest improvements to the co-op's operations and, unlike large investor owned utilities often with millions of

customers, you can be assured your ideas will actually be read by a real person in real time.

All co-ops, whether it is your credit union, farm co-op, telephone co-op or any other of the 29,000 co-ops that exist in the U.S. today, live by these seven co-op principles:

1. Voluntary and Open Membership
2. Democratic Member Control
3. Members' Economic Participation
4. Autonomy and Independence
5. Education, Training and Information
6. Cooperation among Cooperatives
7. Concern for Community

By using all of these principles integrated together, SIEC is able to serve your needs every day.

Adam Schwartz is the founder of The Cooperative Way a consulting firm that helps co-ops succeed. He is an author, speaker and a member-owner of the CDS Consulting Co-op.

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



National Electrical Safety Month

Tip of the Day

Consider purchasing surge protectors with cable and phone jacks to provide protection to your phone, computer modem and television.

Source: Electrical Safety Foundation International

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. • Web address: www.siec.coop

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