

# JAMUP

published by Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative, Dongola, Illinois

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

## Wholesale Power Cost Adjustment



**Larry Lovell**  
Executive Vice President /  
General Manager

**Y**ou have seen many changes recently regarding Automated Meter Reading (AMR), such as new automated meters, new billing statements, new line items on the billing statements, etc. In last month's issue of JAMUP, we compiled a list

of member questions and answers regarding AMR and billing. This month, I would like to focus on the Wholesale Power Cost Adjustment (WPCA) portion of your billing statements.

In April 2009, we had to estimate the cost of power from Southern Illinois Power Cooperative (SIPC) for 2010 in order to set your new rates for the end of 2009. This cost equates to approximately 60 percent of your bill. Unfortunately when decisions are made well in advance and based on estimations, we know that things can change. The WPCA allows us to adjust to these changes. Now that we show the WPCA as a line item on each month's billing statements, we can more accurately charge what is needed to cover the cost of

wholesale power each month.

For example, with your December billing statement, you saw a WPCA line item that gave you a credit of \$0.00466 per kilowatt-hour (kWh). SIEC estimated in April 2009 that the cost of power from SIPC would be \$7.178 cents per kWh. It didn't cost that much, so SIEC gave you a credit on your utility bill. Overall, the credits to our members totaled \$68,188 for power used in November and reflected in your December power bills.

Each month you will see this WPCA line item. It can be either a credit or a charge on your bill. Now, that our Cooperative is no longer a self-read, self-bill Cooperative, you will see that your wholesale power cost charges are more accurate and detailed, thanks to AMR.

## December Billing Error – PLEASE READ!

**S**ome of you may have noticed an inaccuracy on your December billing statement. December was SIEC's first complete AMR billing cycle for everyone. This cycle also reflected the Nov. 1 rate increase. A software error in our billing program caused some members to be over-billed and other members to be under-billed for the December billing statement only. This error was caught and has been corrected. If your account was affected, you will notice an "Adjustments" line on your January billing statement with either a charge or a credit.

We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused you. We appreciate your patience as we complete this AMR transition. If you have any questions regarding your January billing statement, please don't hesitate to call our billing department at 1-800-762-1400.

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# SIEC Urges Caution When Using Back-Up Generators

## Professional installation - an important safety step

**D**uring long-term power outages many rely on portable generators for emergency power. The growing popularity of portable electric generators has resulted in millions being placed in homes and small businesses across the nation. But it's estimated only a small percentage are hooked up correctly. Safe Electricity and Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative (SIEC) urge consumers to understand the proper safety steps that must be taken.

If installed and operated correctly, the use of standby or portable electric generators poses little danger, but improper installation or use could be dangerous to you and threaten the lives of your family, friends, neighbors and electric utility crews trying to restore service.

Consult and discuss your purchase options with a reliable vendor, your electric supplier and contractors. A qualified vendor or electric professional will know existing safety codes and the utility's safety requirements, and can help you select the best equipment for your needs and situation.

Properly connecting the generator into the system is a critical step for safe and effective use. A licensed professional should install a permanent, standby electric generator and can help with proper equipment for safely using a portable generator.

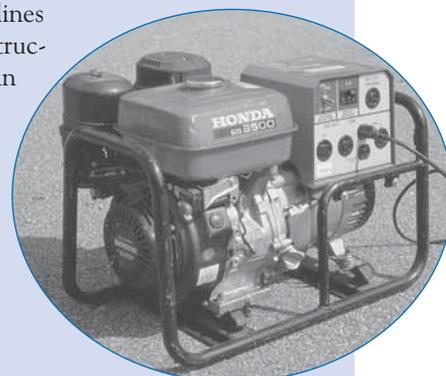
Members should be aware that if they wish to connect a generator into their home, building, or farm wiring system during a power outage, then a double-throw safety transfer switch must be installed. The transfer switch breaks the path of electricity between the power lines and your main electrical panel. SIEC offers these switches at cost for members and they should be installed by a qualified electrician.

During emergencies, many members think they can just pull the meter or put their breaker in the "off" position, then connect their generator into their home's wiring system. **However, this is a very dangerous practice and one which SIEC does not allow.** If the meter is accidentally installed, or if the breaker malfunctions or is accidentally turned on, then power from the generator would "backfeed" onto SIEC's distribution system, endangering linemen who will be working on the lines.

SIEC offers these tips for the safe operation and use of portable generators:

- **Read and follow all manufacturer operating instructions to properly ground the generator.** Be sure you understand them before hooking up the generator.
- **Maintain adequate ventilation. Generators emit carbon monoxide.** Never operate a generator in your home, garage, or other enclosed building. Place it in a dry, outside location.
- **Never plug a portable electric generator into a wall outlet or connect directly to a home's wiring.** This can energize utility power lines and injure you or others working nearby. Electrical backfeed can also damage the generator and home electrical equipment.
- **Turn off generator and allow cooling before refueling.** Gasoline and its vapors may ignite if they come in contact with hot components or an electrical spark. Store fuel in a properly designed container in a secure location.
- **Protect your appliances.** Turn off or disconnect all appliances and lights before you begin operating the portable generator. Once the generator is running, turn your appliances and lights on one at a time to avoid overloading the unit.
- **Use proper extension cords.** Use only safety-tested, shop-type electrical cords designed and rated for heavier, outdoor use to connect appliances. Many generators are equipped with twist-lock connects to reduce the chance of accidental disconnections due to vibrations. *Nancy Jane Morris*
- **Shut down generator properly.** Before shutting down a generator, turn off and unplug all appliances and equipment being powered by the generator.
- **Remember maintenance between uses.** It's important to drain the gasoline from the generator while it is being stored. It's also a good idea to inspect the fuel and oil filters, spark plug, oil level and fuel quality and start the generator on a regular basis before an emergency situation happens.

These safety guidelines and basic operating instructions should be posted in the home and with the generator. For more information on generator safety and other electricity safety issues visit [www.SafeElectricity.org](http://www.SafeElectricity.org) or [www.siec.coop](http://www.siec.coop).



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# Touchstone Energy Classroom Empowerment Grant Winners

**Sherry Goforth –  
Anna District #27**



**Kathy Matlock –  
Shawnee Elementary**



SIEC distributes six \$500 Touchstone Energy Classroom Empowerment Grants to local schools. The 2009-2010 winners are: Sherry Goforth – Anna District #27 (pictured); Ryan O'Shea – Cairo High School; Josh Staples – Jonesboro Elementary School; Jamie Lannom – Lick Creek Elementary; Kathy Matlock – Shawnee Elementary South (pictured); and Barbara Will-Henn – Vienna High School. **Charles Sean Patterson**

Mrs. Goforth plans to use her grant funds to purchase and install a classroom computer projector in order to enhance the learning process for her Anna 7th grade Reading and Language Arts students. Mrs. Matlock plans to expand student learning through the use of an interactive SMART Board for all K-5th grade students and teachers at Shawnee South.

## Youth to Washington

### Attention High School Juniors!

SIEC will again invite one high school junior from each of the following schools: Anna-Jonesboro, Cairo, Century, Cobden, Dongola, Egyptian, Goreville, Joppa, Massac, Meridian, Shawnee and Vienna, to Youth Day in Springfield on April 21. This event is sponsored by SIEC and the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives. Of the 12 students representing SIEC in April, two will be selected to go on an all-expense paid tour of Washington, D.C. in June.

**Youth to Springfield (Wednesday, April 21, 2010):** The day's activities in Springfield will include touring the state capitol complex and the new Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum. Students will also have the opportunity to visit with legislators.

**Youth to Washington (June 11 – 18, 2010):** The two local winners will join some 50 other Illinois students, sponsored by Illinois cooperatives, and spend a week in Washington, D.C. visiting attractions such as the White House, U.S. Capitol, Smithsonian Institution, Arlington National Cemetery, Lincoln Memorial and many other national monu-



ments and places of interest.

If you are a junior and this opportunity interests you, please discuss this with your guidance counselor as soon as possible. Students do not have to be sons or daughters of SIEC members to attend Youth Day. An informative brochure regarding SIEC's Youth to Washington program can be downloaded from our Web site at [www.siec.coop](http://www.siec.coop).

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

## Office Closing

*Our office will be closed Monday, January 18, for Martin Luther King Jr. day.*

### Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative Board of Directors

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

## SIEC Promotes Energy Efficiency to Members



SIEC hosts nationally recognized energy consultant Doug Rye at Shawnee Community College on Nov. 5, as he discusses ways to lower utility bills by using low-cost energy improvements with the crowd. *Orris Mosby Jr.*

## Brian Dirden – New Employee

SIEC welcomes its newest employee, Brian Dirden of Buncombe. Brian is in the Forestry Department as a Forestry Journeyman. He previously worked for Shade Tree Service Company and joins the Co-op with 14 years of experience. He is married to Melissa and they have two children, Clayton and Brisan. Brian states, “I am very excited to be working for the Co-op. I feel really good about working for and serving members in my community.”



### Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative

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