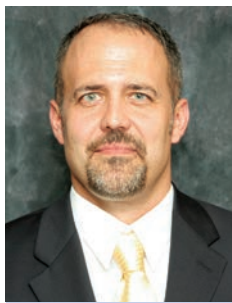


The SOUTHEASTERN Light

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

President's Comments



Dustin Tripp
President/CEO

A year in review and what to expect in 2022

I hope all of you had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! As we begin 2022, I would like to take time to briefly reflect on the year 2021 and summarize your cooperative's plans for this year.

As you know, the cooperative announced a retail rate decrease for all cooperative members in January 2021 that was estimated to save members approximately \$7.4 million per year. At the time of writing this article, residential rates have decreased approximately 10 percent in 2021.

In 2021, the cooperative continued the necessary investments in the distribution system in order to provide members with a reliable electric supply. Some of the investments included testing poles, treating poles, replacing degraded poles, rebuilding aging infrastructure and trimming/clearing in the vegetation management program.

In fact, the cooperative completed trimming and clearing of vegetation in the Bradley, Equality, Rosiclare, Sesser, Walpole and Webb substations. As we have certainly experienced in the past with major storms, a sound vegetation management program is crucial to your cooperative's ability to reduce risks and outages associated with major weather events and to maintain a reliable electric supply for members.

In summary, the cooperative expects to end the year 2021 in sound financial condition and deliver more than 785 million

kilowatt-hours to all of you as cooperative members. In addition, last month your cooperative announced the retirement and return of \$1.77 million of capital credits to members. The capital credits returned were from the years 1984, 2019 and 2020. Over the past 11 years, your cooperative has retired and returned approximately \$20 million to cooperative members.

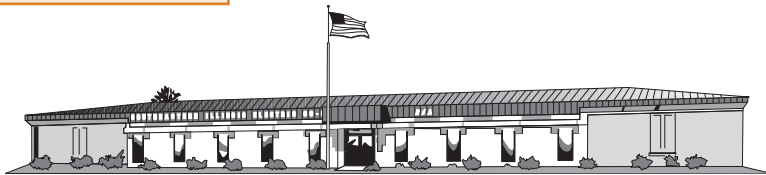
In 2022, your cooperative will continue to make the necessary investments in the distribution facilities that serve your energy by rebuilding aging infrastructure, replacing degraded poles and performing other maintenance activities including pole testing, regulator maintenance, breaker maintenance and sectionalizing in order to help ensure a safe and reliable electric supply.

In fact, the maintenance work will begin in early January with the testing and treatment of approximately 8,000 poles. The cooperative will also continue to make significant investments in the vegetation management program that is crucial to the reliability of service that you receive. Cooperative members will receive more details regarding the 2022 vegetation management program next month.

I'm also pleased to inform you that the cooperative will continue the current, decreased retail rates that went into effect in January 2021, which is saving cooperative members millions each year. Currently, there are no plans for a retail rate increase in 2022.

READERSHIP
PRIZE WINNER:
John Kunath,
Golconda, IL

Continued on page 18D ▶



Are portable space heaters efficient for my home?

Small space heaters are meant to do exactly as their name says: heat a small space. But unfortunately, many people use portable space heaters to heat their entire home, which can really take a toll on energy bills. The truth, whether you should use space heaters really depends on your home's efficiency and energy needs.

If you're using a space heater to compensate for problems in your home, like inadequate insulation, drafty windows and exterior doors, or an inefficient heating system, space heaters are not a practical solution. Your best bet is to improve the overall efficiency of your home.

If you're on a tight budget, caulking and weather stripping around windows and exterior doors is a low-cost, easy way to save energy. Depending on the size of your home, adding insulation can be a great next step. Loose fill insulation typically costs \$1 to \$1.50 per square foot. Taking these proactive

energy-saving measures rather than relying on space heaters for supplemental warmth can reduce your heating and cooling bills for years to come.

Perhaps your home is energy efficient but you're cold-natured and want a specific room to be cozier than the rest. In this case, a space heater may work for your needs. A good comparison is ceiling fans. Ceiling fans in the summer are used to cool people, not rooms. A space heater can be used in a similar way during winter months. Only use a space heater in small spaces that you're occupying and, if possible, try to shut off other rooms to contain the warmth provided by the space heater. If you decide to use a space heater to heat a small area in your home, make sure the heater is properly sized for the space; most heaters include a general sizing table.

A word about safety: the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates more than

25,000 residential fires are associated with the use of space heaters every year, resulting in more than 300 deaths. If you must use a space heater, purchase a newer model that includes the most current safety features and make sure it carries the Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) label. Choose a thermostatically controlled heater to avoid energy waste and overheating, and place the heater on a level surface away from foot traffic when in use. Always keep children and pets away from space heaters.

Consider alternative ways to stay warm like extra layers of clothing or UL-approved electric blankets. If you have hardwood or tile floors, lay down area rugs to provide additional insulation (and appeal!) and maintain warmth.

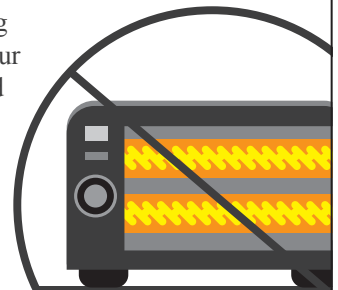
We know it's cold out there, but remember in addition to safety concerns, space heaters can greatly increase your energy bills if used improperly.



TIPS TO DITCH THE SPACE HEATER

Space heaters are energy hogs, and older models can be extremely dangerous. This winter, ditch the space heater and try these alternative solutions to stay cozy.

- Use an electric blanket to keep warm during the night.
- Caulk and weatherstrip around all windows and doors to prevent heat loss.
- Consider adding insulation to your attic and around duct work.



Normal power line

Lines weighed down by ice

Top line melted after bottom line

ICE ON POWER LINES IS A WEIGHTY SUBJECT



When it comes to getting electricity across power lines and into homes, ice can be a force to be reckoned with.

ICE ON DISTRIBUTION LINES

Ice can quickly lead to broken power poles and other pole equipment. Ice can also make falling tree branches 30x heavier and much more likely to break power lines.

ON A 300-FOOT SPAN OF 1-INCH-THICK POWER LINES

- 1/2 inch of ice adds 281 pounds of weight
- 1 inch of ice adds 749 pounds of weight
- 2 inches of ice adds 2,248 pounds of weight

WHEN ICE MELTS

Melting ice can cause power outages. If ice on the bottom (neutral) line melts before the lines above, it can cause the lines to touch.

OTHER ICE FACTS

- Damage can begin when ice exceeds 1/4 of an inch
- 1/2 inch of ice can cause a line to sag up to 12 inches
- Pressure can also be caused by a broken tree limb
- Both ice and melting ice can cause power outages

Safe Electricity.org®

Source: Jerri Imgarten-Whitley and Victory Electric Cooperative

STAY TOASTY AND WARM WHILE

TURNING DOWN THE THERMOSTAT



When the winter winds blow, it is tempting to adjust the thermostat up a few degrees to stay toasty and warm. However, turning to other (FREE!) ways to help keep you warm could help reduce your energy bills.



Each degree you reduce your thermostat saves 1% on your heating bill. No one home during the day? Adjust your thermostat 7 to 10 degrees from its normal setting to save up to 10% annually.

Source: Department of Energy

Here are ways to help you stay warm when it is cold outside:



Bundle up by wearing layers and heavy socks

Get your body moving and stay active

Use blankets while sitting still

Caulk windows and door frames that leak air



Replace or update old or ineffective door seals



Make sure your home's heating system is working properly

Keep your furnace clean and change the filter monthly



Let the sun shine in during the day and close window coverings at night



Reduce how long you use ventilation fans (they transfer warm air outside)



Keep a fireplace damper closed when not in use

Humidify your home to make the air feel warmer



If you use a portable space heater, use it safely and for short amounts of time. Using one for extended periods can cause your energy bill to spike since it draws a lot of power.

Learn more at:

Safe Electricity.org®

"Year in review" continued from page 18A

Your cooperative will continue to work diligently to improve and enhance the level of service and reliability that you receive. On behalf of the Trustees and all employees, we want you to know that your cooperative is committed to providing reliable and quality service

while keeping rates affordable. We thank you for the opportunity to serve you.

See you next month and as always, "We'll keep the lights on for you."

Our office will be closed on Monday, January 17th in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Find us on 

Facebook.com/SouthEasternIllinoisElectric



POWER OUTAGE

If your power goes off, we offer these suggestions

1. Check the fuses or circuit breakers in your service panels. If you have breakers, make sure they are in the "ON" position.
2. If you have a meter pole, check the main breaker panel just below the meter socket. If the breaker is in the "OFF" position, check all of your wiring from the meter pole to your various buildings. If the wiring appears to be okay, reset the breaker to the "ON" position.
3. If you still do not have power, check with neighbors to see if they have power.
4. To report a power failure or other emergency, please phone 1-877-399-8405. This phone number is monitored around the clock, 365 days per year to accept your outage and emergency calls.
5. Your phone call will be handled by SouthEastern's automated outage reporting system and will be identified automatically through ANI (Automatic Number Identification). An outage record will then be generated for your location. Please note that the phone number

from which you place the call will be the number used to generate the record. If the system fails to recognize your phone number, members having touch-tone phones may simply enter their seven-digit phone number (without area code) in order to report the outage. Members not having touch-tone phones will be asked to leave a message. It is important you leave your name, phone number and location of the outage. Retrieving messages and entering them into the system is time consuming; therefore, please leave only a message that will help in restoration of electric service. Do not remain on the line for an operator because a live operator is not there to respond. In order to keep a current listing of all numbers, it is important that you notify the Cooperative of any changes in your telephone number.

6. Handling outage calls electronically allows you to report power failures very quickly. Once your outage has been reported, it will be dispatched to repair personnel who will restore your outage as soon as possible. Calling back repeatedly will not shorten the length of the outage, but may hinder the efforts of other members who are trying to report outages.

OUTAGE CALLS ONLY 1-877-399-8405

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 100 Cooperative Way • Carrier Mills, IL 62917-2275
 618-273-2611 or 800-833-2611 • Office hours: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. M-F