

President's Report



William R. Dodds
President/CEO

Working with local legislators

“All politics is local.” This observation by the late Thomas P. “Tip” O’Neill, Jr., former Speaker of the House of Representatives, means that even national politics have a local impact, and people care most about issues that directly affect them. Indirectly, this famous adage underscores the importance and value of local politics.

At Spoon River Electric, we think it’s critical to develop and cultivate relationships with local legislators because they craft, introduce and vote on legislation that impacts the local business climate, the environment and quality of life for our community. That’s why we work closely with our local elected officials. After all, our purpose is to provide safe, reliable, affordable energy, but our mission is to help our community thrive.

Spoon River Electric is a local business that powers economic development and prosperity for our region. As a cooperative, we have deep roots here, and we listen closely to our members to better understand the needs of the community. Our leadership, board members and employees live and work right here in the community we serve.

We strive to be an advocate for our community, ensuring that local legislators know, understand and act on the issues important to our area.

Providing industry guidance and expertise

As a practical matter, we recognize that most legislators are “generalists,” yet they vote on a wide range of issues. Their expertise may not include the changing energy industry, which is why Spoon River Electric provides guidance and expertise from subject matter experts who’ve been in the energy industry for many years.

Today’s energy landscape is an increasingly complex topic covering not only the traditional

engineering and vegetation management aspects of the industry, but also encompasses technology, cybersecurity, the electrification of the transportation sector and more.

Our experts provide briefings and back-grounders to legislators, committees and staff, and we offer expert testimony for hearings and other legislative or regulatory meetings or gatherings. And because we’re involved in economic development and we know local community leaders, we can provide insight on how issues and policies under discussion might impact our region.

Co-op as a convener

In addition, we periodically invite legislators and their staff to the co-op for tours so they can see first-hand how we operate and can view our operations center, substations, the Spoon River Learning Center and solar farm near Summum and the solar array at the Cooperative headquarters in Canton.

Representing your best interests

We strive to be a trusted resource on energy issues. Because of our deep roots in the community, we have a firm understanding of local issues and needs. We will continue looking after the long-term interests of our consumer-members. This means we can cultivate and foster positive, productive relationships with legislators who know and trust us, because we’re advocating on behalf of the community we serve.

We’re proud to power your life and bring good things to the community. We hope you’ll continue to advise Spoon River Electric on matters of importance so we can continue to advocate on your behalf and improve the quality of life for all.

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
bdodds@srecoop.org

Chairman

Bernard Marvel, Browning

Vice Chairman

Terry Beam, Cuba

Secretary

Jack Clark, Lewistown

Treasurer

Lyle Nelson, Abingdon

Board of Directors

Joe Davis, Canton
Kurt Duncan, Lewistown
JoDee Pedigo, Canton
John Spangler, Marietta
Wesley Strode, Marietta

Editor of Spoon River News

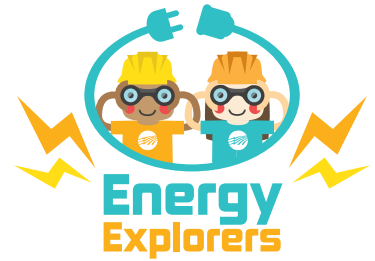
Taryn Mellert
tmellert@srecoop.org

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

WINTER ENERGY EFFICIENCY CROSSWORD

Did you know there are several ways you can fight the winter chill *and* save energy at home? Complete the crossword puzzle below to learn how to save energy during winter months.



1 Down: Open curtains and blinds during the day to allow _____ in to warm your home.

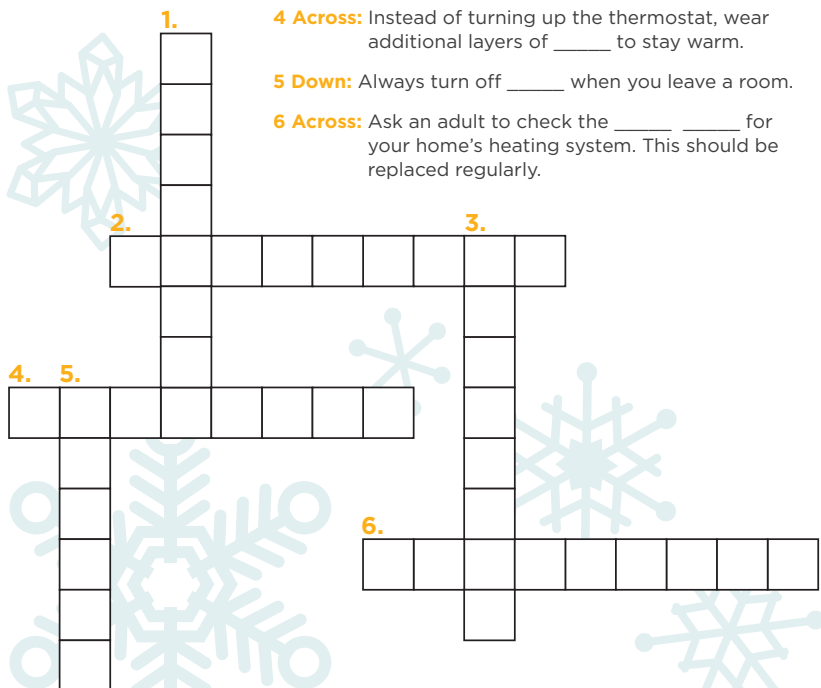
2 Across: If you have a _____ at home, ask an adult to close the flue when a fire is not burning.

3 Down: Unplug phone and tablet _____ when they're not in use.

4 Across: Instead of turning up the thermostat, wear additional layers of _____ to stay warm.

5 Down: Always turn off _____ when you leave a room.

6 Across: Ask an adult to check the _____ for your home's heating system. This should be replaced regularly.



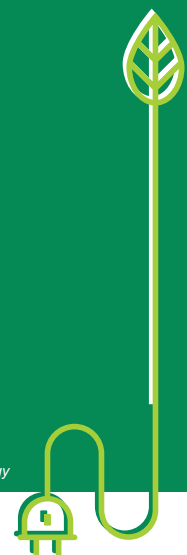
Answer Key: 1 Down) sunlight 2 Across) fireplace 3 Down) chargers 4 Across) clothing 5 Down) lights 6 Across) air filter

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Maximize your heating system's performance by inspecting, cleaning or replacing air filters once a month or as needed to reduce energy costs and prevent potential damage to your system.

Make sure radiators, baseboard heaters and warm-air registers aren't blocked so air can flow freely.

Source: Dept. of Energy



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.

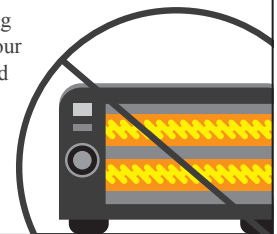
Perhaps your home is energy efficient but you're cold-natured and want a specific room to be cozier than the rest. In this case, a space heater may work for your needs. A good comparison is ceiling fans. Ceiling fans in the summer are used to cool people, not rooms. A space heater can be used in a similar 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.



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.



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.



NEW YEAR BRINGS CHANGE

Happy New Year. The new year will bring change for Spoon River Electric Cooperative as well as significant change for myself. I have decided to retire after 40 years in the utility industry. It has been a pleasure serving as your President/CEO over the last 16 years. Working with your Board of Directors, cooperative employees, and you the members has truly been the highlight of my career. We have seen significant change over my tenure with technology, distributed generation, struggles of the pandemic, and now with the movement to a carbonless environment.

Sharon and I plan on spending our time in the sunny state of Florida. My planned retirement date will be at the end of February. The Board of Directors has named Josh Dewees, COO as my replacement. I am very pleased with the Board's selection. Josh has worked in several positions during his career here at Spoon River Electric. His experience in the cooperative operations has prepared him for the position and has him ready to lead Spoon River into the future. Again, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve as your President/CEO over the past years.

Sincerely, Bill Dodds

Stay safe on the road

You did not see it coming. You were driving down the road and you heard a thumping-type noise, or your car handled differently as it rolled down the pavement.

If you are driving along and you notice your car is starting to malfunction, gently take your foot off the accelerator. Do not brake hard or suddenly, according to the National



Safety Council. Signal your intention to pull over and monitor traffic before changing lanes.

While no one likes to think about the possibility of getting stranded, here are some common causes of car trouble.

Flat tire

One in four roadside emergencies are caused by a flat tire. Because of that, it is a good idea to learn how to change a tire. While you can contact a roadside service to take care of your flat, that will not help you if you are out of cell phone service range or your phone is dead.

Although surveys on this subject should be taken with a grain of salt, some surveys estimate that 25 percent of Americans do not know how to change a tire, and another 19 percent are not confident in their ability to do so. Of teen drivers aged 15–17, 52 percent are clueless when it comes to changing a tire.

Dead battery

A standard car battery will last for around three years or 50,000 miles before it starts failing (depending on the battery's rating, of course). If you do not stay on top of how long you have had your battery, you may find yourself with a drained battery and no way to start your car.

Keeping jumper cables in your trunk is a wise choice because someone else may be able to give you a jump. However, if no one else is around, this will not help you. If you want to play it safe, keep a portable car jump-starter in your trunk. This nifty device could jump-start your car when the battery is completely dead, as long as the starter is charged.

Wintry road conditions

Road conditions during winter can be treacherous and may be caused by a blizzard, sleet or black ice. Each year, 24 percent of weather-related crashes occur on snowy, slushy or icy

pavement and 15 percent happen during snowfall or sleet, according to the Federal Highway Administration.

If roads have become impassable, take the following steps:

- Pull over and try not to panic. Avoid walking away from your car to look for help. Your car will keep you sheltered, and it will also be easier for you to be found.
- On the other hand, if your car is in a hazardous position or in a place where it could be struck by another vehicle, move it off the roadway. If that is not possible, safely get out of the car and off the roadway.
- Open or crack a window to get some fresh air.
- Keep your hazard lights on to help other drivers see your car and make it easier for emergency responders to locate you.
- Move your body to keep your blood circulating.

Take steps to prevent car trouble, such as checking your tires and keeping your vehicle well-maintained. When car trouble does happen, take steps to stay safe.

GOING THE EXTRA MILE

Electric co-ops maintain more miles of power lines per consumer than other electric utilities. Even though we power fewer consumers on our lines compared to other utilities, we'll always go the extra mile for you, the consumer-members we proudly serve.

