

## President's Report



Josh DeWees  
President/CEO

## Be prepared and stay safe

### Storm watches vs. warnings

At any moment, 1,800 thunderstorms occur worldwide, according to the National Weather Service. That is 16 million storms a year. In an average year, 1,200 tornadoes cause 60 to 65 fatalities and 1,500 injuries in the U.S. alone.

To protect yourself, your family and your property from seasonal thunderstorms and tornadoes, you need more than a flashlight and a few cans of food (although they are essential parts of your emergency kit). Beyond the items in your preparedness kit, it is a good idea to fully understand how dangerous storms can be and how to interpret weather alerts to minimize risk.

### Watch versus warning

When bad weather is approaching, people typically turn on the TV, pull up a weather app or look online for information. If you see a severe weather watch or warning, something bad could be heading your way. However, many people do not consider the differences between the two.

A “watch” means there is a significant chance of a severe thunderstorm or tornado. Watch and wait for more information while taking precautionary measures, like unplugging electronics and checking the contents of your emergency preparedness kit.

A “warning” means a severe thunderstorm or tornado has been spotted or seen on radar. The moment you get a warning, take shelter in the safest part of your home, which is usually in your basement or the interior part of your home.

### Thunderstorms

Thunderstorms are some of the most common yet destructive weather events on Earth. Most of the damage comes from flooding caused by heavy rains, lightning strikes and high winds. Some storms also deliver hail and can even spawn tornadoes. Bad weather systems, such as those that cause

thunderstorms, can cause broken windows, extreme water damage, fallen trees, serious fires, downed power lines and more.

Do not ignore the potential hazards of thunderstorms. Keep flashlights or battery-operated lights well supplied with batteries or charge them regularly. Keep a supply of nonperishable food and drinking water on hand. Turn off and unplug electronic equipment to protect it from power surges. Move valuables out of the basement or other locations that may flood. If a power outage occurs, never use a portable generator in your home, enclosed structure or garage. Do not step into a flooded basement or area since the water could be electrified.

### Tornadoes

The central part of the U.S. is sometimes referred to as Tornado Alley because it is the most common geographic location for these disastrous storms. The Great Plains have the perfect environment and climate for severe storm creation. While tornadoes can happen in any month, they are much likelier in the spring and summer than in other seasons. April, May and June have more than twice as many reported tornadoes than any other time of the year.

To stay safe during a tornado, be aware of weather conditions during thunderstorms that could breed tornadoes. Know the best place to shelter both indoors and out, and always protect your head, according to the Centers for Disease Control.

Understanding severe thunderstorm and tornado watches and warnings can help keep you and your family safe. Do not underestimate the potential power of these weather systems. Take steps to protect yourselves and your property before a storm hits. For more information about storm preparedness and electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).



## 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

Josh DeWees  
jdewees@srecoop.org

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### Vice Chairman

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### Editor of Spoon River News

Taryn Mellert  
tmellert@srecoop.org

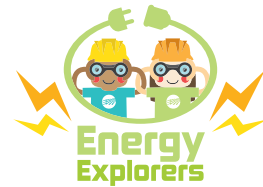
## Spoon River Electric Cooperative – By the Numbers

Miles of line energized: 1,272  
Number of members served: 5,022  
Number of power poles in territory: 29,361

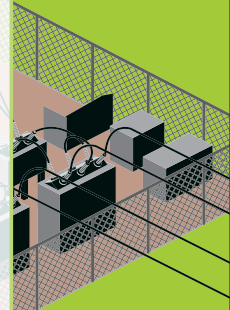
## ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT WORD SEARCH

Did you know we use a variety of equipment to send electricity to your home?

Read the facts below to learn about the equipment we use, then find and circle the bolded words in the puzzle below.



C Y F S S B U R U X S Z P Z S  
T U R S O E Q N S G E W S E K  
N H Z T B V N Z E B F U S K C  
Z N B Z R S M I K Y X U I J U  
E J A D K X Z T L Z S E E E R  
S G L F Y M O G I R E N C O T  
V Z Q O W K V D C H E U K O T  
U S C T A S W J I E O W B H E  
S N O I T A T S B U S E O X K  
X S R E M R O F S N A R T P C  
E L E C T R I C M E T E R S U  
Y B G V H U N P D L K C R R B  
B L P T G I F N Z T S M B G E  
U H U J Y Z L K A S L H H E C  
Z B R I Y Q I U J M F H Z D R



- **Transformers** look like large metal cans on top of utility poles or big green boxes on the ground. They reduce the voltage of electricity for safe use in your home.
- **Power lines** hang overhead or are placed underground to carry electricity from where it's generated to homes and businesses.
- Lineworkers use **bucket trucks** to reach power lines and poles when making repairs and updates to the electrical system.
- **Electric meters** are placed on the outside of homes to measure the amount of electricity you use.
- **Substations** are facilities that contain equipment to help control the flow of electricity.

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

When was your cooling system last serviced? Most manufacturers recommend an annual tune up for your home's cooling system. March is a great time to schedule this service so you can beat the summer rush when the pros are busiest.

A qualified professional can check the amount of refrigerant, accuracy of the thermostat, condition of belts and motors and other factors that can impact the efficiency of your system.

Source: Dept. of Energy





## \$5,500 donated to local organizations through Spoon River Electric's Operation Round Up

The Spoon River Electric Operation Round Up committee recently met and voted to donate \$5,500 to four local organizations within its service territory. Smithfield Fire Protection District received \$1,500 for a new siren, radio and emergency lights; \$1,000 went to the Astoria Schools' Backpack Program, \$1,500 to the Astoria Fire Department for new turnout gear, and

\$1,500 to the Knoxville High School Ag Department and FFA Chapter for their lab and greenhouse project.

These donations are made possible by the generous members of Spoon River Electric who voluntarily make the decision each month to "round up" their electric bill to the next dollar and donating the extra change directly to the Operation Round Up

Program. All the funds collected are donated back into our communities as charitable grants. The average donation a member makes annually ranges from \$6 to \$12.

For more information about the Operation Round Up Program, visit our website [srecoop.org](http://srecoop.org) under the Operation Round Up tab or call Taryn at 309-647-2700.



## Reap what you sow

### Stay safe during planting season

Long hours and fatigue are a constant battle for farmers during planting season. If you farm, remember to take care of yourself by getting as much rest as possible and allowing yourself breaks to clear your head.

Be especially aware of electrical hazards around the farm. Be cautious and think twice before acting around electricity. Safe Electricity offers farmers the following reminders:

- If your machinery or vehicle comes in contact with a power line, do not get out. Once contact has been made with a live line (even when your tractor or truck makes contact), you are now a "pathway to ground" and you could get electrocuted if you step out. Instead, stay where you are and call 911 to dispatch the appropriate utility to de-energize the power.
- If you come across an accident or incident near a downed power line, alert individuals (from a distance) to stay in the tractor or vehicle

as long as there is no imminent danger. Do not approach the scene.

- When using machinery with long extensions or tall antennas and when using ladders, look up to avoid contact with overhead power lines.
- Even if there is no contact, an electrical current can jump or arc, so always keep equipment at least 10 feet from surrounding power lines.
- Remember, non-metallic materials (such as tree limbs, ropes and hay) can conduct electricity, depending on dampness and dust/dirt accumulation.
- Visually inspect overhead lines, which may not meet height codes due to age or pole damage. If a wire is hanging low or is on the ground, consider it energized and stay at least 50 feet away; call 911 to have the operator dispatch the utility.
- Every day, map out where equipment will be moved to ensure it will clear power lines.

- When working in the vicinity of power lines, always use a spotter who has a broad vantage point.
- Train anyone working with or for you (including seasonal employees) to be aware of power line locations and teach them proper clearance distance. Also design and implement a safety training program that includes a review of electrical hazards and how to safely deal with power lines.
- According to American Family Insurance, "know your PTO." To stay safe when working with a power take off (PTO), always disengage the PTO, turn off the engine and remove keys before getting off the tractor. Also, never step across a rotating power shaft.

For more information on electrical safety, go to [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).



## ATTENTION 2021-2022 SENIORS!

### *Spoon River Electric Cooperative Is Awarding Three \$1,000 Scholarships to High School Seniors*

High school students who are seniors during the 2021-2022 school year and are the son or daughter of a Spoon River Electric member are eligible to apply for a \$1,000 Scholastic Scholarship, a \$1,000 Honorary Scholarship, and the \$1,000 Scott Parrish Memorial Scholarship, which will be awarded at this year's Annual Meeting.

Please fill out the form at the bottom of the page and return it to the Cooperative to participate. Applications must be turned in by **May 6, 2022** to be considered. Please see official rules and descriptions of scholarships below.

#### OFFICIAL RULES

- **Applying students and their parent/legal guardian must be present at the Annual Meeting to win.**
- Students must be a son or daughter of a Spoon River Electric Cooperative Member.
- Students must be a high school senior during the 2021-2022 school year and begin college undergraduate studies in the 2022-2023 school year. Students must plan on attending a two-year or four-year accredited college or university, including vocational/technical schools.
- Scholarship winners must be full-time students (at least 12 hours) during the 2022-2023 academic year.
- Scholarships are for one year and are non-renewable.
- Past Spoon River Electric Cooperative scholarship winners are not eligible to receive another one.

#### SCHOLASTIC AND SCOTT PARRISH MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIPS

- The Scholastic and Scott Parrish Memorial Scholarships will be awarded based on an application detailing GPA, college entrance test scores, work and volunteer experience, participation in school and community activities, and a biographical statement.
- Semi-finalists will be notified by mail with a time and place for a personal interview.
- Those not chosen as semi-finalists for the Scholastic and Parrish Scholarships will be automatically placed in the Honorary Scholarship drawing.

#### HONORARY SCHOLARSHIP

- The Honorary Scholarship will be awarded by a drawing as students are recognized at the Annual Meeting.
- All applicants are eligible for the Honorary Scholarship drawing except the Scholastic and Parrish Scholarship winners.



## Scholarship Participation Request

Name of Student \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Student \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Return To: Taryn Mellert  
Spoon River Electric Cooperative  
PO Box 340  
Canton, IL 61520  
647-2700