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President's Report



Josh DeWees
President/CEO

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will be closed
May 29th for
Memorial Day**



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Get involved!

Join us at the annual meeting.

One of my favorite events is coming up on June 8th, when Spoon River Electric will host our annual meeting for you, the members we proudly serve. I always look forward to this event, because it's a great opportunity for me and our employees to talk with our members and hear what's on their minds.

We hope you'll join us for the annual meeting, which will take place at the Fulton County Fairgrounds in Lewistown. We thank you in advance for getting involved, because your participation means so much to us.

During the annual meeting, we'll share a few brief business updates on financial reports and recent projects/investments. But we're going to have a lot of fun, too! We'll have Bucher Boys BBQ catering and Schwan's ice cream!

Spending time with you and hearing your take on our community's energy future is so important to us. In fact, it's essential, because everything we do is shaped by the members of our community. As I'm sure you know, the energy industry is in the midst of massive

change. Consumer needs and changing technology impact nearly every aspect of how we manage and deliver energy to local homes and businesses.

As we navigate major changes in the coming years, we need to hear from you and your neighbors to inform our planning as we strive to meet the long-term needs of all Spoon River Electric members.

You have a say.

You may be wondering if your opinion really makes a difference, and yes, it does! Gaining guidance and perspective from our members and board helps set priorities for the co-op and guide future decisions. At our annual meeting, we raise issues for voting consideration by the general membership (that's everyone who pays for electric service from Spoon River Electric). The annual meeting is also a time for members to vote on the co-op's board of directors.

Our board of directors is comprised of 9 members who live and work right here in our local service area, so they are in the best posi-

tion to know where community investments are most needed. And, by the way, we hope you'll consider running for the board in the future — we're always looking for folks who care about our community who would be willing to serve.

Your electric bill is an investment in our community.

This local input means those closest to the community know its needs and priorities and help direct where co-ops dollars are spent. Every year, we invest funds to make updates to our local system, which helps maintain reliability and grid resilience. Think of it this way: Every time you pay your electric bill, you're actually investing in your community, because all the money we



Spoon River Electric Cooperative

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8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
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President/CEO

Josh DeWees

jdewees@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
Dan Williams, Smithfield
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

take in stays here in the local community. By making these investments in our local system, we can ensure you have reliable power for everyday life.

Most consumers likely don't equate active involvement with their electric company with helping their community. But Spoon River Electric is not an ordinary utility company. We're a co-op, and our business model is

meant to serve the members and the community in which it operates.

Our core purpose and mission are to provide safe, reliable and affordable power. But, as a co-op, we're also motivated by service to our community, rather than profits. We hope you'll exercise the benefits of your co-op membership and join us for the annual meeting on June 8th. We look forward to seeing you!

Energy Explorers

ELECTRICAL SAFETY QUIZ

May is National Electrical Safety Month! Take this quiz to test your safety skills. Check your answers in the key below.

1. It's safe to plug in several devices to one electrical outlet as long as you use a power strip.
A. True B. False
2. Smoke alarms should be tested _____.
A. Every month B. Every other month C. Every six months
3. Extension cords are safe to use year-round if the cord is not frayed or damaged.
A. True B. False
4. When unplugging a device from an electrical outlet, always hold the _____ while unplugging.
A. Cord B. Plug C. Device
5. It's never safe to play near power lines, but it's OK to play near pad-mounted transformers (those big green boxes you see in neighborhoods).
A. True B. False
6. Where is the most dangerous place to use electricity?
A. Near other electrical equipment B. Outdoors C. Near water

Answer Key: 1. B 2. A 3. B 4. B 5. B 6. C

Necessary steps for solar commissioning

By *Miranda Boutelle, Efficiency Services Group*

Q: I'm interested in adding solar panels to my house. What steps do I need to take?

A: Getting a solar photovoltaic system installed and operational on your house or property involves working with several parties to ensure a safe and functional system. You need to work with your electric utility, local building department and a solar contractor.

Here are the solar commissioning steps you need to take.

Do your research

If you are considering a solar PV installation, I recommend starting with research. The cost of a residential solar photovoltaic system varies based on your location, the type of components

regulations for your state and electric utility.

Your electric utility can help you understand electric bill rate structures. Many states offer net metering, a billing mechanism that gives the owner credit for any extra electricity the system produces and supplies back to the power grid. If your utility offers net metering, ask about being compensated for excess power generated by your solar PV system.

The environmental benefit of installing a solar system is based on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. This benefit is dependent on the type of electricity generation that powers your home. You can check with your

proposals from different contractors to compare system design and cost. You can also request a reference from a previous customer in your area.

Solar contractors work in multiple utility service territories and may not be familiar with the requirements in your state or at your electric utility. I always recommend reaching out to your electric utility before signing a solar installation contract. You want to understand your monthly electric bill costs, as well as the monthly solar system costs, after installing solar.

Interconnection agreement

If you commit to a home solar installation, you will sign an interconnection agreement with your electric utility. This contract between you and your utility stipulates the terms of connecting a distributed generation system, such as a solar PV system.

Permits and inspections

You or your contractor will work with the local building department for the necessary permitting prior to installation. Once the system is installed, you likely will need final inspections from the building department and the electric utility. Your utility will grant permission to operate prior to energizing your system. Don't assume your local building department will communicate with your electric utility. In my experience, this doesn't always happen.

Because the solar installation process involves multiple parties, preapproval and post inspections, it is important to check with your local utility and building department before committing to a solar PV installation.

Miranda Boutelle is the chief operating officer at Efficiency Services Group in Oregon, a cooperatively owned energy efficiency company. She has more than 20 years of experience helping people save energy at home, and she writes on energy efficiency topics for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives.



used and the size of the system. With average costs ranging from \$16,000 to \$36,000, installing a solar system is a significant investment for most homeowners.

In my experience, people decide to install solar panels for financial benefit, environmental impact or a combination of the two.

The financial benefit of generating your own electricity is dependent on your energy use, the cost of the system, electric rates and the specific rules and

utility to learn about its energy sources. This information provides you a better understanding of the type of power your PV system will offset.

You should also reach out to your local building department to learn about the permit and inspection process.

Solar proposals

To find out potential costs and estimated energy production, you need a proposal from a solar contractor. I recommend getting two or three



ATTENTION 2022-2023 SENIORS!

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

High school students who are seniors during the 2022-2023 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 12, 2023** 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 2022-2023 school year and begin college undergraduate studies in the 2023-2024 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 2023-2024 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
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Canton, IL 61520
647-2700