


# The SOUTHEASTERN Light

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative Eldorado, Illinois

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

## President's Comments



**Dustin Tripp**  
President/CEO

As we begin the New Year, I would like to take this time to briefly reflect on the year 2010 and describe your Cooperative's plans for the year 2011.

At the time this article was written and for the first time in three years, your Cooperative did not encounter a major storm in the year 2010. Although no major storm was encountered, the weather in 2010 proved to be unseasonably cold during the winter months and unseasonably warm during the summer months. In fact, the summer months proved to be one of the warmest summers on record and resulted in record high energy consumption for residential accounts.

The Cooperative's retail rates decreased in 2010 primarily due to lower fuel costs for generation, which lowered the wholesale power cost adjustment charge. The average residential customer's retail cost for energy decreased by approximately 4.8 percent in 2010. In addition, your Cooperative returned approximately \$1.7 million in capital credits to Cooperative members in December 2010.

Your Cooperative announced the Home Energy Efficiency program in 2010. As part of this program, your Cooperative received a grant for \$109,000 and distributed it to Cooperative members based upon a first come, first served basis for qualified home energy efficiency improvements. This Home program has been extended into 2011 due to the receipt of another grant for \$76,000.

Over the past few years I have informed you of the proposed climate change legislation that was being debated in Congress. Due to the November 2010 election results, it is very unlikely that the previous form of climate

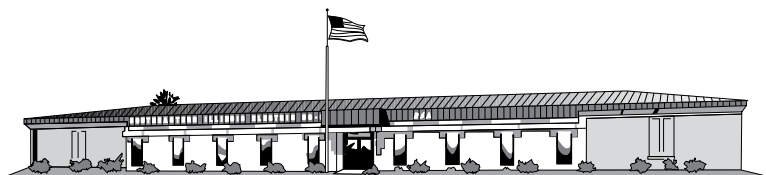
change legislation, more specifically the cap and trade plan, will be passed by Congress.

However, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) is continuing to create more regulations pertaining to emissions from coal and gas-fired generation facilities. These new regulations are scheduled to be released in early 2011 and at this time, it is premature to determine how this may impact your Cooperative. In addition, there are some legislative efforts to postpone the enforcement of these new regulations. Therefore, actions taken by Congress during the first quarter of 2011 will determine whether these new regulations come into effect in 2011 and how these new regulations may impact your electric bill.

In 2011, your Cooperative is planning to continue making 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, sectionalizing, etc. in order to help ensure a safe and reliable electric supply.

In 2011, your Cooperative is planning to continue making significant investments in the vegetation management program to improve the quality and reliability of electric service you receive. Your Cooperative is planning to complete vegetation management on six distribution substations including Braden Valley, Carter, Johnston City, Pittsburg, West City and West End. As we have certainly experienced in the past few years, a sound vegetation management

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READERSHIP PRIZE WINNER:  
Bob Johnson, Mulkeytown, IL

► *Continued from page 16b*

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 our members.

In 2011, your Cooperative remains committed to finding new and better ways to serve its mem-

bers. Your Cooperative will continue to work diligently to improve and enhance the level of service and reliability that you receive.

## Energy efficiency rebate program

### HomE extended into 2011

The popular HomE program being coordinated by SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative has received additional funds and will continue into 2011. Initially funding with \$1.5 million in federal stimulus program funds in May, HomE is getting an additional \$1 million boost. The funding is coordinated through the State of Illinois energy plan. Your Cooperative originally received \$109,000 in May, which has been allocated due to the additional funding your Cooperative will be receiving an additional \$76,000 to promote energy efficiency in our members' homes.

### What's the HomE program about?

HomE (pronounced home E) is our program to help our members become energy efficient. Through our statewide organization, the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC), the Illinois Electric Cooperatives received \$1.5 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds for energy efficiency improvements to their homes.

### Who's eligible?

According to DCEO, Cooperative members who qualify for the LIHEAP Home Weatherization Assistance Program through the state of Illinois will NOT qualify for this program as these members are eligible to receive up to \$6,500 in funding for weatherization and energy efficiency improvements. All OTHER residential members of



SEIEC are eligible to participate in the HomE program. The home must be served by the cooperative and be the member's primary residence.

### How does the program work?

Start by contacting the cooperative at 618-273-2611 to arrange an energy assessment by one of our energy experts. We'll take your name and contact number in the order we are contacted. As we near your turn, we'll contact you to schedule an assessment. Assessments will be scheduled M-F, 8:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. An adult member of the home must be present. There is a \$25 fee for the assessment that will be billed to the member. We will provide you with a report of recommendations on how you might best improve your home's energy efficiency, performance and comfort.

### What do I need to do?

Based on the recommendations we make, you could be eligible for

a rebate up to \$1,500 per residence per member. Once you have your recommendations, you decide what is best for you. You will then submit a proposal form and estimate to us. We will return a signed copy to you, indicating that funds have been set aside for you. You will then have 60 days to complete your project. Once you have made your purchase or completed your project, you will send us a completion form with copies of the paid receipts. We will then issue a check to you.

### How much are the rebates?

|                           |                                     |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Geothermal Heat Pumps     | \$1,500                             |
| Air-source Heat Pumps     | \$1,000                             |
| Central Air Conditioning  | \$350                               |
| Natural gas or LP Furnace | \$350                               |
| Heat Pump Water Heater    | \$250                               |
| Insulation/Air Sealing    | 30% of project costs, maximum \$500 |

The maximum total rebate is \$1,500 per Cooperative member/residence. Rebates will be approved for only one piece of heating or cooling equipment.

Please contact SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative at 618-273-2611 for more information regarding the program or to sign up for an energy assessment. The program will run until the funding is exhausted.

# Winter Weather Woes

## Be prepared for ice storms and prolonged outages

**B**lasts of winter wind, moisture and fluctuating temperatures can result in severe freezing rain, sleet and ice storms. A heavy build-up of ice on power lines can cause wires to snap and utility poles to topple. Falling ice-laden trees or limbs can bring down power lines, cause outages and threaten life and property.

Safe Electricity and SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative stress the importance of being prepared for these potentially dangerous storms and the power outages they may cause.

“When severe weather hits, it can cause extensive damage to our substations, power lines and other electrical equipment. Even with our crews working around the clock, this damage can take days to repair. If the damage will cause long outages, we can call on other electric cooperatives for help. We’ll do everything it takes to restore your power quickly,” says SEIEC President/CEO Dustin Tripp.

### Be prepared and know what to do in case of a winter emergency and long-term power outages:

- Always keep a battery-powered radio or TV, flashlights and a supply of fresh batteries readily available.
- Know where to find extra blankets.
- Fill spare containers with water for washing, and keep a supply of bottled drinking water on hand.
- Keep a supply of foods that don’t require cooking or refrigeration, along with a hand opener for canned food.
- Switch off lights and appliances to prevent overloading circuits and damaging appliances when power is restored. Leave one lamp or switch on to signal when your power returns.
- To prevent water pipes from



- freezing, keep faucets turned on slightly so water drips from the tap.
- Keep all grills outdoors to stay safe from carbon monoxide.
- Assemble a disaster supply kit ahead of time. Remember to include a first aid kit, prescription medicines and special items for infant, elderly or disabled family members.
- Stay inside and dress warmly in layered clothing.
- Close off unneeded rooms.
- When using an alternate heat source, follow operating instructions, use fire safeguards and be sure to properly ventilate.
- If you use a standby generator, make sure it has a transfer safety

- switch or that your power is cut off at the breaker box before you operate it. This prevents electricity from traveling back through the power lines or what’s known as “back feed.” Back feed creates danger for anyone near lines, particularly crews working to restore power.
- When outside, treat all downed and hanging lines as if they are energized electric lines. Stay away, warn others to stay away and immediately contact your utility.

*For more detailed information and electrical safety tips, visit the Safe Electricity Web site [www.SafeElectricity.org](http://www.SafeElectricity.org).*

**We will be closed on Monday,  
January 17th in observance of  
Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday.**



# 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**

**SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative, Inc.**

585 Highway 142 South • P.O. Box 251 • Eldorado, Illinois 62930  
618-273-2611 or 800-833-2611 • Office hours: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. M-F