

President's Comments



Dustin Tripp
President/CEO

This month, I would like to discuss some of the traditional maintenance programs that your Cooperative performs every year and how these programs are not considered “new” but are very important in providing reliable service to you, as Cooperative members and owners.

Some of you may not realize this but your Cooperative owns and operates over 3,400 miles of distribution line in 10 counties of Southeastern Illinois. Just to put this into perspective, this is enough distribution line to stretch across the United States from Portland, Maine to Los Angeles, California and still have over 300 miles of distribution line remaining. This distribution system contains over 70,000 wood poles, over 1,500 oil circuit reclosers, over 180 voltage regulators and 35 substations. These facilities are performing a valuable function every day by delivering your electricity and must be maintained and inspected in order to ensure proper operation.

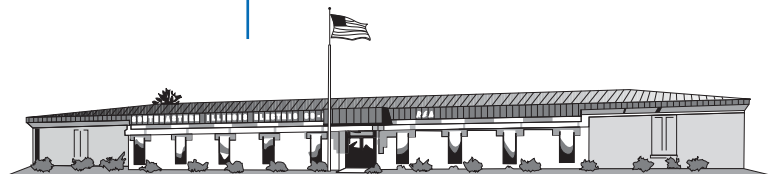
Every year, your Cooperative is testing and inspecting approximately 10,000 to 18,000 wood poles to determine the condition of the pole. The testing and inspecting process includes determining the relative strength of the pole, the condition of the pole, locating loose hardware on the pole, inspecting guy wires, etc. In an average year, your Cooperative will reject some 2 to 3 percent of the poles tested and change them out with new poles

prior to the poles falling unexpectedly, which could cause a safety concern and an outage for members.

In addition, your Cooperative’s distribution system contains over 900 circuit reclosers that work to de-energize a line in the event of a problem and isolate the problem so that it minimizes the number of members affected by the problem. To help you understand what these devices are, I’m sure that some of you have experienced an outage that began by three distinct blinks followed by a prolonged outage. These oil circuit reclosers were operating in an attempt to keep the line on by de-energizing and re-energizing the line three times before finally locking into an outage condition. If the problem was temporary in nature, the recloser would have operated one time and your service would have been restored. These devices perform a critical function not only for minimizing the outages that occur but also helping to provide safety for everyone. Your Cooperative performs maintenance on approximately 375 of these devices every year in an effort to ensure proper operation.

Your Cooperative’s distribution system also contains over 180 voltage regulators that actually control the voltage level to your homes, farms and businesses. These voltage regulators are mechanical devices that may operate several hundred up to several thousand times per year. In

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READERSHIP PRIZE WINNER:
Glenn Hight, Jr., Marion, IL

Don't cook up a stormy electric bill for the holiday

While you're busy in the kitchen preparing your family's holiday feast, Safe Electricity wants to help keep your family safe and your energy bills low.

According to the National Fire Protection Agency, cooking equipment is the cause of approximately 40 percent of home structure fires. As you prepare to show off your cooking and baking skills this holiday season, remember the following tips to avoid shocks or fires:



- Inspect all small appliances and electric cords to make sure they are in good condition before using. Don't use appliances if cords are cracked or frayed.
- Read the operating instructions of any appliance before use.
- When purchasing new kitchen appliances, look for UL-Listed appliances with automatic shut-off features.
- Never plug more than one high-wattage appliance, such as a blow dryer, microwave or toaster oven, into a single outlet.
- Stay focused and attentive to baking, brewing and simmering foods.
- Make sure outlets near sinks are equipped with properly tested ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) to prevent shocks.

Always know the location of a working fire extinguisher and know how to operate it. Cooking is also a great area to save energy. Keep these energy efficient tips in mind while preparing your holiday meals this year:

- Think small – opt for a smaller appliance, such as a toaster oven or microwave, whenever possible. Efficient microwave ovens use around 50 percent less energy than conventional ovens.
- Turn the oven or stove burners off a few minutes before your food is ready – they will remain hot enough to finish cooking the food.
- Don't preheat the oven unless you are baking or a recipe requires it.

- Bake with ceramic or glass pots and pans – this will allow you to lower the oven temperature by about 25 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Self-cleaning ovens use less energy for normal cooking because of the higher insulation levels built into them. If you own one plan to clean it right after you've finished baking something so it doesn't have to heat up a second time.
- Don't peek – opening the oven door can lower the internal temperature as much as 25 percent.
- Don't cover oven racks with foil – this reduces heat flow and increases cooking time.
- Make sure your pan covers the coil of your range – if you can see coil peeping out from the sides of your pan, you need a bigger pan (or a smaller burner).
- Put a lid on it – cover pans while cooking to prevent heat loss.
- Plan ahead – defrosting food in a microwave may be convenient, but defrosting it at room temperature is free.
- In warmer months, try to use a grill to keep the heat outdoors – remember that the less energy wasted in heating food, the less work your air conditioner will have to do to keep your home cool.

These steps are easy to follow and come at no extra cost. Making a habit out of them will save you both energy in the kitchen and money on your electric bill.



Honor, perseverance, blood and victory ...

Each star and stripe on our flag represent the sacrifice made by servicemen and women from across this great land who continue to fight for our freedom.

Take time this Veterans Day to proudly display your flag and show your support to our military heroes both here and abroad.



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order to keep them in good working condition, a routine inspection and maintenance schedule must be performed to ensure adequate voltage levels to your services.

Last but certainly not least, your Cooperative owns and operates 35 substations that contain large substation transformers, protective devices, voltage regulators, switches and much more. Your Cooperative performs maintenance and inspection related activities that include oil analysis in an effort to determine the transformer's condition, infrared scanning to locate loose connections and "hot spots", protective device maintenance to ensure proper operation, etc.

In summary, your Cooperative owns and operates an extensive distribution system that must be maintained in order to provide you with reliable electric service. Please know that while your Cooperative is constantly seeking new technologies/procedures that will provide members with an enhanced or increased level of service, your Cooperative continues to perform traditional maintenance programs that are also very important in providing you with reliable electric service.

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

The office will be closed on Thursday, November 11 in honor of Veterans Day.

The office will be closed on Thursday, November 25 and Friday, November 26 in observance of the Thanksgiving Holiday.

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.

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