

Cooperative receives two safety awards at state conference



Shelby Electric Cooperative Lineman Cary Bryson (left) accepted the awards from AIEC President/CEO N. Duane Noland.

Shelby Electric Cooperative employees received two top safety honors recently during the Safety/Supervisory Technical Conference in Springfield. The awards were given to cooperatives with outstanding “lost time” and “accident/illness” safety records for 2009.

The Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC) sponsors this conference annually. The theme of

the conference was “Put the Spotlight on Safety.” Attendees heard firsthand from two linemen who were involved in a fall during ice storm recovery work as well as Kristie Cunningham, the wife of a fallen lineman, and her family’s perspective on their tragedy.

“This is an outstanding accomplishment. Hats off to our guys who work the lines, many times in harsh

weather conditions and long hours, to keep the power on for our members. Cooperatives strive everyday to work safely. We have a safety-training program in place that helps keep us on track. Unfortunately, there are times when someone does get hurt or sick, so we feel honored to have received these awards as the top cooperative in the state with the best safety record for 2009,” said Operations Superintendent Terry Oldham.

Shelby Electric Cooperative is a member of Touchstone Energy — an alliance of more than 700 local, consumer-owned electric utilities around the country. Shelby Electric is committed to providing superior service based on four core principles: integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community.

The co-op serves more than 9,850 members over 2,236 miles of line in parts of Christian, Cumberland, Effingham, Fayette, Macon, Montgomery, Moultrie, Sangamon and Shelby counties. For more information visit www.shelbyelectric.coop. Follow the cooperative on twitter, twitter.com/YourCoop.

Offices Closed
April 2nd in observance of
Good Friday.



Planting the right tree in the right place

Earth Day celebrates its 40th Anniversary on Thursday, April 22 and National Arbor Day is Friday, April 30

Many people plant trees during the spring. Earth Day and National Arbor Day, celebrated this month, also promote tree planting as part of their celebration. There are many environmental and beautification benefits to planting young trees. However, Shelby Electric Cooperative wants to remind everyone to be aware of electrical hazards while planting this year. Always seek help from professionals when choosing and placing trees and bushes.

Trees that grow too close to electric lines can create shock and fire hazards as well as power outages. More importantly, children can become victims of electric shock when they climb trees that have grown too close to power lines. Trees growing into power lines can also create elec-



National standards for electrical safety require that branches within 15 feet of electrical equipment be removed. Be careful when trimming tree branches near power lines. If a tree presents a safety concern call the cooperative for help.

trical hazards for people who might be trimming branches, hanging lights or otherwise working around them.

“Trees provide many aesthetic, environmental and economic benefits” said Safe Electricity Executive Director Molly Hall. “But everyone needs to be aware of the dangers and risks created when trees grow into power lines and the importance of calling the utility or utility locator service before beginning any landscaping project.”

Take the time to research tree selections by consulting your local arborist, tree nursery or utility. These experts can provide assistance in designing a beautiful, shade-filled yard with trees appropriate for each area of the landscape. With their help, trees can provide economical cooling in the summer and a wind-break for harsh winter winds.

In addition, trees help combat

the effects of pollution by absorbing carbon dioxide (CO₂). When trees grow, they take energy from the sun and combine it with CO₂ from the air to photosynthesize. This makes trees a natural “carbon sink” or a living source of carbon reduction. Some trees are better suited for this task than others; and, according to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), tree species that grow quickly and live long are ideal carbon sinks.

Choosing the right tree for the right place is crucial, especially when it comes to power lines. Trees and wood in general can potentially conduct electricity and can create a safety hazard if grown close to electric lines. Power outages or momentary interruptions can occur when branches come into contact with overhead lines. Electrical arcing and sparking from a wire to a nearby

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SHELBY News

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branch can also cause fires.

“Keep in mind expected height when you purchase trees to plant this year,” said Forestry Foreman Kevin Carlen of Shelby Electric Cooperative. “Just because a tree is far from the power line right now, doesn’t mean it always will be.”

If you have trees that appear to be growing into power lines, contact your electric utility. Never try to prune them yourself. Utilities have or can recommend skilled professionals trained to safely prune and trim trees for electric line clearance.

To avoid future electrical hazards, safe planting tips to remember include:

- n Consider mature height of trees. Never plant a tree that could

exceed 25 feet in height near power lines. Taller growing trees must be planted a minimum of 20 feet away (horizontally) from the power lines.

- n Do not plant near underground utility services. Tree roots can grow to interfere with underground pipes, cables and wires. Future repairs to these facilities also could damage the health and beauty of nearby plants and trees, or even require removal.
- n Keep areas around electric meters, transformers or other electrical equipment free of any vegetation that could limit utility service access.
- n Before digging, call the local underground utility locator service

to mark the location of underground utilities so that accidental contact, damage and injuries can be avoided.

“There are many beautiful varieties of low-growing trees and shrubs that provide color, screening and shade, and enhance the quality of life in our communities and environment,” said Carlen. “Consider the types of trees that co-exist well with power lines and the environment to avoid the need for trimming for line clearance.”

Members interested in planting a tree should pick up the brochure, “Keep Trees and Power Lines Apart,” available at the cooperative office.

For more information on electrical safety visit www.SafeElectricity.org.

REAL LIFE REAL POWER

Let's get outside!!

Hopefully April will bring a lot of opportunities for you to be outside enjoying sunshine and warm weather. To save money and energy, make sure you power down inside before you head outside! Turn off or unplug the lights, televisions, computers and game systems!

In honor of Earth Day (April 22) you may consider planting trees. Remember to call JULIE before you dig!

Whether you are planning to do it yourself or hire a profes-

sional, smart digging means calling 811 before each job. Homeowners often make risky assumptions about whether or not they should get their utility lines marked, but every digging job requires a call – even small projects like planting trees and shrubs.

If you hit an underground utility line while digging, you can harm yourself or those around you, disrupt service to an entire neighborhood and potentially be responsible for fines and repair costs.

For more information, visit the Web site at <http://www.call811.com>.



FREE

While quantities last, Shelby Electric Cooperative will provide **ONE pair of canvas work gloves per member. Stop by the headquarters at North Route 128 and tell them you read Real Life/Real Power to get your free gloves!**



<p style="color: #003366; font-weight: bold;">Shelby Energy</p> <p>1-217-774-2311</p> <p>24-hours-a-day</p>	<p style="color: #003366; font-weight: bold;">PWR-net & WildBlue Internet</p> <p>1-877-994-2323</p> <p>weekdays</p>	<p style="color: #003366; font-weight: bold;">Shelby Electric Cooperative</p> <p>1-800-677-2612</p> <p>1-217-774-3986</p> <p>24-hours-a-day</p>
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PWR-net expansion underway

PWR-net's 2010 expansion is right on target and will see additional areas receiving service over the next few months. PWR-net is currently servicing line-of-sight, wireless broadband to the following communities and surrounding areas: Shelbyville, Findlay, Lakewood, Cowden, Tower Hill, Pana and Assumption. The following communities and surrounding areas will have service some time in April: Oconee, Nokomis, Palmer, Ohlman, Rosamond, Moweaqua, Stewardson, Strasburg, Owaneco and southern parts of Taylorville. To find out if service is available in your area call PWR-net toll-free, 1-877-994-2323 or email subscriberinterest@pwr-net.coop. Visit www.shelbyelectric.coop for future expansion news.



Towers, like this 180-foot tower near Stewardson and Strasburg, are popping up around Shelby Electric's service territory as PWR-net wireless broadband expansion continues.

PWR-net
www.pwr-net.coop

Improving energy efficiency

Shelby Electric Cooperative members were presented a wealth of information about energy-efficient measures they can utilize in their homes to help them save money on their energy use. Energy efficiency measures for new construction and existing homes were presented at the coop's 'Improving Home Performance Workshop.'

Brian Kumer, who has worked in the residential and commercial energy field for 10 years, presented the program to cooperative members in an evening workshop and a morning workshop for builders, HVAC and construction personnel in February. Shelbyville High School Technology teacher, Mark Munch, brought 16 students from his CAD 1 & 2 and Construction classes to the morning program.

"What a great program the students were able to participate in. This gives the students a first-hand look at what can be done when designing a home to make it more energy efficient. I'm glad the cooperative took the time to put this workshop on and allowed us to attend," said Munch.

The cooperative also introduced Dustin Theiss, who will be doing home energy audits for the cooperative. Theiss was recently certified as a Building Performance Institute energy rater. If anyone has questions about having an energy audit performed at their home, contact Member Services Representative Marla Eversole by calling 1-800-677-2612.

Travis Banfield won the free home



Brian Kumer, energy consultant and owner of Thermal Imaging Services of Lewiston, presented a workshop on improving home performance for Shelby Electric Cooperative members.

energy audit after homeowner Randy Walk donated the audit back to the cooperative after his name was originally drawn as the winner. "The cooperative appreciated Randy's kind gesture after he determined the audit could be better utilized by another member. His home wasn't as conducive to an energy audit," said Eversole.

"What a great workshop the cooperative put on, very informative. Energy demands are going to continue to increase and we all have to do something, so I was pleased the cooperative took the initiative to put on this program and is now offering energy audits," said Walk from Trowbridge.

To find out how to save money on your energy bill go to www.togetherwesave.com and take the energy savings home tour.

OUTAGE REPORT

LINE OUTAGES

DATE	HOURS	SUBSTATION	CAUSE	MEMBERS AFFECTED
2/6/2010	2.00	Neoga	Trees	100
2/21/2010	3.20	Richland	Miscellaneous	124