

# JAMUP

published by Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative, Dongola, Illinois

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

## Prepare for increased electric rates

As most have you have heard or read, either at our 2011 Annual Meeting of Members or through our previous JAMUP publications, Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative (SIEC) will implement an average electric rate increase of 9.22 percent next month. Members will see this increase on bills due in **MARCH**.

The primary reasons this increase is necessary are due to increased infrastructure maintenance costs, low growth in kilowatt-hour (kWh) sales and increased wholesale power costs from Southern Illinois Power Cooperative (SIPC).

Prices for transformers, utility poles, wire, line hardware, fuel and equipment continue to rise. In order to maintain the reliability of our service it is important that SIEC maintain its infrastructure.

When a co-op's kWh sales are growing in a good economy, it is easier to offset a rate increase.

Unfortunately, SIEC has seen little to no growth in kWh sales since 2007. Most of the counties we serve have a decreasing population. Southern Illinois is desperate for economic development.

The cost of generating power is rising rapidly across the nation. Approximately 60 percent of what members pay to SIEC for electricity is used to pay for wholesale power costs to SIPC. SIPC must increase their cost of generating power to SIEC by 21 percent, mainly due to growing global demand for energy, dwindling base load generation, resistance to new coal generation, inadequate high-voltage transmission lines, increased environmental regulations, and an investment with Prairie State Energy Campus (PSEC)

Although the initial investment in PSEC is costly, it will produce clean, low-cost electricity, making it among the cleanest power plants of its kind

anywhere in the nation. Every aspect of Prairie State is being designed to ensure environmental protection. This is coming at a significant time, due to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) moving forward with regulation of carbon emissions. The EPA policies dealing with coal ash, cooling water intake, hazardous air pollutants, cross-state air pollution rules, and state renewable energy requirements *will* lead to higher costs. SIPC's investment in PSEC is SIEC's way of keeping its commitment to delivering reliable power at the lowest possible cost.

We are deeply concerned about escalating costs in our volatile economy. We will continue to work hard to minimize the impact of necessary price increases by implementing cost-saving budget actions. Please remember, we are a not-for-profit cooperative, and we are accountable to you.

## Upcoming changes on your electric bill

In addition to the rate increase, you will notice two changes, but **NOT ADDITIONAL CHARGES**, on your **MARCH** electric bill statement:

One is a line item currently called a *Customer Charge*. We are changing this wording to better reflect what the charge really is ... a **Facility Charge**. The Facility Charge is for maintaining infrastructure and providing availability of services, and does not include

energy consumption charges. If you still have an old rate book, you can find this charge there. This is **NOT AN ADDITIONAL CHARGE**, but there will be a necessary increase.

The second change will be a new line item called an **Environmental/Regulatory Compliance Charge**. This is also **NOT AN ADDITIONAL CHARGE**. You may remember a couple of years ago, we introduced a Wholesale Power Cost Adjustment (WPCA)

as a line item on your electric bill. The WPCA line item reflects the change in any purchased power cost or generation cost from SIPC. The Environmental/Regulatory Compliance Charge is a line item that shows you how much it costs SIPC to comply with environmental regulations in generating your electricity. These costs have been included in your rates but we feel it is important for members to be informed of the costs of generating electricity.

# Staying informed of major cooperative issues

There are certain times during the year where issues directly affecting our Cooperative, will directly affect our members. We currently have basic ways of reaching members, such as our monthly Illinois Country Living magazine center section, JAMUP; our website [www.siec.coop](http://www.siec.coop); our Facebook page; and news releases with our local radio stations and newspapers. But, some-

times we need to get urgent information to members as quickly as possible, when the issue is "hot"! Therefore, we are developing an email and text alert campaign so members can be notified immediately of issues such as outage restoration efforts during a major storm, legislation efforts directly affecting SIEC rates, billing changes, etc.

If you are interested in receiving a

limited number of emails, letters and/or texts, with information our General Manager feels necessary to share as an immediate form of communication, please fill out the form below and mail it back with your next electric bill payment, or mail it to Jerri Schaefer, SIEC, P. O. Box 100, Dongola, IL 62926, or email the required information to [siecadministration@siec.org](mailto:siecadministration@siec.org).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

SIEC Member Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_


Please indicate if you would rather be contacted through emails, letters or texting:

( ) Cell Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

( ) Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

( ) Letter to Above Address

*Please mail completed form to Jerri Schaefer, SIEC, P. O. Box 100, Dongola, IL 62926 or email her the above information at [siecadministration@siec.org](mailto:siecadministration@siec.org).*



## 2011/2012 SIEC Touchstone Energy \$500 Classroom Empowerment Grant Winners:

SCHOOL	TEACHERS	PROJECT NAME	DESCRIPTION
Lincoln Elementary	Osman/Boyd/ Fox/Webb	Cooking Up A Storm	To study storms & wind speeds, and prepare storm preparedness kits for all 88 2nd grade students' homes
Lick Creek Elementary	George	IPad for Classroom	Enhance 120 students' reading ability & knowledge base through technology for the entire school
Jefferson Elementary	Hatfield/ Thomasson/ Trovillion/Gallip	Making Learning Fun through Technology	To increase classroom participation with the purchase of "clickers" with a Califone Got it Response System for 69 students in the 2nd, 3rd, 7th & 8th grades
Jefferson Elementary	Thomasson	Science Reading Library	To purchase a science library for approx. 50 2nd & 3rd grade students <b>Jonathan David Abernathy</b>
Anna Jr. High	Lyerla/Soloman	Project Holocaust	To study the Holocaust & tour the Holocaust Museum and Learning Center in St. Louis for 65 8th grade students
Anna Jr. High	Collier	Kindles in the Classroom	To enhance the reading capabilities of 25 students with learning disabilities
Metropolis Elementary	Krueger	How to Thank a Teacher	To purchase books for all three 5th grade classrooms benefiting 75 students each year

JOHNSON • ALEXANDER • MASSAC • UNION • PULASKI • POPE

# SIEC urges caution when using back-up generators

## Professional installation - an important safety step

**D**uring long-term power outages many rely on portable generators for emergency power. The growing popularity of portable electric generators has resulted in millions being placed in homes and small businesses across the nation. But it's estimated only a small percentage are hooked up correctly. Safe Electricity and Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative (SIEC) urge consumers to understand the proper safety steps that must be taken.

If installed and operated correctly, the use of standby or portable electric generators poses little danger, but improper installation or use could be dangerous to you and threaten the lives of your family, friends, neighbors and electric utility crews trying to restore service.

Consult and discuss your purchase options with a reliable vendor, your electric supplier and contractors. A

qualified vendor or electric professional will know existing safety codes and the utility's safety requirements, and can help you select the best equipment for your needs and situation.

Properly connecting the generator into the system is a critical step for safe and effective use. A licensed professional should install a permanent, standby electric generator and can help with proper equipment for safely using a portable generator.

Members should be aware that if they wish to connect a generator into their home, building, or farm wiring system during a power outage, then a double-throw safety transfer switch must be installed. The transfer switch breaks the path of electricity between the power lines and your main electrical panel. SIEC offers these switches at cost for members and they should be

installed by a qualified electrician.

During emergencies, many members think they can just pull the meter or put their breaker in the "off" position, then connect their generator into their home's wiring system. However, this is a very dangerous practice and one which SIEC does not allow. If the meter is accidentally installed, or if the breaker malfunctions or is accidentally turned on, then power from the generator would "backfeed" onto SIEC's distribution system, endangering linemen who will be working on the lines.

These safety guidelines and basic operating instructions should be posted in the home and with the generator. For more information on generator safety and other electricity safety issues visit [www.SafeElectricity.org](http://www.SafeElectricity.org) or [www.siec.coop](http://www.siec.coop).

## Congratulations Survey Winner!

*Andrew Lessar of Tamms, on left standing with SIEC Records Specialist Casey Adamitis, is the lucky winner of \$100. He filled out a state-wide survey that was mailed to random members last fall, and is one of five winners across the state. Thank you Mr. Lessar and everyone else who took the time to complete and return this important member satisfaction survey. A summary of results will be published soon.*





*Martin Luther King Jr.*  
1929-1968

## Office Closed



**Martin Luther King Jr  
Birthday**

**Monday, January 16**

# The power to pick electric service

Several members of Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative and other electric cooperatives statewide are receiving telephone calls and letters encouraging them to switch their power generators (not power distributors), promising savings. The message is intended for investor-owned utility customers (Ameren, ComEd and others), not co-op members or municipal utility customers. We are unsure why cooperative members are receiving phone calls and are included in the mailings. SIEC members should disregard the telephone calls and letters.

**Odell B. Obermark**  
The Illinois deregulation/customer choice issue was debated nearly a decade ago. Legislation was passed that allows investor-owned utility customers to choose who generates their power. It does not change who distributes the electricity to the consumer. Deregulation

was driven by and mainly benefited larger industrial loads. In general, the savings for residential consumers and small industrial loads have been dismal or non-existent.

Power generators and the electric utility industry are facing unprecedented levels of risk and uncertainty in today's environment. Decisions made today could be the wrong decision for the future. Marketers make choice sound wonderful, but the risks for consumers can be high.

The legislation recognized that cooperatives are different and should have the right to make a local decision on whether or not to enter the deregulated market. A few did. Most cooperatives have not. Locally elected co-op board members can always decide to enter the deregulated market if circumstances change and it would benefit the co-op membership.

### Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative Board of Directors

Scott L. Ury (President) ..... Union Co.  
 Dale E. Taake (Vice President) ..... Pulaski Co.  
 Carole J. Kelley (Secretary-Treasurer) ..... Johnson Co.  
 Larry A. Douglas ..... Massac Co.  
 G. Robert Inman ..... Pulaski Co.  
 William E. Littrell ..... Union Co.  
 David Martin ..... Massac Co.  
 Scott Miller ..... Alexander Co.  
 Richard D. Moss ..... Alexander Co.  
 Ronald E. Osman (Attorney)

Manager Larry Lovell \* Editor Jerri Schaefer

**For Outages Call:  
800-762-1400 \* 618-827-3555**

## Member prize

In this issue of the JAMUP, we printed the names of three SIEC members who are eligible to receive a \$10 credit toward their utility bill. If you find your name printed in this center section and it's not part of the story, call Jerri with your account number at **800-762-1400** to claim your prize.



**811**

**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.**

**Always call 811 first.**

### Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative

7420 U.S. Highway 51 South • P.O. Box 100 • Dongola, Illinois 62926  
 618-827-3555 • Office hours: 8 a.m. — 4 p.m. • Web address: [www.siec.coop](http://www.siec.coop)