

JAMMUP

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Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

Be aware of potential electric line hazards during planting season

The risk of electrocution remains one of the greatest hazards on today's farms. Before heading back into the fields, Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative (SIEC) and Safe Electricity remind farm workers to be particularly alert to the dangers of working near overhead power lines.

Farmers and operators should make sure everyone knows the location of overhead power lines and to keep farm equipment at least 10 feet away from them. The minimum 10 foot distance is a 360-degree rule – below, to the side and above lines.

Many farm electrical accidents that involve power lines happen

when loading or preparing to transport equipment to fields, or while working on farm machinery near power lines. Sometimes a line is closer than it looks. When moving large equipment or high loads near a power line, always use a spotter to help ensure proper clearances are maintained.

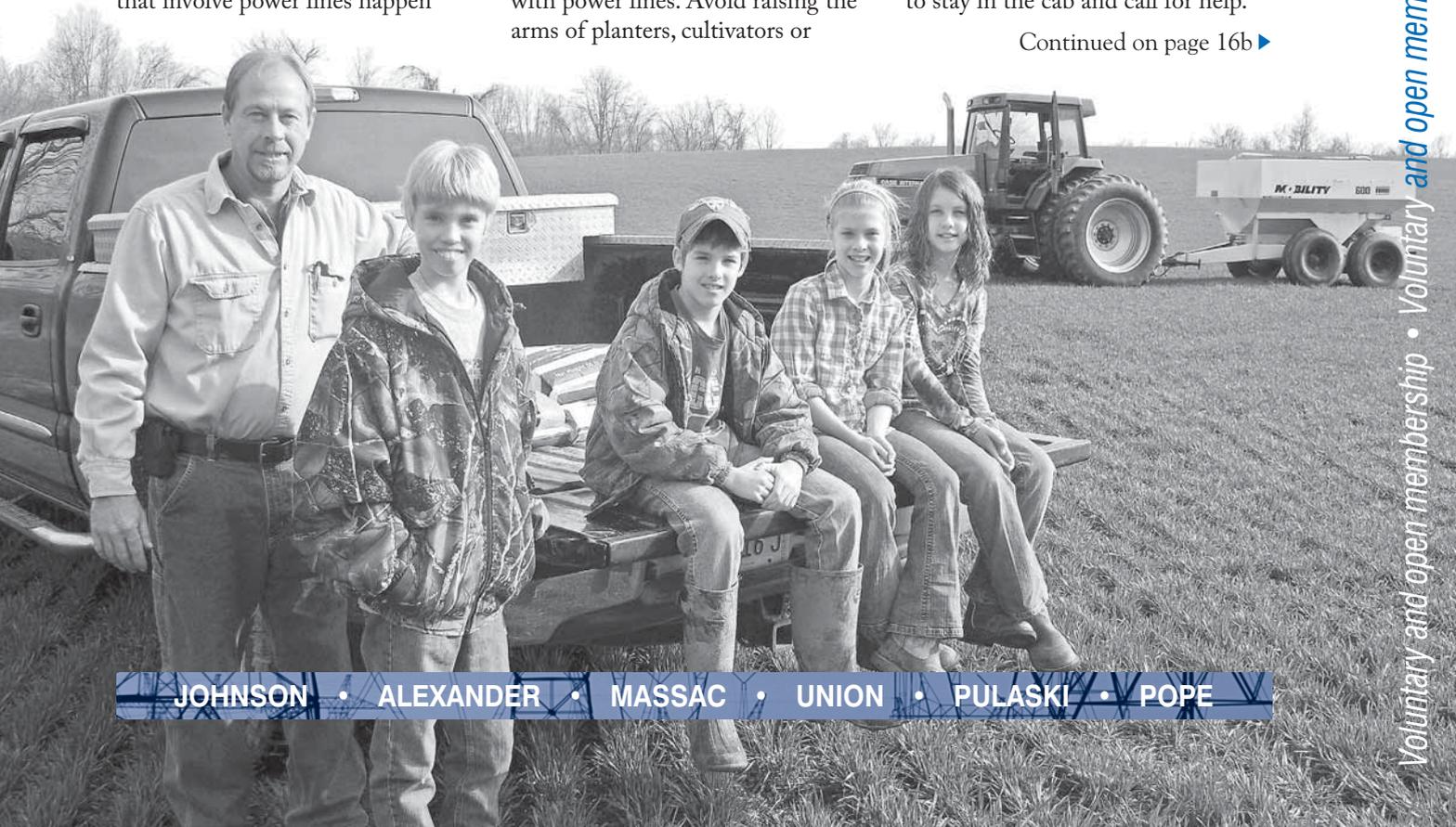
Be aware of increased height when loading and transporting tractors on trailer beds. Many tractors are now equipped with radios and communications systems that have very tall antennas extending from the cab that could make contact with power lines. Avoid raising the arms of planters, cultivators or

truck beds near power lines. Never attempt to raise or move a power line to clear a path.

When performing other farm chores, as in any outdoor work, take care not to raise equipment such as ladders, poles or rods into power lines. Remember, non-metallic materials such as lumber, tree limbs, tires, ropes and hay may conduct electricity. Do not try to clear storm-damage debris and limbs near fallen lines.

Operators of farm machinery or vehicles should also know what to do if the vehicle comes in contact with a power line. It is always better to stay in the cab and call for help.

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Warn others who may be nearby to stay away and wait until Cooperative personnel arrive to make sure the line is safely de-energized and isolated.

If the power line is energized and you step outside, your body becomes the path to the ground and electrocution may occur. Even if a line has landed on the ground, there is still potential for the area to be energized. Stay in the vehicle unless there is fire or imminent risk of fire. In that case, the proper action

is to jump – not step – with both feet hitting the ground at the same time. Do not allow any part of your body to touch the equipment and the ground at the same time. Hop or shuffle to safety, keeping both feet together as you leave the area.

Once you get away from the equipment, never attempt to get back on or even touch the equipment. Many electrocutions occur when the operator dismounts and, realizing nothing has happened,

tries to get back on the equipment.

Farmers may want to consider moving or burying power lines around buildings or busy pathways where many farm activities take place. If planning a new out building or farm structure, contact the Cooperative for information on safe clearances from overhead power lines.

For more electrical safety information, visit www.siec.coop and www.SafeElectricity.org, or call SIEC at 800-762-1400.

10 family outdoor fun tips

Play it safe this spring with this electrical safety information.

Outdoor family fun really takes off in the spring. But before you get out the kites and start those outdoor games, Safe Electricity and Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative recommend you review these safety rules:

- Never climb trees near power lines. Even if the power lines aren't touching the tree, they could touch when more weight is added to the branch.
- Fly kites and model airplanes in large open areas like a park or a field, safely away from trees and overhead power lines. Never fly a kite on a cloudy day when a thunderstorm may be brewing.
- If a kite gets stuck in a tree that's near power lines, don't climb up to get it. Electricity can travel down kite strings or wires and electrocute you. Contact your electric utility for assistance.
- Never climb a utility pole or tower. The electricity carried through this equipment is extremely high voltage and could kill you.
- Don't play on or around pad-mounted electrical equipment (those large green boxes sometimes located in yards).
- Never go into an electric substation for any reason. Electric



substations contain high-voltage equipment, which can kill you. Never rescue a pet or retrieve a ball or toy that goes inside. Call your electric utility instead. **James Forrest Jones**

- Be sure all pools and outdoor play areas are away from power lines and call JULIE before any digging begins.
- Install and use GFCI outlets outside. Use portable GFCIs if outlets don't have them. Keep appliances 10 feet from pools, ponds and wet surfaces.
- Don't leave electrical appliances outside. They could become wet and cause an electrical shock

when unplugged later. If the weather looks threatening, pack up and go inside.

- Spring showers bring more than just puddles to splash in. They can bring flooded areas that are never safe to play or wade in, and may be in contact with energized equipment or fallen power lines.

Visit www.SafeElectricity.org for more information on electrical safety, and on-line games and activities that teach kids to safely use and play around electricity. Also, don't forget to visit www.siec.coop for additional electrical safety information.

Co-op receives safety awards at state conference

Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative employees recently received two safety honors during the Safety/Supervisory Technical Conference held in Springfield. The awards were given to cooperatives with outstanding “no lost time” and “illness/injury” safety records for 2010. The conference is sponsored annually by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC). The theme of the conference was “Don’t Pass on Safety — Make it Your Goal.” Attendees learned seven principles to help their organizations work toward a common vision for world-class safety performance. They also heard about the dangers of distracted driving and how new technology and social media can help them do their jobs more efficiently. **Carol Lang**



Shown with AIEC Manager of Lineworker and Apprentice Development Roger Larkin, right, is Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative Director of Operations and Maintenance Larry Lingle.



Several SIEC employees and board directors were recently recognized for their years of service. Pictured from left are Journeyman Lineman Robert Nelson, Union County Board Director Scott Ury, Utility Serviceman Stanley Treat, Massac County Board Director Larry Douglas, Meter Tester Lineman Steve Hoffman, Office Services Representative Lisa Mead, Pulaski County Board Director Dale Taake, Member Service Representative Pamela Bierstedt, Director of Engineering Mike Logeman, Utility Serviceman Larry Joe Keller and Forestry Journeyman Brian Dirden.

Is Your Air Conditioner Properly Sized?

Is your room air conditioner the right size? Many people buy an air conditioner that is too large, thinking it will provide better cooling. However, an oversized air conditioner is actually less effective – and wastes energy at the same time. Air conditioners remove both heat and humidity from the air. If the unit is too large, it will cool the room quickly, but only remove some of the humidity. This leaves the room with a damp, clammy feeling. A properly sized unit will remove humidity effectively as it cools.

Did you know??

Heating and cooling costs the average homeowner about \$1,000 a year – nearly half the home's total energy bill. If your central air conditioning unit is more than 12 years old, replacing it with an ENERGY STAR qualified model could cut your cooling costs by 30 percent.

Learn more about Energy Star qualified air conditioners and much more by visiting www.energystar.gov.

Dennis R. Clark

Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative

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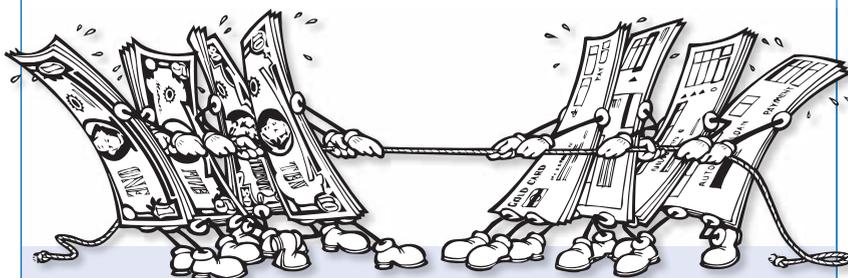
Manager Larry Lovell * Editor Jerri Schaefer

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

Do you need help paying your utility bills?

LIHEAP (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program)

Shawnee Development Council wants to help you with your utility bills. Have you been helped before and think you are not eligible now? Please try again. There is money that may be available to you. According to Shawnee Development Council's LIHEAP Program Manager Quintilla Batiste, "Our main purpose is for everyone eligible for this program to be served. The money is there and that's what it's for." If you think you may qualify and you are in need, please give Shawnee Development Council, Inc. a call at one of its county outreach offices listed below:



Alexander 734-0535
 Johnson 658-6131

Massac 524-2941
 Pope 683-2107

Pulaski 745-6388
 Union 833-7431

Our office will be closed April 22
 in observance of Good Friday

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.

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