

JAMULP

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Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

2012 electric rate increase and bill changes

As previously announced at the 2011 Annual Meeting of Members, Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative (SIEC) will implement an electric rate increase in 2012. General Manager/Executive Vice President Larry Lovell estimated a 9 to 13 percent increase at the meeting. After weeks of study and budgeting, your Board of Directors and management plan to implement an average increase of 9.22 percent, which will go into effect for your February usage. Members will see this increase on bills due in MARCH. This is the first rate increase for SIEC since 2009.

If you weren't at SIEC's annual meeting, you may be wondering "Why is this rate increase necessary?" The bottom line is that three significant factors, among others, affect your rates: increased infrastructure maintenance costs, low growth in kilowatt-hour (kWh) sales and increased wholesale power costs from Southern Illinois Power Cooperative (SIPC).

SIEC Costs: 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 the Cooperative maintain its infrastructure.

Low Growth: SIEC has had little growth for several years. The

Cooperative serves the lower five counties in the state. According to recent census data, the counties we serve had an average 5.84 percent *decrease* in population.

SIPC Wholesale Power Costs:

Due to growing global demand for energy, dwindling base load generation, resistance to new coal generation, inadequate high-voltage transmission lines and increased regulation, electricity costs nationwide are increasing. These increases affect wholesale power costs and SIPC must pass these additional costs to SIEC, which are estimated to increase by 21 percent in 2012. Historically, for every dollar you pay SIEC, approximately 60 percent of that goes to SIPC to cover the cost of generating the power that we can distribute to you.

In addition to the rate increase, you will notice two other changes on your 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.

SIEC is committed 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 budget actions.

We are a not-for-profit cooperative, and we are accountable to you. If you have any questions, please call us at 1-800-762-1400.

Know what to do in vehicle accidents involving power lines

Stay inside until help arrives

Instincts tell us to flee danger. Unfortunately, in vehicle accidents that bring down power lines, these natural inclinations can lead to tragic results.

If your vehicle hits a power pole, or otherwise brings a power line down, Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative (SIEC) and Safe Electricity urge you to stay inside the vehicle until help arrives.

Getting out of the vehicle, with few exceptions, is the wrong thing to do until the line has been de-energized.

You are almost always better off to stay in the vehicle, especially if the line is in contact with the vehicle. If the power line is still energized and you step outside, your body becomes the path for electricity and electrocution is the tragic result.

It is best to wait until utility line crews arrive to make sure power to the line is cut off. The only exception would be if fire or other danger, like the smell of gasoline, is present. In that case, the proper action is to jump – not step – with both

feet hitting the ground at the same time. Jump clear, without touching the vehicle and ground at the same time. Shuffle or hop to safety keeping both feet together as you leave the area. Like the ripples in a pond or lake, the voltage diminishes the farther out it is from the source. Stepping from one voltage level to another allows the body to become a path for that electricity.

Even if a power line has landed on the ground, there is still the potential for the area near your vehicle to be energized. Stay inside the vehicle unless there is fire or imminent risk of fire.

The same rules apply to situations involving large farm and construction equipment that may come in contact with overhead lines. Those working with large equipment should stay inside the cab or remain on the vehicle if equipment extensions come in contact with power lines. Warn others who may be nearby to stay away and wait until utility line crews arrive to make sure

power to the line is cut off.

While driving, if you encounter a downed wire on the road, always assume it is an electrical wire and energized, and stay in your vehicle. If you come upon, or witness an accident involving toppled power poles and lines, don't leave your vehicle to approach the accident scene. **Douglas A. Cerny**

Often our inclination is to step in and help those in danger and offer assistance to the injured. But in accidents involving power lines, call for help. Wait for trained assistance to arrive, or you could become an additional victim in need of rescue.

Accidents and fires involving electricity cause more than a thousand deaths and tens of thousands of injuries each year. The vast majority are preventable if people understand the dangers and steps they can take to be safe around electricity.

For more electrical safety information, visit www.SafeElectricity.org and www.siec.coop.



Louise Zolper
Thank you members, board of directors and employees for contributing to our Lite 4 Bite program. Area food pantries desperately need our help. Since we ran our announcement in the October issue of JAMUP, we found three more local food pantries in this area:

First Baptist Church (open 1st & 4th Wed of month 2 – 4 p.m.) Address: 309 Main Street, Karnak Contact: Donna Lippert 618-645-0140 Serves: Averages 125 people/month	Shawnee Development Food Pantry (open Wed 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.) Address: 124 North Oak, Mounds Contact: Mary Caison 618-745-6388 Serves: Averages 300 people/month	Shawnee Development Food Pantry (open Wed/Thurs 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.) Address: 1000 N. Main, Anna Contact: Paula Stairs 618-833-7431 Serves: Averages 785 people/month
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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

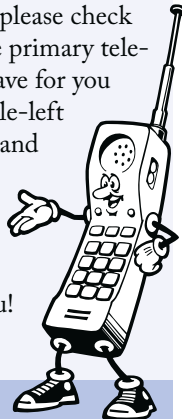
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We need your correct, primary telephone number!

When reporting an outage through our automated outage reporting system, it is very important we have your correct, primary telephone number. Our outage reporting system utilizes your primary telephone number through Caller I.D. This allows our dispatchers and crews to provide you with better service. If you have recently reported an outage and our system did not recognize your number, please contact the

Cooperative to update your records.

If you are unsure if we have your correct information, please check your electric bill. The primary telephone number we have for you is listed on the middle-left side of page. Call us and let us know if this is not your correct, primary telephone number at 1-800-762-1400. Thank you!



Winery Update



In the October issue of the Illinois Country Living magazine, the feature story was *Winning Winery Ways* and the article referred members to a website which featured wineries on cooperative lines throughout the state. Two of SIEC wineries were mistakenly left off of this list. Our apologies to Rustle Hill Winery www.rustlehillwinery.com and StarView Vineyards www.starviewvineyards.com. To see the entire list, go to www.icl.coop. Please support your cooperative served wineries in southern Illinois!

Keep everyone safe

Do NOT install equipment on Cooperative poles

Due to safety concerns for our linemen and property owners, the Cooperative does not allow satellite dishes to be attached to Cooperative poles. If you are considering the installation of a satellite dish, make sure the installer knows not to mount it on a Cooperative pole. The electric lines attached to the pole cause a hazard to the installer, and the dish causes a hazard to linemen who may need to climb the pole. Cooperative linemen also do not want to damage your equipment if they need to climb the pole. Other items such as signs, antennas, birdhouses and owner-furnished security lights are also not allowed on Cooperative poles. If you have an existing installation that needs to be removed, please contact us so that Cooperative personnel can safely remove the item. Remember to educate family members, children and everyone else on the dangers of overhead power lines.



SIEC Shocks the Socks off Breast Cancer!



On a cold and early October morning, over 50 SIEC employees, friends and families showed up on the Jonesboro Square to show their support for the fight against breast cancer. The Susan G. Komen Soul to

Sole Run/Walk was held on Oct. 1. More than 175 people participated in the "Think Pink" themed event. SIEC's team displayed a powerful presence by wearing its personally designed "SIEC Shocks the Socks off Breast Cancer" T-shirts.

SIEC Accountant Stephanie Theis designed the shirts.

Lorrinda Guetersloh, wife of Journeyman Lineman Dale Guetersloh, won a first place medal in the 5k run.

Harold J. Altenberger



The office of Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative will be closed on Dec. 26 in observance of Christmas.

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



Like us on Facebook and visit www.siec.coop for more information about rates, electric safety, upcoming events, etc.

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.

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