

Leave the pole alone

Placing a sign on a utility pole could endanger a life

President's Report



William R. Dodds
President/CEO

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What do yard sale signs, basketball hoops, deer stands, satellite dishes, and birdhouses have in common? They're often found illegally attached to utility poles. But this isn't only a crime of inconvenience. Safety issues caused by unapproved pole attachments place the lives of lineworkers and the public in peril.

It may seem innocent, but a small nail partially driven into a pole can have deadly results around high-voltage electricity.

Your electric co-op line crews climb utility poles at all hours of the day and night, in the worst of conditions. Anything attached to utility poles can create serious hazards for our line personnel. Sharp objects like nails, tacks, staples, or barbed wire can puncture rubber gloves and other safety equipment, making linemen vulnerable to electrocution.

Lineworkers with electric co-ops have reported poles used as community bulletin boards, satellite mounts, and even support legs for deer stands, lights, and carports. Not only do these attachments put line crews at risk, anyone illegally placing these items on poles comes dangerously close to energized power lines with thousands of volts of energy pulsing overhead. It's always wise to keep any structure at least 10 feet away



from utility poles.

Unauthorized pole attachments violate the National Electrical Safety Code, the accepted manual containing guidelines for safe electrical engineering standards. Utilities strictly follow this code that includes a section that reads, "Signs, posters, notices, and other attachments shall not be placed on supporting structures without concurrence of the owner (the utility is the owner of the pole). Supporting structures

should be kept free from other climbing hazards such as tacks, nails, vines, and through bolts not properly trimmed."

Please help us keep our linemen—and our community—safe. Don't attach any of these unauthorized and dangerous items to utility poles. Fixtures not belonging to the cooperative or another utility will be removed by co-op line personnel; the co-op is not responsible for any losses if an item is damaged or destroyed during removal.



Spoon River Electric Cooperative President/CEO Bill Dodds and the "Helping Hands" took part in the Canton Friendship Festival parade Sept. 17 in Canton. The festival's theme was "Helping Hands". Spoon River Electric Cooperative and Spoon River Mechanical Services employees and their children dressed in costumes for the parade.

Spoon River Electric Cooperative

930 South Fifth Ave, PO Box 340, Canton, IL 61520

8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

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Spoon River Electric Cooperative – By the Numbers

Miles of line energized: 1,249 • Number of members served: 4,944

Number of power poles in territory: 29,255

Getting to know us: Kevin Bloyd

Spoon River Electric Cooperative's Kevin Bloyd started work as a forestryman about 14 years ago, after working as a coal miner. Today he works to clean up around power lines and to keep the power on.

Though he has a lot of memorable moments from his time working here, one that sticks out as a "happy moment" was the retirement and going away party for John Franciskovich. "He was a good guy," he said, "Quite the character- in a good way."

Now Bloyd's own retirement is approaching, sometime in the next two years. "It's something to look forward to," he said.



Eight 2012 IEC Memorial Scholarships Available

Spoon River Electric Cooperative President/CEO Bill Dodds has announced that the Illinois electric cooperatives will again in 2012 award seven academic scholarships to high school seniors through a memorial scholarship fund designed to financially assist deserving students in the "electric cooperative family." In addition, an eighth scholarship – to assist with costs in attending an electric lineworker school – will also be offered.

The eight scholarships of \$1,250 each will be awarded in 2012 through the Thomas H. Moore Illinois Electric Cooperatives (IEC) Memorial Scholarship Program.

Four scholarships will be awarded to high school seniors who are the sons or daughters of an Illinois electric cooperative member receiving service from the cooperative. A fifth scholarship, the Earl W. Struck

Memorial Scholarship, will be awarded to a student who is the son or daughter of an Illinois electric cooperative employee. The sixth and seventh scholarships are reserved for students enrolling full-time at a two-year Illinois community college who are the sons or daughters of Illinois electric cooperative members, employees or directors.

A new eighth annual scholarship, the "LaVern and Nola McEntire Lineworker's Scholarship," was awarded for the first time in 2011. This \$1,250 scholarship will help pay for costs to attend the lineworker's school conducted by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives in conjunction with Lincoln Land Community College, Springfield, Ill. LaVern McEntire served as a lineman for McDonough Power Electric Cooperative from



1949 until 1991. He and his wife, Nola, endowed the new scholarship to financially assist deserving individuals in becoming trained lineworkers. Sons and daughters of co-op members; relatives of co-op employees or directors; and individuals who have served or are serving in the armed forces or National Guard are all eligible for the lineworker's scholarship.

For more information regarding the scholarships, contact Brenda Rothert at (309) 647-2700.

Getting to know us: Winnie Wilson

Executive Assistant Winnie Wilson has been working for Spoon River Electric Cooperative for four years. She assists the president through monitoring and handling his calls, keeping his calendar and scheduling, as well as taking care of filing and paperwork. She also works with the board by assisting at meetings, scheduling conferences, arranging travel, providing information and assisting in events. She also helps to back up the front office.



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Energy Efficiency
Tip of the Month

Install GFCIs

An easy way to keep your family safe is to install GFCI outlets in bathrooms, kitchens, garages and outdoor spaces to protect against shocks in wet locations. They could save your life!

Source: U.S. Department of Energy