CELEBRATING 75 YEARS SPOON RIVER ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Find us on: facebook

Spoon River News

President's Report

William R. Dodds
President/CEO

HomE version 2.0

As we start a new year, many of us are resolving to make positive changes in our lives. Eating right and exercising more are two of the things a lot of us start out each year striving to do. But I've got an idea that can make a positive change in your life without forcing you to give up chocolate or work up a sweat.

You may remember the HomE program we offered members in 2011. The electric cooperatives of Illinois received $2.5 million from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act program through the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's State Energy Plan to fund it. The money helped many of our members pay for geothermal heating and cooling or weatherization and air sealing of their homes. The program was so successful that all the money was spent on energy efficiency upgrades to homes.

If you didn't get a chance to participate in the first round of HomE rebates, now you have a second chance. The rebates are available until funding runs out, or until June of this year.

HomE Lite Rebate Incentives Include:

- Geothermal system - $1,500
- Air-Source Heat Pump (16 SEER or higher) - $1,000
- Insulation and Weatherization - 50 percent of total project cost, up to $1,000
- Heat Pump Water Heater - $250
- Commercial installations - $500 per ton of capacity, up to a maximum of $10,000 for geothermal and air source heat pumps.
- Energy Audit by BPI certified auditor - $300

As I write this in November, the rules for the program are still being finalized. So if you're interested in HomE Lite, call our office at (309) 647-2700 for complete details. I hope you can take advantage of this program, which can save you money not just in 2013, but for years to come.

Spoon River Electric Cooperative was recently recognized by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives for its commitment to safety. At a certificate presentation from the Rural Electric Safety Accreditation Program are, left to right, Josh Dewees, the Cooperative's Manager of Line Clearance, Steve Davis, the AIEC Manager of Regulatory Compliance, Frank Romane, the Cooperative's Manager of Operations and Duane Noland, President/CEO of the AIEC.

Watch for co-op crews working in your area

Spoon River Electric Cooperative employees and contractors work throughout our service territory, including on the rights-of-way and easements, and across your private property and driveways. Our efforts to ensure reliable power for you and your neighbors mean we must cross your property from time to time.

You may see us:

- Making routine repairs
- Restoring power outages
- Replacing meters
- Maintaining vegetation in rights-of-way
- Locating buried utilities for construction and digging projects
- Working to upgrade poles, wires, transformers and equipment
- Inspecting lines, power poles, transformer boxes and equipment

Field work, except emergency power restoration, is done during normal working hours, 6:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Every effort is made to avoid damage and unnecessary intrusion. There are times we need to access areas that are secured by locked gates. If you need to have a locked gate for security, please call our office so we can make arrangements for access. The need for access is not always planned, as there are times we need to access areas for power restoration or other emergencies.

If you have concerns about our work on your property, contact our office at (309) 647-2700. We appreciate your cooperation.

Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Sleek new flat-panel TVs can consume almost as much electricity as a refrigerator. In general, the bigger the screen, the more power it draws, and HD pulls more, too. Plasma screens use the most energy, while LCD TVs use much less. And remember to change your new TV's default settings to a power saver mode, and turn down the LCD backlight to save energy without sacrificing picture quality.

Source: Cooperative Research Network

Spoon River Electric Cooperative

930 South Fifth Ave, PO Box 340, Canton, IL 61520
8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
309-647-2700 • www.srecoop.org

President/CEO
William R. Dodds
bdodds@srecoop.org

Chairman
Jack Clark, Lewistown

Vice Chairman
Bernard Marvel, Browning

Secretary
Steve Pille, Glasford

Treasurer
Lyle Nelson, Abingdon

Assistant Treasurer
Terry Beam, Cuba

Board of Directors
James Banks, Canton
Robert Lascelles, Ipava
Greg Leigh, Avon
John Spangler, Marietta

Editor of Spoon River News
Brenda Rothert
brothert@srecoop.org

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

TV [Efficiency] Guides

■ High-powered TVs drain energy, so opt for efficient models

By Megan McKoy-Noe

Which appliance uses more energy: a refrigerator or television? Consumers may not realize that some large entertainment TVs — when used an average of five hours per day — can cost more to operate than a new, basic refrigerator.

According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, 44 percent of American homes have three or more television sets, and each new set adds to a home's monthly energy bill.

In the market for a new television? You're not alone — U.S. consumers purchased an estimated 40 million new televisions with an average screen size of 50 inches last year.

To keep your electric bills in check, here are some tips to consider before buying a new television:

Display Tactics

Three parts of a TV impact energy use: display technology, screen size, and resolution. Plasma and liquid-crystal display (LCD) are the two most popular types of display technologies. Plasma screens often are cited as the largest energy user — mainly because their large 42-inch to 65- inch screens typically draw between 240 watts to 400 watts.

LCD TVs don't need much power to operate — 111 watts on average. Most LCD screens range in size from 21 inches to 49 inches. These TVs fall into two categories: those with cold-cathode fluorescent lamps to illuminate the screen; and backlit models employing a light-emitting diode (LED). LED units offer several benefits, notably better picture quality and thinner and lighter screens. They also use slightly less energy, at 101 watts.

Most prospective buyers already have the ideal screen size in mind; remember that the larger the screen, the more energy you'll drain. And although a high-definition TV (HDTV) transforms the latest blockbuster movie into a theater-like living room experience, these sets generally use more power to generate better picture clarity.

ENERGY STAR Boosts Ratings

ENERGY STAR TVs cut an estimated $3.5 billion from consumer electric bills annually. The joint energy efficiency ratings program of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) created the first set of voluntary television efficiency standards in 1998. Today's ENERGY STAR-qualified screens use, on average, 40 percent less energy than standard models, whether you're watching the latest hit show (active mode) or have the screen turned off (standby mode).

Standards are constantly ratcheting up. In 2008, a 50-inch ENERGY STAR-rated television used 318 watts on average. In 2010, those sets had to curb energy use to 153 watts or less, and by 2012 50-inch TVs could not drain more than 108 watts. ENERGY STAR provides an online guide so potential buyers can find qualified televisions ranked by energy use, size, brand, and display type at www.energystar.gov.

ENERGY STAR Partners like TopTen USA also maintain lists of the top energy efficient televisions (and other household appliances) based on size at www.toptenusa.org.

Look for Labels

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has recognized the need for education and easy comparisons for the amount of energy televisions consume. In 2011, a yellow Energy Guide label — a common sight on refrigerators, dishwashers, and other large appliances — became a requirement for TV.

"TVs now vary widely in the amount of energy they use," comments FTC Chairman Jon Leibowitz. "By comparing information on the Energy Guide labels, consumers will be able to make better-informed decisions about which model they choose to buy, based on how much it costs to operate per year."

The label compares the annual operating cost of a specific television to the plug-in cost of similar models. The label must be attached to the front of all televisions; websites selling televisions must also provide an image of the label for prospective buyers.

Tune in to Savings

If you're not in the market for a new TV but want to make sure your model is operating efficiently, these tips may help you save energy:

- Turn off the TV and other connected devices when they're not being used — consider using smart power strips to eliminate continually power draw.
- Reduce TV brightness by turning down the LCD backlight — you'll save energy and still retain good picture quality.
- Turn on the power saver mode, which many new TVs offer
- Control room lighting. While many energy-saving tips reduce brightness of the screen, you can compensate by dimming lights around your TV.

Your television set isn't the only energy-guzzler in your residence. Visit www.TogetherWeSave.com to find more ways to save energy and money at home.

Megan McKoy-Noe, CCC, writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service organization for the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives. Brian Sloboda contributed to this article.

Spoon River Mechanical Services is owned by YOUR electric cooperative.

Service is our top priority. We're your comfort for today and tomorrow.

Let us meet all your heating, cooling, plumbing and electrical needs by calling us at (309) 647-3450.

Spoon River
MECHANICAL
Services, Inc.

(309) 647-3450 • 405 ½ E. Linn St., Canton
24-hour emergency service