

The SOUTHEASTERN Light

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative Eldorado, Illinois

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

President's Comments



Dustin Tripp
President/CEO

The digital age of communication and automation has provided some opportunities for all of us to simplify some of the routine and ordinary tasks that we perform on a monthly basis. One example of this is the various methods that are available for members to pay their monthly electric bill. Your Cooperative offers a variety of options you can select that best suits your preferences, lifestyle and your needs. In this article, I would like to briefly explain the various options that are available for members to pay their bill.

SEIEC offers an automated payment plan that automatically draws the necessary funds from your checking or savings account to pay your monthly electric bill. With this option, you will still receive a statement in the mail that is virtually identical to the invoice you receive now but the funds necessary to pay the total amount due will automatically be withdrawn from your checking or savings account on the due date. Please contact the office if you would like an enrollment form for this option.

SEIEC also offers on-line payments thru SEIEC's website. Residential customers can also select this option and pay their bill on-line using a debit card or credit card. In addition to paying your bill or printing your current invoice, you can also access other account information such as electric consumption history, payment history, prior month's invoices, etc. Please visit our website www.seiec.com to see how you can pay your invoice on-line.

SEIEC also offers a pay by phone option. This option allows you to make your

payment by calling the toll free number (800)-833-2611. Once you have dialed this number, select the pay by phone option to make a payment using your debit card or credit card.

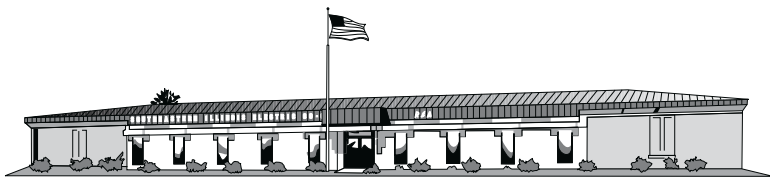
SEIEC also offers reoccurring credit card payments which will automatically charge your credit card to pay your monthly electric bill. With this option, you will still receive a statement in the mail that is virtually identical to the invoice you receive now but the funds will be automatically charged to the credit card on the due date. Please contact the office if you would like to receive an enrollment form for this option.

These automated options were implemented to give members a choice in selecting the most appropriate and convenient way to pay their bill. It is great to see that members are taking advantage of these automated options. In fact, SEIEC currently receives approximately 7,000 payments per month thru these additional options.

Last but certainly not least, your Cooperative still offers the traditional methods of paying invoices including receiving your checks in the mail and at the front counter of the headquarters facility. We certainly understand that these automated options for paying invoices may not be appropriate for everyone but they are available so that members can select the option that best suits their needs.

See you next month and as always, "We'll keep the lights on for you."

READERSHIP PRIZE WINNER:
Sylvan Kauffman, Stonefort, IL



Planting seeds of caution

Tips to stay safe during planting season



The greatest hazard on today's farms is electrocution. Before you head back into the fields this spring, read this information on how to stay safe.

"Make sure everyone knows the location of overhead power lines and to keep farm equipment at least 10 feet away from them," says Molly Hall, Executive Director of Safe Electricity. "The minimum 10 foot distance is a 360-degree rule – below, to the side and above lines."

Simply coming too close to a power line while working is dangerous as electricity can arc or "jump" to conducting material or objects, such as a ladder, pole or truck.

"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," notes Molly Hall. "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 contact is not made with a line."

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," warns Hall.

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 will conduct electricity depending on dampness, dust and dirt contamination. Do not try to clear storm-damage debris and limbs near or touching power lines or near fallen lines.

Overhead electric wires aren't the only electrical contact that can result in a serious incident. Pole guy wires are grounded to the neutral; but, when one of the guy wires is broken, it can cause an electric current disruption. This can make those neutral wires anything but harmless. If you hit a guy wire and break it, call the utility to fix it. Don't do it yourself. When dealing with electrical poles and wires, call the electric utility.

"Operators of farm machinery or moving equipment also should know what to do if the vehicle

comes in contact with a power line," Hall says. "It's almost always best to stay in the cab and call for help. Warn others who may be nearby to stay away and wait until the electric utility arrives to make sure power to the line is cut off."

"If the power line is energized and you step outside, your body becomes the path to the ground and electrocution is the result," Molly Hall says. "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's 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.

For more electrical safety information, visit www.SafeElectricity.org.



Spring cleaning with a payback!

What's on your spring cleaning list? Be sure to include changing out your furnace filter, clearing dust from the dryer vent and hose and refrigerator grill, clearing debris away from the air conditioner or heat pump and making sure your air ducts are clean. It will be the first time spring cleaning has ever paid you back! Find out how simple things you do can add up at www.togetherwesave.com.



TOGETHERWESAVE.COM



Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Keep energy efficiency in mind as the ground thaws and you plan spring landscaping. Properly selected and planted trees, shrubs and bushes can create a windbreak that lowers home heating bills in the winter and insulates your home year-round. Before you start, check on the right plants and techniques for your climate at EnergySavers.gov.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy



POWER OUTAGE

If your power goes off, we offer these suggestions

1. Check the fuses or circuit breakers in your service panels. If you have breakers, make sure they are in the "ON" position.
2. If you have a meter pole, check the main breaker panel just below the meter socket. If the breaker is in the "OFF" position, check all of your wiring from the meter pole to your various buildings. If the wiring appears to be okay, reset the breaker to the "ON" position.
3. If you still do not have power, check with neighbors to see if they have power.
4. To report a power failure or other emergency, please phone 1-877-399-8405. This phone number is monitored around the clock, 365 days per year to accept your outage and emergency calls.
5. Your phone call will be handled by SouthEastern's automated outage reporting system and will be identified automatically through ANI (Automatic Number Identification). An outage record will then be generated for your location. Please note that the phone number from which you place the call will be the number used to generate the record. If the system fails to recognize your phone number, members having touch-tone phones may simply enter their seven-digit phone number (without area code) in order to report the outage. Members not having touch-tone phones will be asked to leave a message. It is important you leave your name, phone number and location of the outage. Retrieving messages and entering them into the system is time consuming; therefore, please leave only a message that will help in restoration of electric service. Do not remain on the line for an operator because a live operator is not there to respond. In order to keep a current listing of all numbers, it is important that you notify the Cooperative of any changes in your telephone number.
6. Handling outage calls electronically allows you to report power failures very quickly. Once your outage has been reported, it will be dispatched to repair personnel who will restore your outage as soon as possible. Calling back repeatedly will not shorten the length of the outage, but may hinder the efforts of other members who are trying to report outages.

OUTAGE CALLS ONLY 1-877-399-8405

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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618-273-2611 or 800-833-2611 • Office hours: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. M-F