

The SOUTHEASTERN Light

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative Eldorado, Illinois

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

President's Comments



Dustin Tripp
President/CEO

78th Annual Meeting of Members report

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative held its 78th Annual Meeting on Tuesday, August 2, with approximately 1,036 members registered and approximately 1,400 in total attendance. For those of you who were unable to attend your Cooperative's annual meeting, this article will summarize the report members received at the annual meeting.

During the year 2015, your Cooperative constructed 252 new services to homes, farms and businesses and changed out 465 poles. For the second year, your Cooperative achieved the milestone of delivering over 1 billion kilowatt-hours to Cooperative members.

Your Cooperative ended the year 2015 in sound financial condition. As a not-for-profit organization, your Cooperative does not strive to produce profits for shareholders and investors but must maintain a sound financial position for the membership. In 2015, your Cooperative's Board of Trustees approved the retirement and return of \$1.4 million of Capital Credits and the capital credit checks were mailed to members in December of 2015. This means that over the past six years, your Cooperative has retired and returned almost \$11.5 million of Capital Credits to the members.

Cooperative members were informed that an American Customer Satisfaction Survey was conducted in 2015, and your Cooperative received the highest score it has ever received. It is well above the national

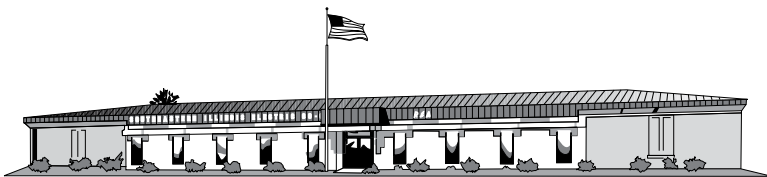
average for electric cooperatives, well above the investor owned utility average, and well above the municipal utility average. The key drivers to member satisfaction included reliable service, knowledgeable employees, prompt outage response, employee performance and excellent customer service.

On July 18, your Cooperative moved into the new headquarters facility located six miles west of Harrisburg along the south side of Illinois Highway 13 and has closed the Eldorado and Marion facilities. This new facility fulfilled the numerous needs that the cooperative had been experiencing for years and provided the much needed space and functionality for the future. This new facility has improved member access by being more centrally located to our service territory, has more convenient member parking and entrance capabilities, more member conveniences including drive thru facilities and better member privacy. This new facility provides a new level of security for employees, members and cooperative equipment.

Cooperative members were informed regarding the most recent environmental regulation published by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). On August 3, 2015, the EPA released the

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READERSHIP PRIZE WINNER:
Donald Vancil, Mulkytown, IL



Paying the price of power theft

It's often an "invisible" crime. Someone illegally hooks into a power supply, hooks up a line that has been disconnected, or tampers with a meter to avoid recording electricity usage. Legitimate electricity consumers do not engage in these behaviors, so the impact of electricity theft – including the danger – is often unrecognized.

Power theft carries deadly risks. Many thieves have paid for the power they are stealing with their lives. But the danger does not end with those who are engaging in illegal activity. Tampering with electrical equipment or attempting to steal electric power carries the potential to harm many people," says Molly Hall, executive director of Safe Electricity. "The innocent consumers on the same line, and utility personnel that work on those lines, are all at risk when someone tampers with electricity or electrical equipment." An overload of electricity could result in extremely high voltages that may damage appliances of paying customers.

Excessive current that is not safeguarded by a fuse is especially dangerous. In emergency situations such as fires, power has to be shut off to help firefighters and ambulance crews safely enter a building. If lines have been interfered with illegally, the lines could remain energized, endangering the lives of the emergency personnel.

From a reliability standpoint, illegal connections to power sources and attempts to divert metering devices can overload the system, cause interruptions and compromise power quality.

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative reminds everyone that they can help prevent and reduce power theft:

- Notify your electric utility immediately if you know of an illegally connected consumer.
- Do not cut the seal on your meter base or tamper with your own meter for any reason.
- Apply for a legal connection if you do not have one.
- Remain aware of your

surroundings and report any suspicious activities to your electric utility.

Most electrical theft crimes occur through meter tampering, bypassing meters and tapping power lines. Other less frequent crimes include tapping into neighboring premises, using illegal lines after being disconnected, self-reconnection without consent, and electrifying fences. Possessing fraudulent electricity bills is also a federal crime and is punishable by law.

The theft of electricity is a challenge the electricity distribution industry faces to remain sustainable, viable and safe. If illegal connections were curbed, more power would be available to customers who obey the law, power quality and safety would increase, and people would experience fewer service interruptions.

Everyone is affected by power theft, and detecting and reporting illegal activity will help reduce the price paid.

Attention local teachers!

Apply for your 2016/2017 Touchstone Energy Classroom Empowerment Grants

Does your school or classroom need new materials? Can your students benefit from new programs and educational resources? We thought so.

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative is once again coordinating this grant program with Touchstone Energy for our local teachers and administrators. The grants will be provided for innovative, unfunded projects or materials. Qualifying projects are those that improve the learning environment or increase educational resources for the school.

A panel of judges will determine which projects will be awarded the grants. Grant applications are due by November 10. Grant awards will be announced on January 6. For a grant application and guidelines, please visit our website at www.seiec.com or contact Stefanie Tripp at 1-618-273-3806. It only takes a few minutes to apply.



Since 2006, SEIEC has distributed a total of \$41,800 Touchstone Energy Classroom Empowerment Grants throughout the Cooperative's service area.

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final rule to reduce carbon emissions from existing power generation facilities as part of the President's Climate Action Plan. The proposed rule calls for reductions to begin in 2022 and to achieve a national average reduction of 32 percent below 2005 levels by the year 2030. The proposed rule has a specific reduction target for each state and, for Illinois, the rule calls for a 44 percent reduction by the year 2030. The new regulation may ultimately be decided by the United States Supreme Court, which currently appears to be split with four Supreme Court Justices that appear to oppose the plan while four Supreme Court Justices appear to support the plan. Many believe the ultimate fate of the Clean Power Plan will be determined by the election in November for President of the United States. The next President of the United States will nominate the Supreme Court Justice that may swing the balance in the Supreme Court.

The threat of this new regulation, along with other industry changes, is having a significant impact on power supply across

the Midwest. Southern Illinois could face a significant shortfall of electricity capacity in the next two years. If plant shutdowns come to fruition, Illinois will be faced with increasing energy capacity prices and be forced to import electricity from surrounding states instead of generating right here in Illinois. This means Illinois would lose numerous power plant jobs, support industry jobs and a tremendous tax base.

Your Cooperative is one of seven co-op owners of Southern Illinois Power Cooperative (SIPC) and its Lake of Egypt coal-fired plant. The generation and transmission cooperative also owns a diversified portfolio of electricity generation including coal, natural gas, hydro and wind power. SIPC is also one of the owners of the Prairie State Generating Campus, which also uses Illinois coal. The ownership of generating assets will help insulate the cooperative from an increase in market prices of energy capacity if power supply continues to decline as power plants are shut down across the Midwest. SIPC plans to continue operations right here in southern Illinois, consuming

southern Illinois coal in an environmentally-responsible way, providing numerous direct and indirect jobs, and helping to support our local economy while providing you, as our member owners, with electricity for many years into the future.

Lastly, the members were informed that your Cooperative did receive a slight increase in the cost of wholesale power that is purchased from Southern Illinois Power Cooperative, to cover their cost of operations, and this has been reflected in the wholesale power cost adjustment charge. Aside from this, your Cooperative has no plans to increase the retail rates at this time. The Cooperative is in the process of completing a cost of service study and will also be reviewing the wholesale power cost from Southern Illinois Power Cooperative to determine if any rate adjustments are needed in 2017 and 2018.

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



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Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/SouthEasternIllinoisElectric/>



LABOR DAY
The cooperative Office will be closed
on Monday, September 5, 2016
for Labor Day.

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

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