

The SOUTHEASTERN Light

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative Eldorado, Illinois

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

President's Comments



Dustin Tripp
President/CEO



Since 1964, October has been designated as National Cooperative Month, providing cooperatives with an opportunity to explain the cooperative difference to their members. In this month's article, I would like to explain some of the cooperative differences and how it benefits all of us as cooperative members.

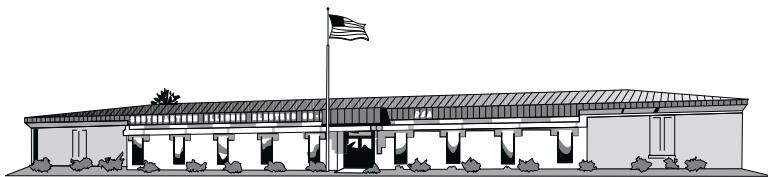
As the electric utility industry continues to evolve and face continual change, we can all be proud that we are part of the electric cooperative program. Electric cooperatives have a very unique business model that provides many benefits for its members and has proven the test of time for over 75 years. Your electric cooperative is a not-for-profit, member-owned business and exists for the sole reason of serving members. Your electric cooperative sets the rates just high enough to cover the cost of doing business unlike investor-owned utilities that strive to maximize profits for investors or shareholders. Any money that is collected by the

cooperative above the cost of operations is allocated back to you as capital credits. This allocation becomes your equity ownership in the cooperative and when the financial condition of the cooperative permits, the capital credits are returned to you in the form of cash. Over the past three years, your cooperative has paid back over \$4.8 million in capital credits as cash to members.

Electric cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by the members who actively participate in electing representatives, setting bylaws and making decisions.

► *Continued on page 16d*

READERSHIP PRIZE WINNER:
Shane Quertermous,
Creal Springs, IL



Take the Chill Out of Winter Bills

By Amber Bentley



Between holiday houseguests and shorter, colder days, electric bills tend to climb in the winter. Read on for ways to save energy when the temperature drops.

Lower your thermostat to 68 degrees (or lower): If you decrease the temperature by just one degree, you can save up to 5 percent on heating costs. Consider a programmable thermostat that you can set to lower the temperature when away from home and increase before you come back.

Adjust blinds and curtains: Keep them open to let in sunlight during the day, and close at night to keep heat inside and protect from drafts.

Reduce hot water temperatures: Heating water accounts for 12 percent of the average home's energy use. Set your water heater's thermostat to 120 degrees or lower—that's usually sufficient for a household's hot-water needs. Also, if you've had your water heater for more than 12 years, you might want to consider

replacing it with a more energy-efficient model.

Seal and insulate: This is the best way to keep heat in and air out. Areas that may need sealing include corners, cracks, door frames, and windows.

Consider replacing old appliances, doors, and windows with ENERGY STAR-rated models: You can save about 15 percent of your normal energy use with these appliances and get better insulation on doors and windows for the price you pay. ENERGY STAR-rated items meet special efficiency standards set by the federal government.

Free your vents: HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) systems will have to work twice as hard if vents are blocked by rugs, furniture, or doors. Keep vents clear for proper air flow.

Keep food cool: Don't make your fridge work too hard. A temperature set between 34 and 37 degrees Fahrenheit is usually sufficient.

A special holiday tip: Use LED lights to decorate. They're up to 75 percent more energy efficient than traditional incandescent lights and last much longer—but check for an ENERGY-STAR rating before you buy. Cheaper LEDs tend not to last as long or be as durable.

Visit TogetherWeSave.com for more ways to save.

Sources:

Five Action Steps to Winter Energy Usage

[*http://energy.gov/energysaver/articles/top-10-tips-save-energy-and-money-winter*](http://energy.gov/energysaver/articles/top-10-tips-save-energy-and-money-winter)

[*http://energy.gov/energysaver/articles/tips-save-energy-during-holidays*](http://energy.gov/energysaver/articles/tips-save-energy-during-holidays)

Amber Bentley writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.



I have
an amazing wife
who's always
by my side
two kids who always
keep me on my toes
a family that gives
me endless strength

an electric cooperative that's always
looking out for my family.

At SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative, we get our strength from a family as well. It's a family of over 730 cooperatives—who all work together. And together, we have strength. We have a greater ability to provide a reliable source of electricity. We also have greater purchasing power, which enables us to keep costs in check. Together, we'll always be looking out for you, your family and your community.



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Continued from page 16a

The members of a cooperative have equal voting rights – one member, one vote. Each customer of the cooperative is a member and owner of the business with an equal say as every other member, unlike investor-owned utilities where the amount of governance is determined by the number of shares held in the company.

Electric cooperatives and their employees support the local community and local economy in various ways. Commitment to community is a founding principle of electric cooperatives and as a local business, your cooperative is staffed by your friends and neighbors that work hard for you. Whether the employees are working thru storms to restore your power, volunteering their time to help install lighting on local ball fields or finding ways to help provide grants for local schools, your cooperative employees are finding ways to make a difference in your community.

At SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative, not only is the delivery of energy provided by your local cooperative, the generation and transmission of your energy is also provided by a local cooperative. Southern

Illinois Power Cooperative (SIPC) located at the Lake of Egypt is a locally owned, locally operated generation and transmission cooperative that has been providing service to you for five decades. SIPC provides a significant boost to our local economy by providing local jobs at the plant and various other associated organizations. SIPC also consumes a local fuel supply that supports our local economy and provides additional jobs right here in Southern Illinois.

In summary, from start to finish your electric energy is generated, transmitted and delivered to you by local cooperatives with a very unique business model that benefits all of us as cooperative members. As the utility industry continues to evolve and explore different ways to serve its customers, all of us can be very proud to be member-owners of our electric cooperatives, what we stand for, how we operate and how we truly make a difference in our very own communities.

See you next month and as always, “We’ll keep the lights on for you.”

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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