


# The SOUTHEASTERN Light

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative Eldorado, Illinois

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

## President's Comments



**Dustin Tripp**  
President/CEO

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. 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.

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 two years, your cooperative has paid back over \$3.4 million in capital credits as cash to members.

Electric cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by the members

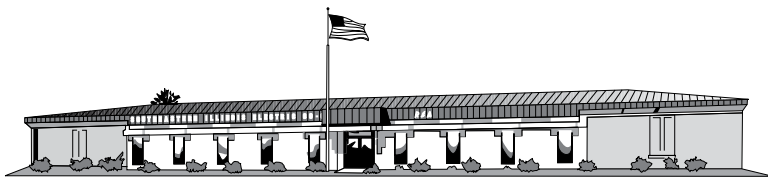


who actively participate in electing representatives, setting bylaws and making decisions. The members of a cooperative have equal voting rights – one member, one vote. Each customer of the cooperative is a member and owner of the business with an equal say as every other member, unlike investor-owned 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

► *Continued on page 16d*

READERSHIP PRIZE WINNER:  
Dorothy Craine, Benton, IL



# Keep cool during sultry days while spending less on energy

**S**weltering hot days make it harder to keep your home cool, straining air conditioning systems and energy budgets. The Energy Education Council (EEC) offers some simple tips to boost comfort and save on electric bills during the sultriest of days:

- Make sure your air conditioner filter is clean. Change or clean it monthly during the cooling season.
- Ensure air can move freely around the air conditioner unit coils. Remove leaves and plant overgrowth that could keep it from operating efficiently.
- Use ceiling and oscillating fans to create a «wind chill» effect. The moving air makes the temperature feel cooler and allows a higher air conditioner thermostat setting while maintaining cooling comfort. For each 1-degree increase in the thermostat setting, cooling costs can be lowered by about 3 percent.
- Avoid unnecessary trips in and out of the house, which let in hot, humid air.
- Turn off lights, televisions, and computers when not in use.
- Close drapes and shades on sunny days.
- Plan to do hot work, washing and drying clothes, cooking, and baking, during cooler morning and evening hours.
- Keep your kitchen cooler by cooking in a microwave oven or grilling outdoors.
- Make sure heat-producing appliances like televisions and lamps are away from the thermostat. They will increase the temperature near the thermostat and cause the



air conditioner to run when it is not needed.

There are several low-cost measures that can yield big energy savings, says EEC Executive Director Molly Hall. Replace traditional light bulbs with lower wattage compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs). Incandescent bulbs waste 95 percent of their energy in heat; CFLs burn cooler, use only a fourth of the energy, and come in many styles and color temperatures.

#### **Other low-cost suggestions include:**

- Install a timer or a programmable thermostat to increase and decrease the temperature automatically. Leave it on a higher temperature while you are away, and set it to cool the house half an hour before you return home.
- Seal air leaks and cracks. Weather stripping and caulking are inexpensive ways to improve efficiency and cut energy costs year round.

- Ventilate the attic, and check insulation. Adequately sized vents and/or an attic fan can help keep hot air from building up. If you can see the ceiling joists in your attic, consider adding insulation. Proper attic insulation can save up to 30 percent of your cooling bill. Be sure the insulation does not block vents or cover exhaust fans.

Increased summer electric demands do not only place a strain on budgets, they also can place a severe strain on your home's electrical system, which poses a dangerous shock and fire hazard. Frequent circuit breaker trips or flickering or dimming lights, TV screens, or computer monitors are signs of an overloaded electrical system or faulty wiring that should be checked immediately by a professional.

For more information and tips to help cut costs and improve home safety, visit [EnergyEdCouncil.org](http://EnergyEdCouncil.org) and [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org)

# John

always knows what  
the owners of his  
Touchstone Energy®  
co-op are thinking  
because he's  
one of them.


**Only your local electric co-op**

**makes every customer an owner of the business.**

Unlike other electric utilities, your co-op exists to make sure your needs are always met, not to make a profit. And since every electric co-op is locally owned and operated, your co-op is always there with you, reinvesting in your community. That's why in an electric co-op, the people have the power.



SouthEastern Illinois  
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► *Continued from page 16a*

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

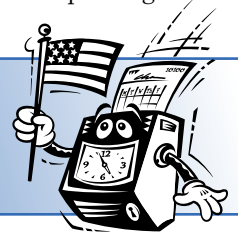
is a locally owned, locally operated generation and transmission cooperative that has been providing service to you for almost five decades. SIPC provides a significant boost to our local economy by providing local jobs at the plant and various other associated organizations. SIPC also consumes a local 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."

**SEIEC's office will be closed Monday, September 3 for the Labor Day Holiday**



# 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