

Spoon River News

President's Report



William R. Dodds
President/CEO

It's time to clean and check your furnace

We're heading into the coldest time of year, and it's a good time to make sure your furnace is ready.

A Clean and Check of your furnace will help make sure it's running well before the bitter cold hits. A technician will change your furnace's filter, check all the furnace parts to make sure they are running properly and test the unit out.

Our Cooperative owns Spoon River Mechanical Services, with a staff of more than a dozen experienced plumbers, electricians and heating and cooling technicians. Spoon River Mechanical offers free estimates and 24-hour emergency service, and they want to build a long-term relationship with you as a customer.

This is also a good time to consider the efficiency of your furnace. Today's furnaces are manufactured to operate much more efficiently than older units, which saves you money on

your electric bill every month. There are furnaces on the market today that are 97 percent efficient, meaning that 97 percent of the energy the furnace uses becomes heat in your home. Older units can have efficiency ratings lower than 60 percent.

If you have an older furnace, the best way to improve efficiency is to replace it. But if that is not affordable for you, there are other things that can help. A programmable thermostat can save money by lowering temperatures automatically at the times you are not home. Sometimes revisions to your existing ductwork can help improve efficiency. And air sealing is always a good way to help lower electric bills.

More information about the savings you can achieve with a new furnace is available at www.energy.gov, or by calling Spoon River Mechanical at (309) 647-3450.



The Spoon River Electric Cooperative Board of Directors congratulates State Rep. Mike Unes (R-East Peoria), who was awarded the Illinois Electric Cooperatives' Public Service Award. Pictured in the front row (left to right) are Director John Spangler, Director Greg Leigh, Rep. Mike Unes, President/CEO Bill Dodds, Board Chairman Jack Clark and Director Lyle Nelson. In the back row (left to right) are Directors Bob Lascelles, Terry Beam, Steve Pille, Jim Banks and Bernard Marvel.

(More on page 16b)

Unes receives award at Spoon River EC

At Spoon River Electric Cooperative's September board meeting, State Representative Mike Unes (R-East Peoria) received the Illinois Electric Cooperatives' Public Service Award. The award was made in recognition of Rep. Unes' dedicated public service and for outstanding contributions to the rural electrification program.

"It has been an honor to work with Spoon River Electric Cooperative, and I'm very humbled to receive this state-wide recognition," Unes said. "Building relationships and working with the Electric Cooperatives, especially Spoon River Electric locally, has not only been enjoyable but also very rewarding as we continue to work together and find solutions to keep costs down for the end user. An example of this is the great working relationship developed as I sponsored and passed House Bill 3825, the copper theft bill."

That legislation, which takes effect on Jan. 1, 2013, will assist the electric co-ops' efforts to stop a growing problem of copper theft that endangers the public, line workers and the thieves who steal copper from electric utility substations and power lines.

"Almost all of the Illinois electric cooperatives have been impacted by this epidemic of copper theft," said Duane Noland, president/CEO of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives. "This legislation makes it tougher for thieves to sell copper wire to scrap dealers, and our electric co-ops sincerely appreciate Rep. Unes' leadership in sponsoring this bill."

"Mike Unes has been great to work with," said Spoon River Electric Cooperative President and CEO Bill Dodds. "He is always responsive and accessible. This legislation shows that he not only listens to our concerns, he does something about it."

The new law requires scrap dealers to record all transactions, eliminating the state's existing \$100 threshold. Cash payments will be eliminated, with sellers being paid by check three business days after a transaction. And anyone with a felony drug conviction will be banned from selling metal for 10 years. Spoon River Electric Cooperative is a member of Touchstone Energy™ — an alliance of more than 700

local, consumer-owned electric utilities around the country. Spoon River Electric is committed to providing superior service based on four core principles: integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community. The co-op serves nearly 5,000 meters over 1,259 miles of line in parts of Fulton, Knox, McDonough, Peoria and Schuyler counties. For more information visit www.srecoop.org.



Energy Efficiency *Tip of the Month*

Consider using solar lights for outdoor lighting. Solar cells convert sunlight into electricity that can be stored in a battery and tapped at night to make light. Check manufacturers' instructions to make sure your solar lights are situated to receive sufficient sunlight to recharge each day.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

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

Are All Fires the Same?

By Kelly Trapnell

Where there's smoke, there's fire. And while all blazes may look the same, fires should not be treated equally.

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, more than 26,000 electrical home fires result in property damage, injuries, and even death every year. Remember this acronym F.I.R.E. for electrical safety:

Find the source before it starts

Old or faulty wiring often emerges as the main culprit in causing electrical fires. In electrical fires, heat from wiring or an overloaded system can provide the strike that leads to a fire. But there are often signs before a fire even starts.

Investigate the signs

If you notice flickering lights, recurring trips in a circuit breaker, or a tell-tale sizzling sound around wiring and hot light switches, call a qualified electrician. These may indicate an imminent fire hazard.

Remedy the problem

If you have any signs of a pending fire or have worries about old wiring, contact a professional electrician. Other precautions include:

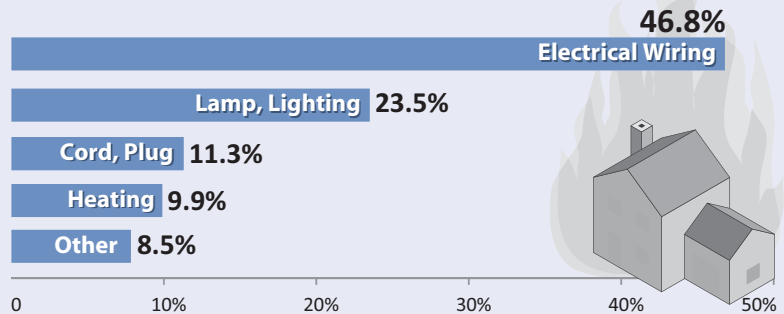
- Use correct wattage bulbs to prevent overheating fixtures.
- Avoid using damaged cords or running cords under rugs.
- Do not overload outlets or extension cords.
- Do not use appliances in wet areas.
- Routinely check appliances for signs of wear and tear or overheating.

Exit the Building and Learn to Extinguish Properly

If you are faced with an electrical fire, call 911 immediately and have everyone exit the building. If you feel you must face a small fire, know the proper way to approach it.

Electrical Fire Culprits

About 26,000 household electrical fires occur in the U.S. every year. Following are the top five pieces of equipment that ignite residential electrical fires.



Source: U.S. Fire Administration National Fire Incident Reporting System; Residential Building Electrical Fires Volume 8, Issue 2; 2010 USFA Fire Estimate Summary

- Never use water on an electrical fire. Water conducts electricity, so it will not smother the fire and may lead to electrocution.
 - If the circuit breaker does not trip in the area on fire, shut off the main breaker to the house if possible. Be sure to approach the breaker only if the fire is not nearby and if your hands are dry.
 - Never use a Class A extinguisher on an electrical fire. Use a Class C or a multi-purpose ABC model. If there is no extinguisher available or the class of extinguisher is not known, baking soda may help smother the flames.
 - Again, if the fire is not quickly extinguished, exit the building.
- Even though the source and treatment of fires may differ, they produce the same results. You are no match for the force of a house fire—learn F.I.R.E. and protect yourself.

Sources: U.S. Fire Administration, Electrical Safety Foundation International, National Fire Incident Reporting System

Kelly Trapnell writes on safety and energy efficiency issues 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.



Attention 2012-2013 Seniors!

About the IEC Memorial Scholarship Fund

High school students who are seniors during the 2012-2013 school year and meet the requirements are eligible to apply for one of seven annual scholarships, each worth \$1500. Fill out the form at the bottom of the page and send to the cooperative before December 31, 2012, to participate. Please see the official rules and descriptions of scholarships listed.

Four scholarships will be awarded to students who are the sons or daughters of an electric cooperative member who resides in Illinois and is receiving service from the cooperative at the time the scholarship application is submitted.

A fifth scholarship – the Earl W. Struck Memorial Scholarship – will be awarded to a student who is the son or daughter of an electric cooperative employee or director who resides in Illinois.

A scholarship applicant is eligible for consideration in only one of the above two categories, and is

eligible to apply through only one electric cooperative.

The applicant must be a high school senior who is planning to enroll in a full-time (at least 12 hours) undergraduate course of study at an accredited two-year or four-year college, university, or vocational/technical school in the United States.

The sixth and seventh scholarships will be awarded to a high school senior who will be enrolling full-time at a two-year Illinois community college. Sons and daughters of electric cooperative members, employees and directors who reside in Illinois are eligible to apply.

Official Rules

Applicants are eligible to apply through only one electric cooperative

- The applicant must be a high school senior.
- The electric cooperative through which a scholarship applicant applies must be a member of the

Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives.

- Scholarship winners must begin undergraduate studies within a year of being notified that they have won.
- Scholarship winners will be expected to be “full time” students (at least 12 hours).
- Scholarships are for one year and are not renewable.
- Scholarships will be awarded based on grade point average, college entrance test scores, work and volunteer experience, participation in school and community activities, biographical statement and knowledge of electric cooperatives as demonstrated by a short essay.
- Deadline for receipt of completed applications and submissions is DECEMBER 31, 2012.
- Scholarship winners will be notified by May 1, 2013.



Scholarship Participation Request

Name of Student _____

Address of Student _____

Name of Parent/Guardian _____

Telephone Number _____

Scholarship Applying For:

- Thomas H. Moore Memorial Scholarship
- Earl W. Struck Memorial Scholarship
- LaVern and Nola McEntire Lineworker's Scholarship

Return to:

Brenda Rothert
Spoon River Electric Cooperative
P.O. Box 340, Canton, IL 61520
647-2700