

The SOUTHEASTERN Light

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

President's Comments



Dustin Tripp
President/CEO

Making a difference, locally

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative is very proud to be one of a number of businesses in our area that has remained locally owned, locally governed and locally operated for the past 86 years in southern Illinois. SEIEC embraces improving the quality of life in the communities that it serves. Here are just a few examples of how your electric cooperative is striving to make a difference right here in southern Illinois.

Your cooperative coordinates an educational grant program known as the Touchstone Energy Classroom Empowerment Grant. SEIEC offers a total of \$4,600 in grants to fund innovative, unfunded projects or materials. Qualifying projects are those that improve the learning environment or increase educational resources for the school and its students. Every year, your cooperative sends grant applications to all of the schools in our 10-county service area and assists school administrators in applying for these grants. For the 2023-2024 school year, SEIEC awarded grants to Adams School – Marion, Frankfort Community High School – West Frankfort, Lincoln Elementary – Johnston City and Unity Christian – Energy.

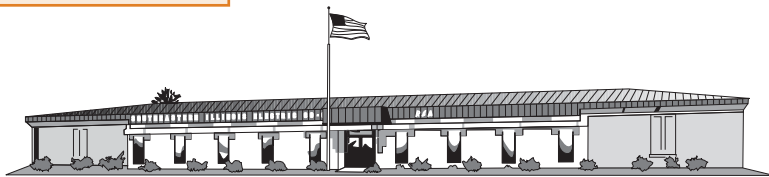
SouthEastern also invites all 23 area high schools to participate in a program known as the “Youth To Washington Tour.” Students are invited to complete an application and send it to SouthEastern

for evaluation by staff personnel. Two applicants are awarded the opportunity to participate in a one-day tour of the State Capitol in Springfield, Ill., and to a one-week, expense-paid tour of our nation's capital in Washington, D.C.

SouthEastern also participates in a statewide scholarship fund known as the Illinois Electric Cooperative Memorial Scholarship Fund as a means of honoring deceased members of the electric cooperative family. Every year, your cooperative sends information to all schools in our 10-county service area with instructions on how students can apply for these scholarships. The program awards 16 scholarships in the amount of \$2,000 each. Ten scholarships will be awarded to high school seniors who are the sons or daughters of an Illinois electric cooperative member receiving service from the cooperative and are enrolling in an accredited two-year or four-year college, university or vocational/technical school in the United States. An eleventh scholarship, the Earl W. Struck Memorial Scholarship, will be awarded to a student who is the son or daughter of an Illinois electric cooperative director or employee. Five additional scholarships will be awarded to high school seniors who are the sons or daughters of Illinois electric cooperative members, employees or directors who will be enrolling full-time at a two-year Illinois community college. The scholarship must be used for

READERSHIP PRIZE WINNER:
Jeff Lonnon,
Benton, IL

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How to stay safe after a storm

Severe thunderstorms, tornadoes and flooding can leave more than damage in their wake — they can leave hidden dangers as well. Safe Electricity advises everyone to be mindful of the electrical hazards that storms and flooding can leave behind.

“The danger does not end when the storm does,” says Erin Hollinshead, executive director of Safe Electricity. “People can be hurt or killed by hazards left behind. Be cautious in any clean-up effort.”

Stay away from downed power lines and be alert to the possibility that tree limbs or debris may hide an electrical hazard. Treat all downed or hanging power lines as if they are energized. Lines do not have to be arcing or sparking to be live. Warn others to stay away and contact the electric utility.

As part of the “Teach Learn Care” TLC campaign, the program urges parents and other caregivers to make sure children are aware of these hazards as well.

“Before reentering storm-damaged buildings or rooms, be sure all electric and gas services are turned off,” said Jay Solomon, University of Illinois Extension educator of natural resources, environment and energy. “Never attempt to turn off power at the breaker box if you must stand in water to do so. If you can’t reach your breaker box safely, call your electric utility to shut off power at the meter.”

Never step into a flooded basement or other area if water is covering electrical outlets, appliances or cords. Be alert to any electrical equipment that could be energized and in contact with water. Never touch electrical appliances, cords or wires while you are wet or standing in water.

If using electric yard tools in clean-up efforts, do not operate them if it’s raining or the ground is wet, or while

you are wet or standing in water. Keep all electric tools and equipment at least 10 feet away from wet surfaces.

“Cleaning up and using water-damaged appliances also carry safety risks,” said Solomon. “Electric motors in appliances that have been drenched or submerged should be thoroughly cleaned and reconditioned before they are put back into service. It may be necessary to repair or replace electrical appliances or tools that have been in contact with water. Do not use any water-damaged appliance until a professional has checked it out.”

If after a storm or disaster, the power to your home is out for a prolonged period, know important safety rules, such as never using a charcoal or gas grill to cook inside. If you use a portable generator, be sure a transfer safety switch has been installed or connect the appliance(s) directly to the generator. This prevents electricity from traveling back through the power lines, what’s known as “back feed.” Back feed creates danger for anyone near lines, particularly crews working to restore power.

If you are driving and come upon a downed power line, stay in your vehicle, warn others to stay away and contact emergency personnel or the electric utility. Never drive over a downed line. A downed line causes other things around it to become potentially hazardous.

If you are in a car which has come in contact with a downed power line, stay in your vehicle. If you must leave your car, jump free keeping both feet together and either shuffle or hop to safety. A live wire touching the ground causes electricity to fan out in a pool, and the action of running or striding allows one foot to move from one voltage zone to another. Your body then becomes a path for the electricity, and electrocution is the tragic result.



Happy *Easter*

Happy Easter from all of us at
SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative!

Your cooperative, your community.



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

The office will be closed
FRIDAY, MARCH 29TH
 in observance of
Good Friday.



"Making a difference" continued from page 18A

educational costs, and the student must enter college within one year from the time the scholarship is awarded. Scholarships are awarded based upon grade point average, college entrance test scores, work and volunteer experience, participation in school and community activities, a biographical statement and knowledge of cooperatives, as demonstrated by a short essay. The seventeenth annual scholarship is known as the "LaVern and Nola McEntire Lineworker's Scholarship." This scholarship helps pay for the cost to attend lineworker's school conducted by the AIEC in conjunction with Lincoln Land Community College in Springfield, Ill. Relatives of co-op employees or directors are eligible for the lineworker's scholarship, as are individuals who have served or are serving in the armed forces or National Guard.

These are just a few examples of how your electric cooperative is striving to make a difference in the communities it serves.

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

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

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