

President's Report



Josh DeWees
President/CEO



Spoon River Electric holds 87th Annual Meeting

Spoon River Electric Cooperative (SREC) consumer-members gathered at the Fulton County Fairgrounds in Lewistown on Thursday, June 6 for their electric co-op's 87th Annual Meeting of Members. Attendees received bill credits, enjoyed a dinner from Bucher Boys BBQ, ice cream from Jenna Lou's and had the opportunity to talk with SREC board members and employees.

During the business meeting, SREC President/CEO Josh DeWees welcomed the members to the meeting and provided a co-op update. "The theme for this [year's annual meeting] is 'Powerful Past, Future Focused,'" DeWees said. "The future is bright, but before we look ahead, we must remember our roots and our powerful past."

He went on to discuss the roots of the electric cooperative program with the Rural Electrification Administration and the formation of SREC.

"The first meeting of SREC was held in the gymnasium of the Cuba High School in 1938," he continued. "Rural electrification wasn't easy, but nothing about rural life was easy in those days. Early in our history, we faced many challenges; these ranged from finance to engineering to the physical construction of poles and wires across the countryside."

DeWees went on to discuss the challenges that the electric industry across the nation faces today, including policy, less capacity and higher demand. Despite the challenges, SREC continues to look ahead and explore ways to utilize new technology to improve service to its consumer-members. The past two decades have brought advancements such as GIS mapping, advanced metering, comprehensive maintenance programs and member-owned self-generation.

Continued on 18C ▶

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

Josh DeWees
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Chairman

Bernard Marvel, Browning

Vice Chairman

Wesley Strode, Marietta

Secretary

Jack Clark, Lewistown

Treasurer

Lyle Nelson, Abingdon

Board of Directors

Joe Davis, Canton
John Disharoon, Cuba
Kurt Duncan, Lewistown
JoDee Pedigo, Canton
Dan Williams, Smithfield

Editor of Spoon River News

Taryn Mellert
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Spoon River Electric Cooperative – By the Numbers

Miles of line energized: 1,272
Number of members served: 5,022
Number of power poles in territory: 29,361

NATIONAL GRILLING MONTH WORD SEARCH

July is National Grilling Month! Can you find all the words associated with grilling in the puzzle below? Use the word bank as a guide.



B H C D F T N U Z R B J R Q G
O A U F O N H R K Q S H E F V
M A R N X U J O R W Z N M B L
W M G B F B X L F P O K M V Z
X S J A E Z K M O R F S U B T
E S R P N Q I V P H P R S H V
X C D L L F U A L A C B K P J
V K J N A E B E T M E V K V X
J X O Y E K D U T B C H N I J
W N P T B I L C P U T Y T Y F
N C C N J A R O C R C G C D A
Y T W V C Z A F W G M E W B M
O D G R I L L A R E O U X W I
U L T K U S Q N V R S Q U B L
L E T K S O Q R G O D T O H Y

WORD BANK

Hamburger
Spatula
Hot Dog
Friends
Summer
Apron
Grill
Barbeque
Family
Tongs



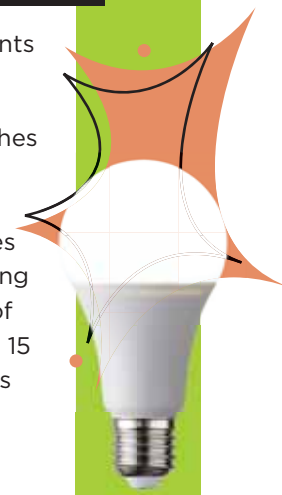
Cooking outdoors is a fun way to spend time with friends and family! By cooking outside, you can save energy indoors and keep your home cooler.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Electricity used to operate major appliances accounts for a significant portion of your home energy use.

Here's an easy way to lighten the load on your clothes dryer. Before you dry a load of damp clothing, toss in a clean, dry towel. The towel will absorb excess water, shortening the drying time. If your dryer does not include an autosense feature to determine drying time, remember to reduce the timer to about half of what you normally would. Remove the towel about 15 minutes after the cycle begins. Shorter drying times will extend the life of your dryer and save energy.

Source: homesandgardens.com



\$9,000 donated through Spoon River Electric's Operation Round Up program



The Spoon River Electric Operation Round Up Committee recently donated \$9,000 to six local organizations within our service territory: \$1,500 to The Fulton-Mason Counties Farm Safety Day; \$1,500 to the Fulton County 4-H Livestock Judging Team; \$1,500 to the Lincoln Elementary School Pantry; \$1,500 to the Spoon River Pregnancy Center; \$1,500 to the Hickory Kerton Fire Department; and \$1,500 to the Cuba Nazarene Church Youth Program.

These donations are made possible by the generous members of Spoon River Electric who voluntarily make the decision each month to “Round-Up” their electric bill to the next dollar and donate this “extra change” directly to the Operation Round-Up Program. All the funds collected are donated back into our communities as charitable grants. The average donation a member makes annually ranges from \$6-\$12.



For more information about the Operation Round-Up Program, visit our website at srecoop.org under the Operation Round-Up tab or call Taryn at 309-647-2700.

Annual meeting continued from 18A

“Our members are our highest priority, and we will work to keep power safe, reliable and affordable as we continue to look toward the future,” DeWees said. “You can be confident that SREC will commit to exploring new ways to help our members and our community.”

State Representative Norine Hammond (R-94) was in attendance and was thanked for her work to help Illinois’ electric cooperatives. “Noreen has been a great advocate on your behalf this year,” DeWees said. “She has been working very hard in Springfield, fighting what I would call an uphill battle. She’s done a great job for us, and I really appreciate that.”

Board Director John Disharoon announced \$1,000 scholarships awarded to recent high school graduates from within SREC’s service territory. “Every year, the Spoon River Electric Co-op Foundation presents scholarships to [students heading to college],” he said. “They come in for an interview ... and we had a great cast of applicants this year.”



Cortny Hudson earned the Scott Parrish Memorial Scholarship, Layne Putnam received the SREC Scholarship, Abigail Stevenson won the Honorary Scholarship and Sophia Lascelles received the Scholastic Scholarship. Unable to attend the meeting, twins Allie and Zachary Hopkins also received the SREC Scholarship.

During the meeting, several employees and directors were recognized for their years of service. They include Line Clearance Foreman Bryce Ehlers (five years), Distribution Supervisor Bill Seago (10 years), HR Director/Executive Assistant Taryn Mellert (10 years), District 8 Director Bernard Marvel (30 years) and District 1 Director Lyle Nelson (30 years).

SREC’s 2024 Annual Meeting marked new three-year terms for three members on the board of directors. Members voted to re-elect JoDee Pedigo of Glasford, Dan Williams of Smithfield and Bernard Marvel of Browning. The election was not contested.

11 things you might not know about power restoration

Have you ever watched a video or TV show where a person is cooking a meal, then suddenly, they snap their fingers, and the meal is plated and ready to eat? That's called a jump cut.

While we wish we could "jump cut" from a power outage to power restoration, it can often take a lot more effort and people to make it happen.

As the President/CEO of Spoon River Electric, I'm accustomed to members' questions about power outages and why it can take time to get the lights back on. Given our reliance on electricity, there's simply never a good time to be without it.

This month, I'd like to shed light on our restoration process to help our members understand what may be happening behind the scenes. Here are 10 things you might not know about restoration:

- 1. We need you.** When your power goes out, it might be just at your home or a small section of a neighborhood. There is a chance we may not know about it, and no one has reported it. We rely on you to let us know if your power is out.
- 2. Our employees might be affected, too.** Because Spoon River Electric is a local electric cooperative owned by the members we serve, our employees are local, too. They are your neighbors, friends and familiar community volunteers. When you're without power, our people might be, too.
- 3. It's a team effort.** Every one of Spoon River Electric's employees are working to get your power restored as soon as possible. Our member services representatives are taking your calls, engineers and field staff are surveying damage, our vegetation management team is clearing hazards, dispatchers are organizing crews, and communicators are keeping everyone informed of progress or potential dangers. When your power goes out, we all work together as quickly and safely as possible to get you back to normal.
- 4. We assess the situation first.** Every outage is different, and we don't know how dangerous it is or what equipment might need to be replaced. When responding to outages, we first need to see what happened, then figure out what materials we need and a plan for how to fix the problem(s) without compromising electric flow for the rest of our members.
- 5. When we call in backup.** Depending on the number of outages and the damage, we may need to call in back up. This could include having our office personnel stay to keep answering our members' calls. This is helpful as they get the most up to date information the quickest, in turn, able to get that information to our members. If the damage and outages is significant, we could call in help from a neighboring cooperative. This is one of the cooperative principles – cooperation among cooperatives.
- 6. Restoration is normally prioritized by the largest number of members we can get back on in the shortest amount of time.** Our crews focus on responding first to public safety issues and critical services like hospitals. Then we complete work that impacts the largest number of people first.
- 7. Our employees face many dangers.** Besides working around high voltage electricity, our crews are on alert for wild animals, weather elements, falling trees and fast-moving cars. (If you ever drive past one of our vehicles, please do so slowly.)
- 8. Flickering lights are a good thing.** Some folks mistake flickering lights for outages, but these "blinks" are important, because they indicate our equipment worked and prevented a possible outage likely caused by wayward animals or stray tree limbs on the lines.
- 9. You need a backup plan.** We do our best to help those who need it, but if you depend on electricity for life support purposes, you must have a backup plan — remember, we don't always know how long restoration efforts will take. If you're unsure what to do, call us so we can help you prepare an emergency location.
- 10. Our employees have to plan – and eat.** If you ever see our trucks in a restaurant parking lot while your power is out, know that sometimes our employees huddle in a safe, common area to map out their plan for getting your power back on. Also, our crews work long, hard hours during outages and need to take time for meals just like everyone else.
- 11. Sometimes it's a waiting game.** Our portion of the power grid is connected to other electric utilities, and we maintain positive relationships with power providers interconnected to our system. If our outage is due to an issue from their feed into our system, we must let them do their repairs and be mindful of what they're going through to fix it.

We do our best to avoid power disruptions, but they are inevitable from time to time. If the lights go out, know that your co-op team is working as quickly and safely as possible to restore power. If you experience an outage, please let us know by calling us at 309-647-2700.