

## President's Report



Josh DeWees  
President/CEO

## May your holidays be merry and bright

As November kicks off, it's hard to believe we'll soon be gathering with family and friends to celebrate the holiday season. This festive time of year brings joy and warmth, but as the weather gets cooler and we spend more time indoors, the holidays can also bring increased energy use and a higher risk of electrical and fire hazards.

As your local electric cooperative, our team at Spoon River Electric Cooperative cares about your wellbeing. This month, we'd like to share a few practical tips to help you stay safe and efficient during the holiday season.

### Safety first

My family truly enjoys decorating our home for the holidays. Before we deck the halls, I always check electrical cords and light strands to make sure they aren't frayed or damaged. This gives us peace of mind, knowing our holiday lights are ready to safely brighten our home. I also double check the lights we use outside to make sure they're rated for outdoor use.

Like many households, we also enjoy holiday-scented candles. While festive, candles can create fire hazards and should never be left unattended. One of the best and easiest ways to safeguard your home is to test smoke alarms often. I test mine on the first of each month, so it's easy to remember. Testing smoke alarms only takes a few seconds and could save lives, so make it a habit.

### 'Tis the season for savings

Spending more time indoors with a few more guests in the home can really impact home energy use. By taking a few small steps to save energy during the holiday season, you can lower your bills.

I like to remind my family members to mind the thermostat. Since heating and cooling makes up the majority of home energy consumption, the thermostat is one of the best places for savings. Lower it a few degrees, especially when you have

family or friends stopping by. Good company brings additional warmth to your home.

Your family can also save energy by decorating with LED holiday lights. LEDs are the most energy efficient lighting options available, and they last much longer than traditional bulbs.

There's no denying one of the best parts of the holiday season is the food — not just the meals but the time we spend together in the kitchen. There are many ways to save in the heart of your home, but one of the best approaches is to cook with smaller countertop appliances, such as air fryers, slow cookers and toaster ovens. These handy appliances consume a fraction of the energy used to heat the oven, creating the perfect recipe for mealtimes and energy savings.

I hope you will implement some of these energy-saving and safety tips into your holiday plans. We're here to help you with safety and savings year-round.

From your friends at Spoon River Electric, we hope your holiday season is merry and bright.



Our offices will be closed  
**Thursday, November 28,  
and Friday, November 29,**  
in observance of the Thanksgiving holiday.  
We are incredibly grateful for your  
membership as our team spends this  
special time with loved ones.

From our co-op family to yours,  
we hope you have a wonderful  
Thanksgiving!

## Spoon River Electric Cooperative

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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

## BE AN ENERGY EFFICIENCY MVP

Do you have what it takes to be the energy efficiency MVP (most valuable player) in your home? When you take proactive steps to save energy at home, you can help your family save on monthly energy bills *and* help the environment—that's a win-win!

Read the sentences below and unscramble the bolded letters to complete the energy efficiency tips.

Check your work in the answer key.



1. Turn off **glihsit** when you leave a room.
2. Unplug smaller electronic devices like phone **reahgcsr** when you're not using them.
3. Reduce your **nesecr** time to save energy and spend more time outdoors.
4. Turn off the **reatw** while brushing your teeth.
5. Keep doors and **swdwnio** closed when your home's heating/cooling system is running.
6. When it's cold, wear an extra layer of **tohgncl** inside instead of adjusting the thermostat.

Answer Key: 1. lights 2. chargers 3. screen 4. water 5. windows 6. clothing

## Safety Tip

When decorating outside, look up and look out. Never throw holiday lights or other decorations into trees near power lines. Be especially careful when working near power lines attached to your house. Keep ladders, equipment and yourself at least 10 feet from power lines.



Safe  
Electricity.org



## Stay safe and warm: Your winter home readiness guide

Preparing your home for winter involves several key steps to ensure safety, efficiency and warmth. Here are tips to help you prepare before the temperatures drop, and a few ways to stay safe if a power outage leaves you snowbound.

### Inspect your heating system

- Have your heating system professionally serviced.
- Replace air filters if needed.
- Ensure vents and radiators are unblocked for efficient heat distribution.

### Prepare pipes and water supply

- Insulate exposed pipes to prevent freezing.
- Drain and shut off outdoor faucets and irrigation systems.
- Know the location of your water shut-off valve in case of emergencies.

### Maintain smoke and carbon monoxide detectors

- Replace batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Test detectors to ensure they are functioning properly.

### Prepare your home

- Clear gutters and downspouts of leaves and debris to prevent ice dams.
- Trim trees and bushes away from the house to prevent damage from heavy snow.
- Ensure downspouts extend away from your home's foundation.
- Drain and store garden hoses to prevent freezing.

- Service and store outdoor equipment such as lawnmowers and trimmers.
- Gather winter tools such as snow shovels and ice melt.
- Seal gaps and cracks around windows and doors with weatherstripping or caulk.
- Set ceiling fans to rotate clockwise to circulate warm air.
- Lower your thermostat a few degrees to save on heating costs.

### Stock emergency supplies

At home, have enough nonperishable food and water for 72 hours in case of power outages or severe weather. Experts suggest storing one gallon of water per person per day.

### Include these essentials in your emergency kit:

- First-aid kit
- Flashlights and batteries
- Warm clothing
- Blankets
- Phone chargers and backup charger sources

Gather important documents, medical supplies/medicines and medical records. Don't forget your pets. Make sure you have enough supplies for them as well.

### What to do if the power goes out

Winter weather is unpredictable, with high winds, whiteouts and ice storms. These conditions can cause hazardous roads and power outages.

If the electricity goes out due to a winter storm, you might be in for a prolonged power outage as crews work through the harsh weather to get the power back on.

If this happens, contact your electrical utility as soon as you can so they know you have lost power.

### Other actions you can take to stay safe

- Avoid travel. Stay inside and dress warmly in layered clothing.
- Place a draft block at the bottom of doors to minimize cold drafts from entering the house.
- When using an alternative heat source, follow operating instructions and be sure to ventilate properly.
- Keep grills, camp stoves and generators out of the house, basement and garage.
- Use a tarp and portable canopy when using a portable generator if conditions are damp or wet.
- Move fuel-powered generators at least 20 feet away from the house.
- Keep a close eye on the temperature in your home. Infants and people over the age of 65 are often more susceptible to the cold. You may want to stay with friends or relatives or go to a shelter if you cannot keep your home warm.

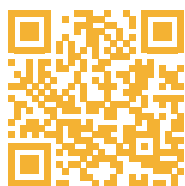
For more information on keeping your family safe during and after a winter storm, visit [SafeElectricity.org](https://www.SafeElectricity.org).

# POWERING YOUR FUTURE

17 SCHOLARSHIPS  
\$2,500 EACH

The electric cooperatives of Illinois are proud to offer scholarships to deserving students in our co-op family. Whether you're a high school senior planning to attend college or interested in a career as a lineworker, there's a scholarship opportunity for you.

Applications are now open for the 2025 Illinois Electric Cooperatives Memorial Scholarships. Apply by December 31, 2024, for most scholarships, or by April 30, 2025, for the lineworker scholarship. Scan the QR code or go to <https://bit.ly/IECScholarships> for more details.



**IEC MEMORIAL  
SCHOLARSHIPS**

