

The SOUTHEASTERN Light

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Voluntary and open membership • Voluntary and open membership

President's Comments



Dustin Tripp
President/CEO

Annual meeting recap

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative held its 86th Annual Meeting on Tuesday, Aug. 5, 2025, with 967 members registered and approximately 1,200 in total attendance. For those of you who were unable to attend your Cooperative's annual meeting, this article will summarize the report members received at the annual meeting.

Your Cooperative invested \$10.8 million in system improvements to replace aging infrastructure and invested \$8.8 million to perform strategic maintenance activities in order to ensure that members receive a reliable electric supply while also maximizing the life and value of cooperative assets. Just a few examples of the maintenance activities include the Pole Testing and Treatment program and

of poles and saves cooperative members millions in early replacement costs. The Vegetation Management Plan, which is crucial to electric reliability, ensures that we perform trimming and clearing along approximately 800 miles of distribution line every year.

The Cooperative sold approximately 734 million kWh in 2024, resulting in an increase of 1.6% from 2023. This slight increase in kilowatt hours sold was due to higher residential, small commercial and large commercial sales. The cooperative constructed 244 new services to homes, farms and businesses and upgraded 17 services to provide additional energy capacity.

Your Cooperative ended the year 2024 in sound financial condition. As

a not-for-profit organization, your Cooperative does not strive to produce profits for shareholders and investors but must maintain a sound financial position for the membership. In 2024, your Cooperative's Board

of Trustees approved the retirement and return of \$1.68 million of capital credits, and the capital credit checks were mailed to members in December of 2024. Over the past 15 years, your Cooperative has retired and returned approximately \$27.5 million to cooperative members.

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the Vegetation Management Plan. Over the past several years, your Cooperative has performed a testing and select treatment program on approximately 69,000 poles. This program identifies poles that have met their useful life and must be replaced, ensures the integrity of other pole assets, extends the useful life

READERSHIP PRIZE WINNER:
Charles Ewell,
Marion, IL

While the year 2024 was a very successful year for your Cooperative, 2025 has proven to be extremely challenging due to the numerous severe storms that have hit the Cooperative's service area. The year began with Ice Storm Blair on January 5th that resulted in ice accumulation throughout the Cooperative's service territory, with some locations exceeding over 1 inch of ice, and approximately 16,000 outages. On March 15th, an EF2 tornado began near Vienna and traveled northeast thru Johnson County causing extensive damage to the Cooperative's Vienna Substation. On April 2nd, another severe storm hit our service area that included strong winds and three confirmed tornadoes. These tornadoes included an EF2 tornado in Johnson County, an EF1 tornado in Williamson County and an EF1 tornado in Saline County. Then, on May 16th, another severe weather storm hit our service area that included strong winds and three more confirmed tornadoes. These tornadoes included a very devastating EF4 tornado in Williamson County, an EF2 tornado in Gallatin County and an EF1 tornado in Saline County.

Your Cooperative is currently experiencing an increase in our wholesale power costs from Southern Illinois Power Cooperative, located at the Lake of Egypt, primarily due to higher-priced fuels consumed to generate electricity, including coal and carbon. These increased fuel costs are reflected in the wholesale power cost adjustment charge that varies monthly in your retail rate. Given the extensive storm damage your Cooperative has incurred during the first half of 2025, which has resulted in \$3.7 million in damages,

you may be wondering if a retail rate increase will be needed. At this time, it is almost certain that the year 2025 will produce negative margins due to the extensive storm damage incurred. However, your Cooperative's strong financial condition and equity position provides some options in how to address the current losses. After careful consideration by the management team and the Board of Trustees, your Cooperative has made the decision to lower the equity position slightly in an effort to maintain the current retail rates. Therefore, we do not anticipate the need to increase retail rates at this time.

Cooperative members learned that electric generation is becoming more vulnerable during peak demand conditions due to a rapid transition in the electric generation industry to construct more renewable energy resources (solar and wind) and retiring fossil fuel generation (primarily coal but natural gas as well). The electric generation industry is becoming more reliant on intermittent sources like solar and wind at the same time the industry is projecting electric demand growth of 15-25% by 2030. The new growth in demand will be driven by new artificial intelligence (AI) data centers, increased domestic manufacturing and the electrification of almost everything from appliances to automobiles.

With increasing demand for electricity and decreasing dispatchable generation supply, supply and demand economics lead to increasing supply prices, and that's what is happening. Just to provide some perspective on the market price increases in capacity — in 2024, the MISO market price of summer capacity cleared at \$30

per MW-Day. This year, that same summer capacity market price jumped from \$30 to \$666 per MW-Day. Other utility customers who rely more heavily on purchasing capacity in markets are experiencing significant rate increases. Fortunately, your Cooperative is part owner of Southern Illinois Power Cooperative, and owning your own generation assets has proved very beneficial by keeping member rates more affordable and more stable.

It is imperative that the industry, other stakeholders and consumers recognize the significance and importance of having sufficient generation capacity available to meet the peak demands of consumers. This means we must keep all generation, especially dispatchable fossil generation units, running now and into the foreseeable future. Renewables such as wind and solar are in your Cooperative's generation portfolio, and they are a part of our current generation mix. However, wind and solar are simply not able to provide energy and capacity when we as consumers demand energy and long-duration energy storage solutions are not available.

As we look to the future, your Cooperative's strategic vision includes implementing a new automated metering infrastructure, new technologies and voluntary programs for members to participate in demand-response programs. Through participation in these programs, members may be able to reduce their energy demand and save money while helping reduce the strain on the electric grid during peak demand times.

Your Cooperative was formed 87 years ago to bring electricity to rural areas of southeastern Illinois. We appreciate the opportunity to serve you, and we want you to know that your Cooperative is owned by the people it serves and will continue to be an electric cooperative that is truly operated "for the people and by the people."



Attention Local Teachers!

Apply for your 2025/2026 Touchstone Energy Classroom Empowerment Grants

Does your school or classroom need new materials? Can your students benefit from new programs and educational resources? We thought so.

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative is once again coordinating this grant program with Touchstone Energy for our local teachers and administrators. The grants will be provided for innovative, unfunded projects or materials. Qualifying projects are those that improve the learning environment or increase educational resources for the school.

A panel of judges will determine which projects will be awarded the grants. Grant applications are due by **Nov. 7, 2025**. Grant awards will be announced on **Jan. 30, 2026**. For a grant application and guidelines, please visit our website at www.seiec.com or contact Stefanie Tripp at 618-273-3806. It only takes a few minutes to apply.

Since 2006, SEIEC has distributed a total of \$77,600 Touchstone Energy Classroom Empowerment Grants throughout the Cooperative's service area.

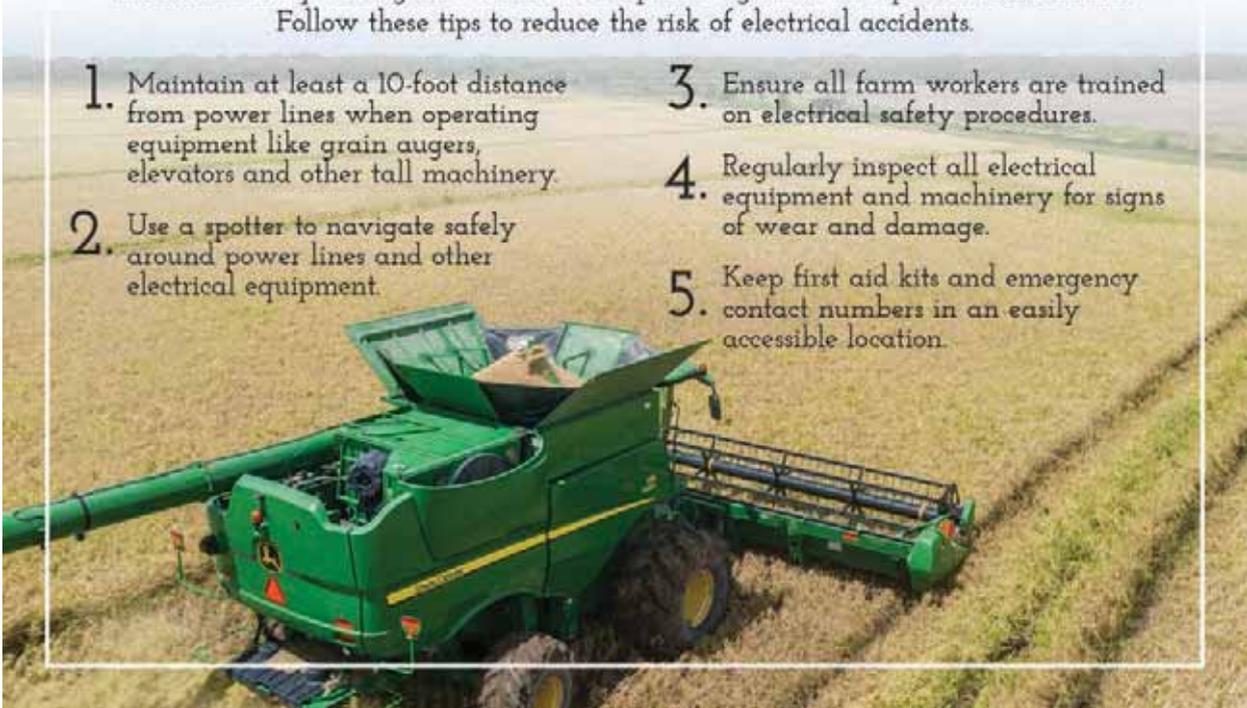


Our office will be closed on Monday, September 1st in observance of Labor Day.

5 Tips for a Safe Harvest

Electrical safety during harvest season requires vigilance and proactive measures. Follow these tips to reduce the risk of electrical accidents.

1. Maintain at least a 10-foot distance from power lines when operating equipment like grain augers, elevators and other tall machinery.
2. Use a spotter to navigate safely around power lines and other electrical equipment.
3. Ensure all farm workers are trained on electrical safety procedures.
4. Regularly inspect all electrical equipment and machinery for signs of wear and damage.
5. Keep first aid kits and emergency contact numbers in an easily accessible location.



ENERGY EFFICIENCY

TIP OF THE MONTH

Take advantage of "shoulder months," which refer to the transitional periods between peak heating and cooling seasons. During the fall, these milder weeks typically occur between September and November. Shoulder months offer a great opportunity to reduce home energy consumption as the need for extensive heating or cooling is reduced. Look for simple ways to boost indoor comfort without running your heating and cooling system. Use ceiling fans and open windows on breezy days to ventilate your home. On cooler days, add a layer of clothing and avoid running the heat.



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

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