

High School Students: Apply Now for Youth Tour 2026!

Are you ready for the adventure of a lifetime? Each year, electric cooperatives across the country send outstanding students to Washington, D.C., for Youth Tour (also called Youth to Washington), a weeklong, all-expense-paid trip filled with learning, leadership, and unforgettable memories.

For nearly 60 years, over 50,000 young Americans have experienced this incredible opportunity through their local electric cooperatives. Next summer, at least 1,500 high school students from across the nation will travel to D.C. to explore our nation's capital, meet with elected officials, and see firsthand how government and cooperatives work together to power communities.

Youth Tour is more than a sightseeing trip — it's an experience that changes lives. Many participants return home inspired, more confident, and equipped with leadership skills they carry into their futures. **Carol Schwartz**



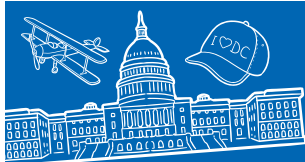
This month, Egyptian Electric Cooperative (EECA) is kicking off the application process for Youth Tour 2026, scheduled for June 15-22.

If you're a **high school sophomore, junior, or senior**, and you're interested in leadership, government, or **looking for leadership opportunities to show on college applications or resumes**, this is your chance!

Help us find the next generation of leaders! Encourage a promising student to apply, or if that's you, don't wait! Applications are open now **through February 9, 2026.**



EECA's two sponsored students for the 2025 Youth Tour were (left) Harlan Whiteford of Marion and (right) Maddie Voss of Murphysboro.



Sophomores, juniors and seniors attending a public or private high school within the EECA service territorial footprint, or otherwise a consumer-member of the cooperative, are eligible to apply for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. EECA school districts include: Carbondale • Carterville • Chester • Coulterville • Du Quoin • Elverado • Marissa • Murphysboro • Pinckneyville • Red Bud • Sparta • Steeleville • Trico

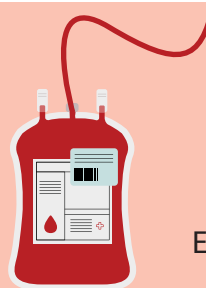
Toy Drive

Toys for Tots Drop Off
EECA Lobby
Until December 8



Red Cross blood drive

Tuesday, December 2
10 a.m.-3 p.m.
EECA, 1732 Finney Road,
Murphysboro





Egyptian Electric
Cooperative Association
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

1732 Finney Road
Murphysboro, IL 62966

Business hours/After hours
800-606-1505

24/7 Automated Pay-by-Phone
855-939-3675

Office hours 8 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. M-F
www.eeca.coop

Board of Directors

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Shane Hermetz
General Manager

Choose your payment option!

- At our office lobby, drive-thru, drop-box, or payment kiosk
- Mail to: 1732 Finney Road, Murphysboro, IL 62966
- Set up recurring bank draft or credit card payments
- Use SmartHub portal, online or mobile app
- By phone at 855-939-3675, using credit card or checking account
- Off-site kiosks located at 2301 N. Reed Station Parkway and 1815 W. Main in Carbondale

EECA Helps Village of Elkhville Secure REDLG Loan for Water Meter Upgrades

The Village of Elkhville will soon upgrade its water meters in the village, thanks to a zero-percent interest loan through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant (REDLG) program and Egyptian Electric Cooperative Association (EECA).



Pictured from L to R: Brooke Guthman, Dean Bullar, Mayor Lance Bedar, Luana Wright, and Shane Hermetz

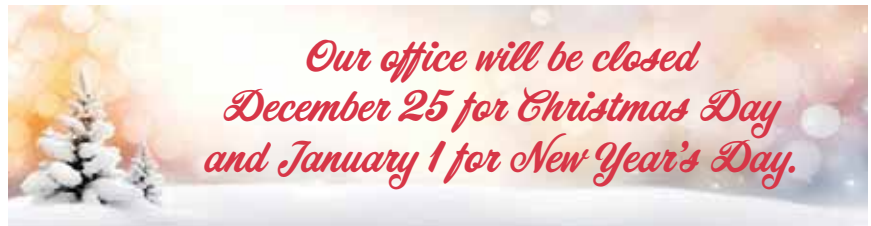
Through application, the village received \$156,500 to replace 475 aging analog water meters with digital technology. The new meters will improve accuracy, save time and money, and help detect leaks or unusual water use — enhancing service for every customer in Elkhville.

“We’re proud to be able to help facilitate these loans for our local communities,” says EECA General Manager Shane Hermetz. “Supporting improvements like these helps strengthen the areas we serve and aligns with our mission as a cooperative to invest in rural progress.”

Although Egyptian Electric does not serve the Village of Elkhville directly, facilitating this loan helps improve the quality of life of those in our communities within our service area. **Cynthia L Taylor**

The EECA Board of Directors approved the loan on August 26, and the funds were distributed to The Village of Elkhville on October 21, 2025.

The USDA Rural Development program expands economic opportunities and create jobs in rural areas. Funding for these projects is part of the REDLG program, which supports rural infrastructure and business development. For more information, visit eeca.coop/redlg.



MEMBER PRIZES

Every month we will have three member names hidden throughout our Egyptian Electric News section. If you find your name, call our office and identify yourself and the page that it is on and you will win a \$10 credit on your next electric bill.

LIHEAP

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is a heat and electric assistance program through the state of Illinois that is a benefit payment program, per heating season, that is intended to help with a portion of a qualified household's heating and electric costs.

The benefit amount depends on household size, income and energy costs where the benefit is applied as a credit directly to the household's Egyptian Electric account. Qualifications are based on income and household size, if your household's combined income is at or below the levels shown on this chart. To apply for assistance, go to helpillinoisfamilies.com for the online application or contact your local administering agency at the applicable phone number below. Applications for the 2026 LIHEAP season are available Oct. 1, 2025-Aug. 15, 2026 or until funding is exhausted.

Are you eligible? If your household income is within 200% of the federal poverty level for the 30 days prior to the application (gross income for all household members, before taxes are deducted) you could be eligible.

Questions? Contact your local office.

Jackson/Perry/Randolph/Monroe Counties 618/965-3458
 St. Clair County 618/277-6790
 Washington County 618/532-7338
 Williamson/Franklin Counties 618/937-3581
 Union/Johnson Counties 618/634-2201

*Illinois LIHEAP
income guidelines for the
2025–2026 heating season eligibility*

Family Size <small>(total # in household)</small>	30-day Income
1	\$3,332
2	\$4,357
3	\$5,382
4	\$6,407
5	\$7,432
6	\$8,457

*For more details, visit
helpillinoisfamilies.com*



IEC scholarships available!

Sixteen IEC memorial academic scholarships will be awarded again to high school seniors this school year. Each scholarship is worth \$3,000. Deadline to apply online is Dec. 31, 2025.

- 10** scholarships are awarded to students who are the sons or daughters of an Illinois electric cooperative member receiving service from the cooperative.
- 5** scholarships are reserved for students enrolling full-time at a two-year Illinois community college who are the sons or daughters of Illinois electric cooperative members, employees or directors.
- 1** scholarship, the Earl W. Struck Memorial Scholarship, is awarded to a student who is the son or daughter of an Illinois electric cooperative employee or director.



Information has been shared with area high school guidance counselors. For more information or to apply online, go to:
<https://aiec.coop/iec-scholarship/?coop=EGT>

YOU ASKED WE ANSWERED

Q: We have a heat pump. In the winter, we keep our house at 68 degrees. Do we save any energy by turning down the heat to 62 degrees at night before we go to bed and then gradually increasing the heat to 68 degrees during the day?

A: In many cases, yes, but it depends on things like the type and efficiency of your heat pump, condition of air filters, the outside temperature, and your backup heat source.

Heat pumps move heat rather than create it, so the biggest energy savings come when your backup heat (electric or gas) kicks on. When it's very cold outside, air-source heat pumps may switch to backup "auxiliary" or "emergency" heat and operate like a furnace because they can't keep up on their own. In that situation, lowering your temperature at night may save energy.

Heat pumps are designed to run most efficiently when temperature settings remain consistent. In general,

making gradual changes to increase heat (2 degrees at a time) is better than big jumps, which can spike energy use and kick on your emergency heat — costing you money — and causing more wear on your system.

You can also save energy by making sure your registers/vents aren't covered and your ducts in unheated spaces are sealed. Keep your heat pump well-maintained and ensure your filters are clean. Adding insulation and sealing air leaks around windows and doors helps heat stay inside your home. The easier it is for your system to move air and your home to retain heat, the lesser amount of energy will need to be used. You'll be more comfortable and save on costs.



Have a question for Egyptian Electric Cooperative

Send it to info@eeca.coop with the subject line "You Asked" and it may be featured in a later issue.

Should I use a space heater or turn up the heat?

Drafty room? Before reaching for your space heater, consider whether it's better to plug it in or simply turn up the thermostat.

Space heaters are designed to warm small, targeted spaces — not your entire home. If you find yourself relying on one often, it may be time to address your home's energy efficiency.

Fix efficiency first, then supplement with a space heater

Improving your home's efficiency helps it retain heat, reduces drafts and reduces your energy use. Many solutions are affordable and DIY-friendly, such as:

- Sealing air leaks. Use caulk and weatherstripping around windows and exterior doors to prevent drafts.
- Adding insulation where it matters. Attic insulation has the biggest return on investment, and loose-fill insulation is an affordable option.
- Checking your heating system. Schedule regular service for your furnace or heat pump. If it's

outdated or struggling, it could be time for an upgrade.

- Using programmable thermostats. These can help reduce energy waste by heating only when and where needed.

Once your home is sealed and insulated, a space heater can be used to increase comfort and warm specific rooms, like a home office or bedroom, without turning up the heat for the whole house. A space heater is like a ceiling fan; it can improve comfort in a small area, but it's not a whole-house solution.

Use space heaters efficiently:

- Heat only the room you're currently in.
- Close doors to keep heat contained.
- Choose the right size — too small and it won't warm you; too big and it wastes energy. Check manufacturer sizing guides. **Ronnie Reames**
- Use a heater with a thermostat and timer to avoid overheating the room or wasting electricity.

Stay safe while staying warm:

- Place the heater on a solid, flat, nonflammable surface — never on carpets or rugs.
- Plug the heater directly into the wall outlet. Never use extension cords or power strips.
- Keep children, pets and anything flammable, such as curtains or bedding, at least 3 feet away from the heater.
- Choose a heater with built-in safety features including:
 - An overheat sensor;
 - A tip-over shutoff switch; and
 - A UL, ETL or CSA International certification label.
- Never leave a space heater unattended, especially around children or pets.
- Turn off the heater when you leave the room or go to sleep.
- Unplug it when not in use to prevent electrical hazards.