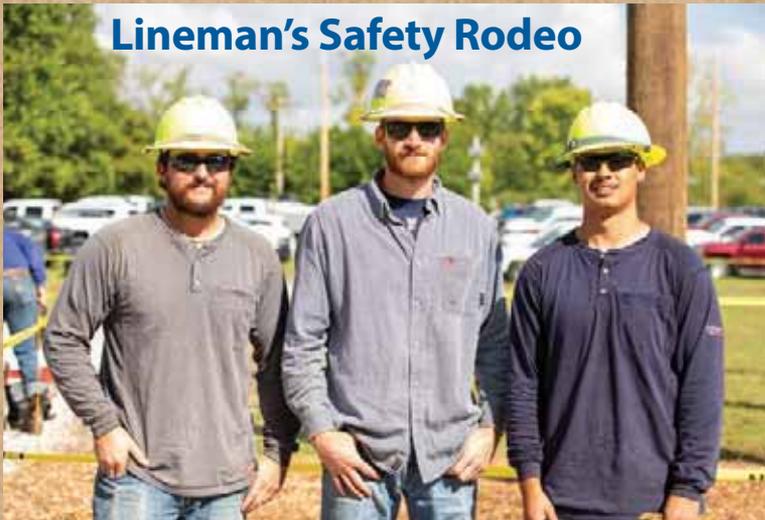




# Rural HIGHLIGHTS

Local News from Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative

## Lineman's Safety Rodeo



RECC team: Hayden Jacobs, Drayton Davis and Juan Giron.



Davis receives individual award.

RECC employees participated in the annual Lineman's Safety Rodeo in September. Eighteen teams from 13 electric co-ops and two municipal electric utilities participated in the friendly competition. Ten competed individually. The event was held at the LLCC Line School in Springfield.

Drayton Davis, Juan Giron and Hayden Jacobs represented your cooperative, as they competed against other teams from across Illinois in events using skills that focus on agility, speed and accuracy. While these skills are part of the judging criteria, above all, participants are judged on safe work practices. Line personnel competed in an armor rod install, cutout change, hurt man rescue, 40-foot transition climb and transition climbing challenge.

Scores for each event are based on completion time, proper execution of the task, and safety. Deductions were made to a team or individual's overall performance score due to mistakes such as slipping when climbing poles, dropping tools, or executing inappropriate procedures or methods.

At the end of the day, RECC's team earned third place in the hurt man rescue competition. Individually, Drayton Davis won first place in the 40-foot transition climb and the transition climbing challenge. Congratulations to all of the linemen who competed in the event, as a team and individually.



<<< Auburn Parade



North Mac Parade >>>



## Scholarships help power the future

We believe the key to a brighter future lies in empowering the next generation. That's why electric cooperatives across Illinois are committed to investing in youth through scholarships that honor the cooperative's legacy. Illinois cooperatives will help fuel the dreams and goals of tomorrow's leaders by awarding 17 scholarships of \$3,000 each to outstanding students. Cooperatives are always looking for ways to

spark positive change in our communities, and supporting local youth is the most impactful way to help shape tomorrow.

Application deadline is Dec. 31, 2025, but the lineworker scholarship is due by April 30, 2026. Apply at [aiec.coop](http://aiec.coop) or contact RECC at 217-438-6197 for more details. Information has also been shared with area high school guidance counselors.

### 17 scholarships available

- 10** scholarships will be awarded to high school seniors whose parent(s) are members of an Illinois electric cooperative.
- 1** scholarship will be awarded to a student whose parent is an Illinois electric cooperative employee or director, honoring a legacy of service within the cooperative family.
- 5** scholarships will be awarded to students enrolling full-time at an Illinois community college whose parent(s) are electric cooperative members.
- 1** scholarship supports students pursuing a career in linework through enrollment in the lineworker program at Lincoln Land Community College. Eligible applicants include children of cooperative members, relatives of employees or directors, and individuals who have served or are currently serving in the armed forces or National Guard.

**Tim Hemberger**

**May 2025**



**2025  
Retirements**



**Stefan Sporrer**  
**October 2025**

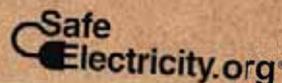
**Celebrate safely this year**  
Your pets will thank you!



## Christmas Tree Fire Safety

- ❖ **Pick fresh:** Choose a tree with green needles that don't fall off easily.
- ❖ **Trim base:** Cut 2" before placing in stand.
- ❖ **Water daily:** Keep the stand full and the tree fresh.
- ❖ **Placement matters:** Keep at least 3' from heat sources; don't block exits.
- ❖ **Secure tree:** Anchor to prevent tipping, especially with pets or kids.
- ❖ **Light it right:** Use only UL-listed lights; replace damaged strands.
- ❖ **No candles:** Never decorate with a flame.
- ❖ **Turn off lights:** Unplug when sleeping or away.
- ❖ **Use smoke alarms:** Test monthly.
- ❖ **Ditch when dry:** Remove promptly; don't store near home or garage.

Learn more:



**Christmas Light History:** Long before electricity, people brightened the dark winter months with fire-light — from the burning of the Yule log to candles placed around the home. The first recorded candlelit Christmas trees appeared in Germany in 1660 and eventually spread across Europe, reaching the United States later in the century.

While the glow of the candles was festive, it also posed a serious fire hazard, so the light could only be enjoyed for a short time. Then came a revolutionary spark. Thomas Edison invented the incandescent light bulb in 1879, but his colleague, Edward H. Johnson, created the first electric Christmas tree lights in 1882. He hand-wired 80 colored bulbs around a revolving tree in his parlor, all powered by a generator.

Johnson's lights were ahead of their time, as electricity was not yet routinely available, and electric lights were considered expensive. President Grover Cleveland and his wife, First Lady Frances Cleveland, helped boost acceptance in the 1890s, when the White House Christmas tree was illuminated with colored bulbs to delight their young daughters.

The tradition of outdoor light displays, which we now associate with driving around to view beautifully lit homes and elaborate light shows, began in North America. This expansion was made possible by the development of safe outdoor Christmas light bulbs and light strings in the 1920s. Christmas lights have come a long way. Today's LED lights shine brighter than ever, creating beautiful displays while using less energy, and they're built to last.

Every holiday season, millions of lights brighten homes across the country. From twinkling displays set to music to TV favorites like ABC's "The Great Christmas Light Fight," modern holiday lighting turns neighborhoods into dazzling shows filled with festive "flip the switch" moments.

Year after year, Christmas lights continue to brighten our lives and homes. The evolution reflects our desire to bring light, warmth and joy to the darkest winter days — with a mix of new technology and timeless tradition that makes holiday lights truly magical.

## Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative

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Find us on 

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See our web page for monthly  
board meeting reports.

### Data Center Proposed



To learn more about the prospective data center in Sangamon County, visit our website at recc.coop. Find answers to frequently asked questions and learn how a data center located near Lowder, IL, could affect the cooperative and its members.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

### Federal Energy Tax Credit is Ending Dec. 31, 2025



If you've been considering a geothermal system, now is the time to act! The federal energy tax credit expires this year.

### Co-Op Community Grants



Organizations interested in applying for funds may submit their applications any time after Jan. 1, 2026. Schools and nonprofit organizations selected may receive up to \$5,000, thanks to the matching funds provided by CoBank, our primary lender.

### TIPS TO AVOID ENERGY SCAMS



Look out for the "energy-saving device" scam. Whether sold on social media platforms or through random emails, consumers have fallen victim to scams where these products claim to reduce or even eliminate energy bills. These products are advertised as devices that will "balance" or "clean" the power in your home, thus saving you money. There is no such device that can simply be plugged in to lower energy use.



*Our office will be closed on  
December 25th for Christmas and  
January 1st for New Year's Day*

