

President's Report



Josh DeWees
President/CEO

YOU get the credit

Spoon River Electric returns more than \$600,000 to members

It's time for you to get the credit — capital credits, that is — for helping build, sustain and grow your local electric cooperative.

This fall, Spoon River Electric Cooperative is returning more than \$600,000 to members across portions of five counties. When you signed up for electric service with Spoon River Electric, you became more than a customer; you became a member-owner of your cooperative.

Unlike investor-owned utilities that return profits to shareholders, electric cooperatives operate on an at-cost basis. Any money left over after paying expenses is called a margin, and those margins are allocated back to members based on how much electricity they used during the year. These allocations are known as capital credits.

This year, members who purchased electricity from Spoon River Electric during 1979, 1980 and 1981 will receive their capital credit retirements. Payments of \$100 or less will be applied as a bill credit, and amounts greater than \$100 will be issued as a check by mail.

While those years may seem long ago, the funds members contributed during that time helped keep rates affordable, reduce borrowing,

and invest in the infrastructure that continues to deliver reliable power today.

Common questions about capital credits

What are capital credits?

Capital credits represent your ownership in Spoon River Electric Cooperative. Each year, any funds remaining after expenses are allocated to members based on their electricity use. When the cooperative's financial condition allows, these funds are later returned (retired) to members.

Where does the money come from?

Each year, Spoon River Electric collects enough revenue to cover operating costs, loan payments and reserves. Any remaining balance, called the operating margin, is allocated to members as capital credits.

How are margins allocated?

Allocations are based on how much electricity a member used during the year. The more electricity purchased, the larger the member's share of the margin.

Continued on 18C

**Our office will be closed for the
Christmas holiday Dec. 24-25 and
Dec. 31 and Jan. 1 for New Year's Day.**

Spoon River Electric Cooperative

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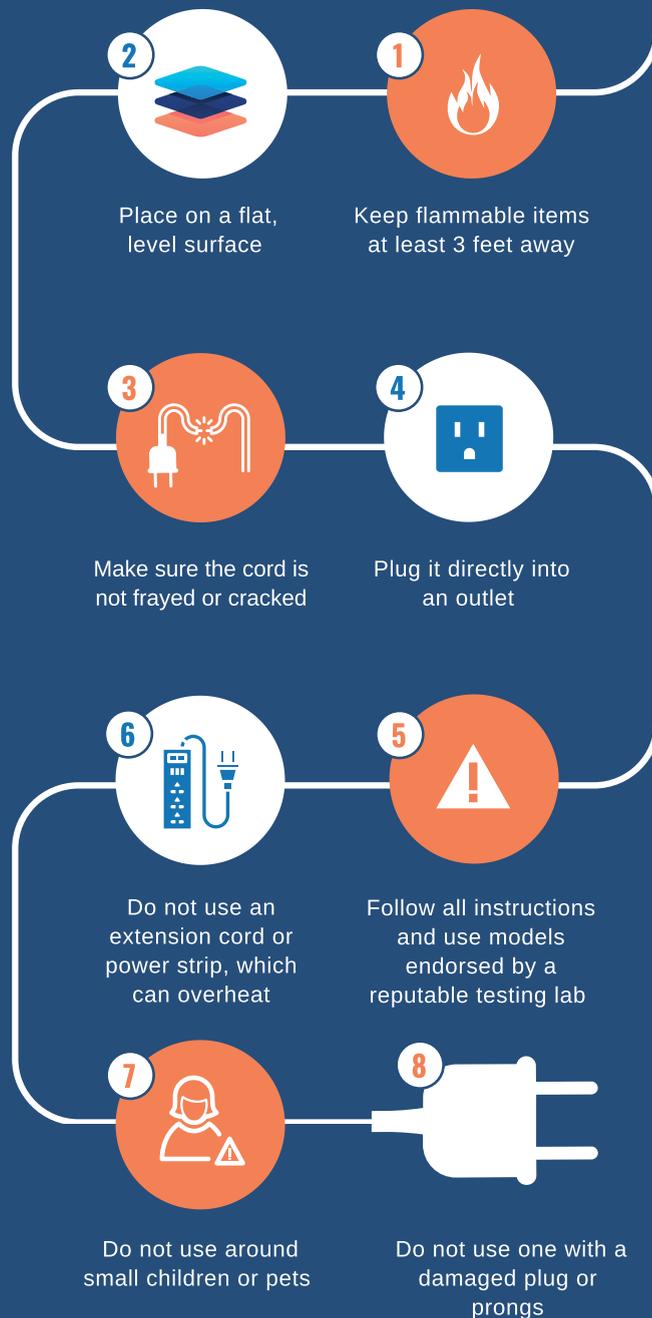
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Spoon River Electric Cooperative – By the Numbers

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

feeling chilled?

HEAT YOUR SPACE SAFELY



Safe
Electricity.org®

"You get the credit" continued from 18A

Does Ameren return capital credits?

No. Capital credits are unique to member-owned electric cooperatives like Spoon River Electric.

Are capital credits retired every year?

Not always. Each year, the board of directors reviews the cooperative's financial position and determines whether capital credits can be retired. Major storms, infrastructure needs or growth can affect when retirements occur.

Do I lose my capital credits if they aren't retired right away?

No. All capital credits allocated for every year members have been served by Spoon River Electric. They are maintained until retired by the Board of Directors.

What years are being retired in 2025?

Capital credits from 1979, 1980 and 1981.

How much will be retired in total in 2025?

A total of \$602,893.30 will be returned to members this year.

Who will receive a payment this year?

Only members who purchased electricity from Spoon River Electric during 1979-1981 will receive a payment or bill credit.

How much has Spoon River Electric returned to members since it was founded?

Since 1938, Spoon River Electric will have returned nearly \$2.1 million in capital credits to current and former members.

How often are capital credits retired?

The board of directors reviews the cooperative's finances annually and may authorize a retirement when equity and reserves are strong enough.

How will the 2025 retirement be issued?

Current members will receive a bill credit or check, depending on the amount. Former members will receive a check by mail before the end of 2025.

What if I've moved?

If you've moved or no longer receive electric service from Spoon River Electric, please make sure we have your current mailing address. Members who purchased electricity during the retired years remain eligible to receive their capital credits even if they now live outside the cooperative's service area.

Purchasing Appliances and Electronics: Best Times to Buy

Product Type	Best Time to Buy for Discounts
 Refrigerators and Freezers	Late winter to early spring (March/April); New models arrive in spring, and older models are discounted; Holiday sales (Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day).
 Washers/Dryers, Dishwashers, Ovens and Ranges	September and October when new models are released and older models are discounted; Holiday sales (Labor Day, Black Friday, Presidents' Day, Memorial Day); End-of-year clearance.
 Large Home Electronics (TVs, home theater)	Holiday sales (Black Friday and Cyber Monday); Amazon Prime Days; Late fall/early winter; Other promos, like Super Bowl sales for televisions.
 Smart Assistants and Other Smart Devices	Holiday sales (Black Friday, Cyber Monday); Other sales events, like Amazon Prime Days.
 Air Conditioners, Heaters and Other Seasonal Appliances	Off season (purchase AC units in fall or winter, heaters in summer); Retailers offer bigger discounts when demand is low.

Additional Purchasing Tips:

- When possible, bundle major appliances for significant savings.
- Be on the lookout. When new models arrive, older models drop in price.
- Retailers typically clear out inventory at the end of the year, which mean big discounts.
- Local retailers typically try to meet end-of-month/end-of-quarter sale quotas, which could mean flexible prices and/or negotiating.



Christmas lights: a history

Long before electricity, people brightened the dark winter months with firelight — 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.

A revolutionary spark

While Thomas Edison invented the incandescent light bulb in 1879, it was his colleague, Edward H. Johnson, who 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.

LEDs, smart displays and sustainability

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.

Keep Your Holidays

**MERRY &
BRIGHT**

Don't add stress to your holiday season. Knowing how to properly use and hang lights could prevent injury or fire.



Make sure your home's electrical system can handle the load.



Unplug lights or decorations before changing a bulb or other parts.



Do not use cords or plugs that are damaged, frayed or cracked.



Only use lights certified by a reputable testing lab.



In addition, consider LED lights when replacing old light strands. LEDs use 80 to 90% less energy than incandescent bulbs.

Learn more:  Safe Electricity.org®