

JAMUP

published by Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative, Dongola, Illinois

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

2026 ROW Plan

Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative (SIEC) proactively engages in a system-wide right-of-way (ROW) maintenance program to provide safe and reliable electric service to its members — all day, every day.



Robert Mayo
Director of Operations
& Maintenance

With over 2,100 miles of power lines to more than 8,500 members within 1,350 square miles of the southern tip of Illinois. Providing cost-efficient and reliable electric service to our members is challenging because the terrain varies and is covered with many fast-growing species of trees. Our well-managed right-of-way maintenance program has been successful as it has a direct correlation with our 2024 reliability rate of 99.92%.

While trees add to the beauty of our communities, they are also responsible for costly property damage as well as dangerous and inconvenient power outages. In fact, tree failure is by far the leading cause of outages. A tree that grows into electrical conductors presents a potential hazard to you and others if it becomes energized when contacting a power line. The right-of-way program is a critical part of our business, but most importantly, it is a critical part of your safety — for your family, friends, and neighbors.

What is right-of-way?

In the strict sense of the word, right-of-way refers to the land on which infrastructure is built. Infrastructure could be anything from a highway, airport or power lines. Projects such as power lines, pipelines or telephone facilities all require right-of-way.

SIEC uses right-of-way to build and maintain power lines. We maintain right-of-way areas by controlling brush and tree regrowth in all easement areas. Right-of-way is usually on private land and is obtained by an agreement with the current landowner when new poles and wires are installed. SIEC doesn't own the private land but is legally granted the right by the landowner to maintain brush and tree regrowth.

We provide electric services with over 2,100 miles of power lines to more than 8,500 members within 1,350 square miles of the southern tip of Illinois. Providing cost-efficient and reliable electric service to our members is challenging because the terrain varies and is covered with many fast-growing species of trees. Our well-managed right-of-way maintenance program has been successful as it has a direct correlation with our 2024 reliability rate of 99.92%.

Why SIEC needs right-of-way

SIEC has a legal obligation to provide safe and reliable electric service to our members. This obligation could not be met without a commitment to an effective right-of-way program. **Derrek A. Kahl**

With the vast size of SIEC's service area and its diverse terrain, a well-maintained right-of-way program is a critical part of our everyday functions. It is important to have clearance between trees, brush and power lines and poles so your power stays on. If the power does go out, a maintained right-of-way helps our line crews spot the cause of an outage so they can get your power back on more quickly. Thick brush and trees in easement areas limit access and cut efficiency and safety for line crews. Before crews can fix a power outage, they need to drive or walk every piece of line before turning on the power, or it could be harmful or even fatal to a lineworker or yourself. If line crews can't access the lines because of poor right-of-way, the member is more likely to be without power for a longer period and more often.

About SIEC's right-of-way program

Right-of-way maintenance is accomplished through side trimming and removing trees and limbs, mowing underbrush to allow access and the use of nonrestricted herbicides. SIEC rights-of-way are on a 7-year cycle. SIEC spends approximately \$1 million dollars a year trimming, treating and clearing rights-of-way.

Our crews pay special attention when evaluating the line clearance before trimming or removing a tree. The National Electric Safety Code requires us to follow a certain amount of clearance around wires and trees. This can depend on voltage, the tree's growth rate and other characteristics, and the re-clearing cycle — how frequently it will need to be re-cleared. Our right-of-way clearance is 15 feet on each

Continued on page 18B

"2026 ROW Plan" Continued from page 18A

side of the power line for single phase, 20 feet on each side for 3-phase, and 40 feet on each side of transmission lines with SIEC's under-build. If trimming needs to be done, the tree should be left in a healthy state with some aesthetic value. If this cannot be accomplished, we may opt to remove the tree if it is cost-effective rather than create an eyesore and future problems. A danger tree is one that is partially dead, shows signs of rot or has insect infestation, cankers, eroded root systems, conifers with brown needles or is a deciduous tree that will no longer leaf out and clearly will cause damage to an SIEC power line that can create an unsafe condition.

In cases where we've encountered large established trees on rights-of-way, we have found that the removal of limbs helps to redirect the future regrowth away from the wires, thereby eliminating the need to remove the entire tree. This also keeps maintenance costs to a minimum while helping to ensure that the tree won't need drastic trimming in the future.

After re-clearing, brush and regrowth are maintained with an herbicide treatment, which encourages slow regrowth. The herbicides that are used are varieties which can be purchased over the counter by private landowners. The products are used in accordance with label instructions and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). We control all species of woody brush and trees. **Charles F. Yates**

2026 ROW PLAN

Substations to spray (June-September)

- Dongola
- Foreman
- Mill Creek
- Olive Branch

Substations to bucket trim (January-December)

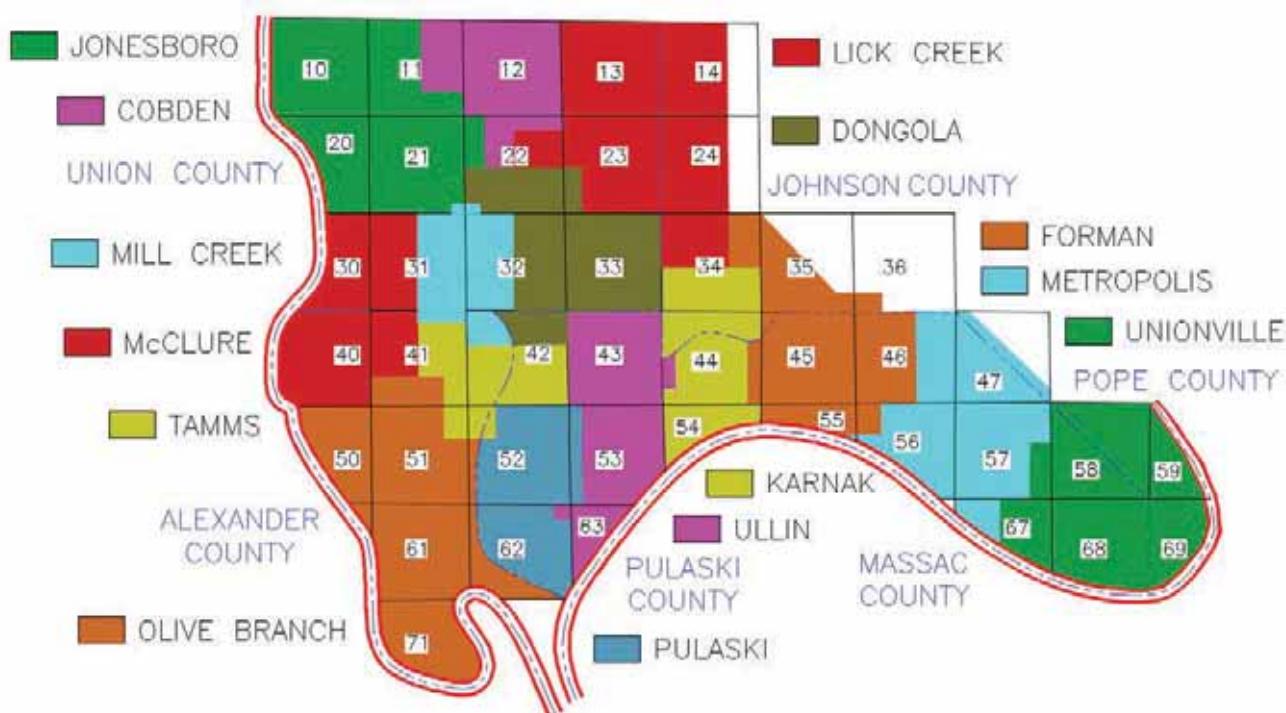
- Cobden
- Dongola
- Foreman
- Mill Creek

Substations to Jarraff trim and mow (February-November)

- Cobden
- Dongola
- Foreman

If you want to know what substation you are on or have other questions, call our office at 800-762-1400.

ROW Area Notification by Substation





Winter safety for outdoor workers

How to protect yourself from frostbite and hypothermia this winter

When the temperature drops, so does your body's ability to stay safe. Outdoor workers — and those who enjoy outdoor sports like hunting, fishing or hiking — face added risks and must take extra steps to guard against frostbite and hypothermia.

Follow these tips and have a plan to stay safe when working outdoors:

- **Watch the weather.** Monitor the temperature and wind chill. Take frequent breaks indoors to help prevent cold stress.
- **Stay warm and dry.** Dress in loose, warm layers. Wear a moisture-wicking base, an insulating mid-layer and a protective outer layer (flame-resistant/arc-rated (FR/AR-rated) if required for your work). Use warm socks and waterproof boots. Remove any wet clothing as quickly as possible.
- **Protect your head and face.** Use a hat, hood or hard-hat liner. When required for your job, choose FR/AR-rated liners or balaclavas. Avoid bulky hats or loose scarves.
- **Keep your hands safe.** Wear insulated gloves or mittens to guard against frostbite. If working with electricity, always use voltage-rated protective gloves with approved liners — never substitute regular winter gloves in place of necessary personal protective equipment (PPE).

- **Fuel your body.** Drink warm fluids, stay hydrated and eat high-energy foods.
- **Know the warning signs.** Watch for frostbite (numbness, skin color changes) and hypothermia (shivering, confusion, slurred speech).
- **Be prepared on the road.** Keep a winter emergency kit in your vehicle with blankets, traction aids and extra PPE.

Recognizing frostbite

Frostbite happens when skin and tissue lose circulation and freeze, commonly affecting fingers, toes, ears and nose. **Paul W. Karber**

Symptoms of frostbite:

- Numbness or tingling in the affected area
- Skin that turns red, white or bluish gray
- Cold, hard or waxy-looking skin
- Stiff muscles and joints

Treating frostbite:

1. If possible, move indoors to a warm place.
2. Warm the affected area with warm (not hot) water, or place hands under armpits.
3. Avoid rubbing or massaging frostbitten skin, as this may cause further damage.
4. Seek medical attention for severe frostbite or skin with blisters.

Recognizing hypothermia

Hypothermia occurs when body temperature drops dangerously low.

Symptoms of hypothermia:

- Shivering
- Confusion or slurred speech
- Drowsiness or exhaustion
- Slow, shallow breathing

Treating hypothermia:

1. If possible, move indoors to a warm place.
2. Call 911 immediately, especially if the person is unconscious.
3. Provide warm fluids, avoiding caffeine and alcohol.
4. Remove any wet clothing and warm the torso with layers of blankets or clothing.
5. Wrap the body and head, leaving the face uncovered.
6. If layers are not available, add body heat.

Cold weather brings unique challenges, from icy roads to freezing winds that make outdoor work even more hazardous. Lineworkers and other outdoor professionals face these risks daily to keep essential services running.

When temperatures drop, look out for one another and take steps to stay safe. Prevention matters — limit your time in the elements, wear proper protective clothing, and stay alert. Working smart in the cold helps ensure everyone makes it home safely.

Member prize

In this issue of the JAMUP, we printed the names of three SIEC members who are eligible to receive a \$10 credit toward their utility bill. If you find your name printed in this center section and it's not part of the story, call Brent with your account number at **800-762-1400** to claim your prize.

SIEC Board of Directors

Scott L. Ury
(President) Union Co.
Jerry P. Thurston
(Vice President) Pulaski Co.
Toni L. Snell
(Secretary-Treasurer) Johnson Co.
Kim Bakehouse Massac Co.
Lamar Houston, Jr. Alexander Co.
Bill Littrell Union Co.
Josh Miller Alexander Co.
Randall Rushing Massac Co.
Nathan Pfaff Pulaski Co.
Ronald E. Osman (Attorney)
Executive VP/General Manager
David A. Johnston
Brent Goforth (Editor)

For Outages Call:
800-762-1400 • 618-827-3555

Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative

7420 U.S. Highway 51 South
P.O. Box 100
Dongola, Illinois 62926

618-827-3555

Office hours: 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

www.siec.coop

Preparing for Storm Season?

DON'T FORGET TO READY YOUR CAR

According to the National Safety Council (NSC), every vehicle should have an emergency supply kit onboard. Kits should be checked twice a year and expired items should be replaced regularly. Emergency supply kits should include:



Snowbrush
Shovel
Windshield washer fluid
Cat litter for traction



Warm clothing
Blankets
Drinking water
Nonperishable foods



Properly inflated spare tire
Wheel wrench & tripod jack
Jumper cables
Fire extinguisher



Reflective triangles
Reflective vest
Brightly colored cloth
(to tie on side mirror)



First-aid kit
Flashlight and batteries
Compass
Car charger for cell phone

**Safe
Electricity.org®**

Source: NSC