

The SOUTHEASTERN Light

SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

President's Comments



Dustin Tripp
President/CEO

Winter Storm Fern

Like many of you, I'm certainly glad that spring is right around the corner. The cold winter weather experienced during Winter Storm Fern, which occurred Jan. 23-27, impacted 35 states, bringing very cold temperatures, snow and ice. In fact, 26 states reported over 6 inches of snow and severe ice accumulations in the south.

During Winter Storm Fern, your Cooperative was instructed to issue public appeals for members to conserve energy in the early daylight hours Saturday morning, Jan. 24. These conservation alerts are not local decisions made by your Cooperative. These alerts come from the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO), the regional organization that oversees the electric grid in the Midwest, which serves more than 45 million people. At this time, I would like to briefly explain what happened in the electric generation industry that caused MISO to issue these alerts, events and public appeals to conserve energy.

As Winter Storm Fern moved into the Midwest, temperatures plummeted, and the demand for residential and commercial heating increased significantly, which resulted in a substantial increase in the demand for electricity. At the same time, as temperatures decreased Friday night to Saturday morning, wind generation declined sharply. To provide an example of how significant this decline was, MISO wind generation in the early daylight hours Friday morning was producing approximately 18 to 19 gigawatts (GW) of energy; however, wind generation in the early daylight hours

Saturday morning produced only 2 GW of energy, which is significantly less than MISO's accredited (expected) winter peak generation of approximately 8-9 GW.

In addition to decreased wind generation availability, the demand for natural gas heating was extremely high, and some natural gas generation units did not run due to elevated natural gas prices. For example, the 2025 average spot price of natural gas at Henry Hub was \$3.52 per dekatherm; however, during Winter Storm Fern, prices began around \$12 per dekatherm and rose to exceed \$130 per dekatherm.

Due to these combined conditions, MISO declared a Maximum Generation Event Step Alert 2C and required your Cooperative, and all others in the region, to issue public appeals to conserve energy. This also allowed MISO to take emergency measures, including importing generation capacity from other regions. The purpose of these public appeals is to reduce strain on the electric grid and help avoid more serious actions, including rolling blackouts. For our members who took extra measures to conserve energy once called upon, your efforts were greatly appreciated.

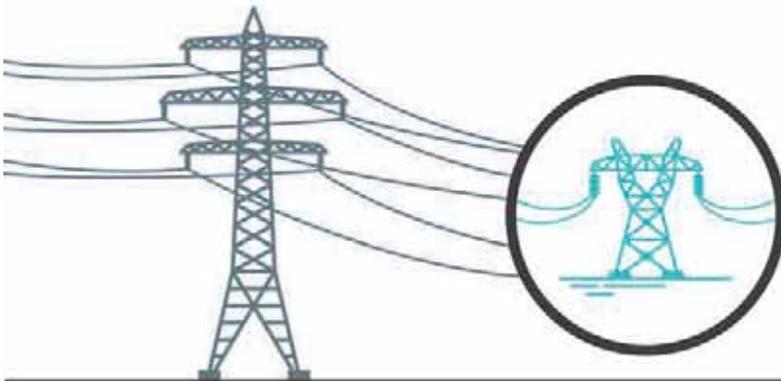
During the early daylight hours of Jan. 24, coal and natural gas units combined to provide approximately 80% of MISO's generation capacity while wind and solar combined to only provide 3% of MISO's generation. This is clear evidence of how important fossil fuel generation is to our energy security.

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READERSHIP
PRIZE WINNER:
William Karnes,
Eldorado IL

The Steps to Restoring Power

When a major outage occurs, our crews restore service to the greatest number of people in the shortest time possible – until everyone has power.



- 1. High-Voltage Transmission Lines**
These lines carry large amounts of electricity. They rarely fail but must be repaired first.



- 2. Distribution Substations**
Crews inspect substations, which can serve hundreds or thousands of people.



- 3. Main Distribution Lines**
Main lines serve essential facilities like hospitals and larger communities.



- 4. Individual Homes and Businesses**
After main line repairs are complete, we repair lines that serve individual homes and businesses.

Tornado safety and electrical hazards

Tornadoes can strike with little warning, leaving behind downed power lines, damaged electrical equipment and dangerous debris. Preparing before a tornado, and knowing how to stay safe afterward, can help prevent electrical shock, fire and injury. Make sure your emergency plan includes electrical safety steps so you and your family are ready to act quickly and safely.

Before a tornado

- Prepare an emergency kit with water, battery-powered flashlight, radio, extra batteries and portable phone charger.
- Keep your electric utility's phone number handy in case you need to report an outage or downed line.
- Fully charge cell phones and backup power banks before severe weather hits so you can use them in an emergency.

During a tornado

- Seek shelter immediately in a basement or a small, interior room with no windows, such as a bathroom or closet.
- Turn off and unplug appliances and electronics to protect them from power surges. Leave one light on so you'll know when power is restored.
- Do not stay inside a vehicle or try to outrun a tornado. Exit the vehicle and seek shelter in a sturdy building. If none are available, lie flat in a low-lying area away from the vehicle and power lines.

After a tornado

- Stay away from downed power lines and anything they could touch, such as trees, fences or debris. Always assume they are energized.
- If you see a downed line while driving, do not exit your vehicle. Call 911 and your utility, and warn others to stay away.

WATCH

A watch means there is a **great chance of a severe thunderstorm or tornado.**

"Watch" and wait for more information while taking precautionary measures.

WARNING

A warning means that a **severe thunderstorm or tornado has been spotted or seen** on radar.

The moment you get a warning, **take shelter in the safest part of your home.**

Safe Electricity.org

- Do not touch anyone who is in contact with a power line. Call 911 immediately and wait for emergency responders.
- Do not enter damaged buildings until electricity and gas are shut off by professionals. Never attempt to turn off power if you must stand in water to reach the breaker.
- Avoid flooded areas with electrical outlets, appliances or cords, and never touch electrical equipment when wet or standing in water.
- Have all water-damaged electrical systems, appliances and devices inspected by a licensed electrician before use.
- Never plug a generator directly into a wall outlet. This can inadvertently energize power lines and pose a lethal risk to you, neighbors and utility workers.

Stay informed, stay alert and share this information to help protect your family and community during severe weather events.

Power outages and generator safety

- Never use a generator indoors or in partially enclosed spaces such as garages, porches, or near open windows and doors. Place it at least 20 feet away from your home to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Keep the generator dry by placing it on a tarp or under a canopy, and follow all manufacturer's instructions.

Our Office will be closed Friday, April 3rd in observance of Good Friday.

"Winter storm" continued from page 18A

These issues are not just impacting our region. On Monday, Feb. 2, Duke Energy made a similar appeal to their customers in North and South Carolina due to the unseasonably cold temperatures blanketing the southeast causing additional strain on generation for that area.

For several years, your Cooperative has been informing members that the electric generation industry is becoming more vulnerable during peak demand conditions due to the transition in the electric generation industry to construct more renewable energy resources (solar and wind) and retiring thermal generation (primarily coal but natural gas as well). Renewable energy resources are intermittent resources, which

means their generation output is dependent upon the amount of wind blowing or sun shining at any specific moment in time. During the early morning hours of Jan. 24, these intermittent resources contributed very little generation capacity due to lack of wind and sun.

It is imperative that the generation 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 thermal 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 or financially feasible.

We truly appreciate your continued trust, patience and support as we work every day to provide safe, reliable and affordable power to the communities we serve. Your Cooperative is committed to thoughtful planning, smart community investments, and doing what's right for our members, today and in the years ahead.

See you next month, and as always, "We'll keep the lights on for you."

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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