



RuralHIGHLIGHTS

Local News from Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative

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POWER DELIVERED

NextEra Energy procures the cooperative's power, which is then delivered through a series of transmission lines into the Midcontinent Independent System Operator region. MISO facilitates the buying and selling of electricity, monitors grid activity, and assures that energy is available for RECC members when and where it is needed. The bulk power purchased from NextEra is delivered through Ameren transmission lines to RECC substations, where it is processed to travel along neighborhood roadways on poles or buried underground. At each individual service location, a transformer is used to reduce the voltage once again, before being connected to the meter enclosure.



Harvel Substation: Line Foreman Shane Norris relocates a line to facilitate Ameren's metering upgrade

The Harvel Sub is one of RECC's nine substations strategically located within the cooperative's service territory. Each substation supplies power for a large region of the cooperative's distribution system. They are interconnected to offer multiple back-feeding options during an outage, but ultimately rely on primary transmission lines to supply them with power.

Each substation houses a transformer to step the transmission voltage down to 7.2kV. They contain switching gear, regulators, reclosers, and metering equipment. Modern substations include communication equipment that utilizes cellular networks to report voltage irregularities, detect faults, secure metering data, and even provide video surveillance.



Line crew working on the Harvel sub included: Hayden Jacobs, Bill Hart, Matt Evans, Michael Lavin, and Dalton Brown



Cooperative Substation Functions

Stepping Down Voltage: Power plants transmit electricity across long distances at ultra-high voltages to prevent energy loss. The substation's primary job is to receive this high-voltage electricity and reduce it down to a manageable level for RECC's distribution lines, which is 7.2kV.

Grid Protection and Safety: Substations act as a giant circuit breaker network for the local community. Equipment like circuit breakers, reclosers, and protective relays automatically detect electrical abnormalities—such as short circuits, lightning strikes, or fallen trees. If a fault occurs, the substation isolates that specific section to protect the broader grid from damage.

Voltage Regulation: The power must remain steady and within an acceptable range. Substations use voltage regulators to actively manage fluctuations, ensuring a constant and reliable flow of electricity regardless of demand.

Rerouting and Switching: Substations serve as a local dispatch center, allowing RECC linemen to redirect electrical flow along alternative paths if needed. Power can be rerouted from a neighboring substation when outages are caused by damaged transmission lines feeding them.

Making their mark: Local students represent RECC in D.C.

Students representing electric and telephone co-ops across the state recently returned home following Youth Tour, a tradition spanning decades that sends students to Washington, D.C., for an unforgettable weeklong trip.

This year, 49 students sponsored by 25 Illinois electric and telephone cooperatives took part in the 2026 Youth Tour, held June 15-22, to visit the nation's capital for an immersive experience designed to educate and inspire the next generation of cooperative and civic leaders.

RECC sponsored two students within its service territory. These students included Lydia Megginson and Elizabeth Allen. They joined more than 2,000 students representing 44 states for the annual event.

"Electric and telephone cooperatives across the state are investing in the next generation through Youth Tour," said Brooke Gross, member services manager and facilitator of youth programs at the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives. "It gives students a chance to see our nation's history and government up close. Just as importantly, it helps them discover their own potential as leaders."

Central to the Youth Tour experience is the formation of a mock student-run cooperative called Chip 'n' Pop Co-op. Students began their journey at the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives headquartered in Springfield, where they selected the co-op's board of directors. The board later interviewed and selected a co-op manager.

Throughout the week, the co-op handled snack sales, decision-making and budgeting — giving participants a hands-on look at how cooperatives operate. All students were members of the co-op.



Co-op leadership included manager Josephine Meyer, Tri-County Electric Cooperative; board chair Elizabeth Hampton, Shelby Electric Cooperative; vice chair Brenna Hays, Wabash Communications CO-OP; secretary-treasurer



Isabella Smith, Menard Electric Cooperative and board members Iris Mount, SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative and Reece Whitley, Wayne-White Counties Electric Cooperative.

"Being part of this co-op helps students understand what makes a cooperative different," said Gross. "It's all about working together and making decisions that serve everyone — not just one person or company."

Over the course of the week, students visited historic landmarks, including Gettysburg, Arlington National Cemetery and the U.S. Capitol, where they had the opportunity to meet U.S. Senator Dick Durbin. They also strolled the National Mall and explored the Smithsonian museums.

Midweek, students took part in the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's Youth Day, where they joined hundreds of other teens from across the country to hear from national leaders and learn how to use their voices back home.

The week concluded with a farewell dinner and dance, and by the time students returned home on June 22, many said they felt changed by the experience.

"These students arrive in Washington, D.C., not knowing what to expect," Gross said. "By the end of the trip, they've built friendships, expanded their perspectives and gained a better understanding of how they can make a difference in their communities."

High school students who live within the service area of RECC are eligible to participate in the annual program. To learn more about Youth Tour, go to youthtour.coop or facebook.com/ILYouthTour.

Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative

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2027 Grants Available

Schools and eligible nonprofit organizations can contact Julie Waghorn at 217-438-6198 or email her at julie.waghorn@recc.coop for more information. An application can also be found on our website at recc.coop. The grants are available with the assistance of CoBank and its Sharing Success program, which provides RECC with matching funds. Applicants must apply before Jan. 31, 2027. Up to \$20,000 will be available to be distributed among four grants.

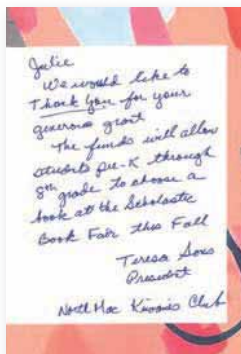


CoBank's Sharing Success program doubles the contributions of its customers to the charitable organizations and causes they care about most.

2026 Co-op Community Grants Awarded



Northern Macoupin Kiwanis Club's Jim Pitchford and Teresa Sons receive a grant check from RECC employees Craig Workman and Hayden Jacobs



Sugar Creek UMC's Shelly Lewis and Gail Austin accepted a grant for their micro pantry; check presented by RECC's Juan Giron & Sean Koen