

PowerLines

May 2020

Times like no other

What a difference a few months can make. Who even heard of COVID-19 six months ago? At Eastern Illini, we are focused on protecting the health and safety of our employees, our members, and the public. We are very aware that EIEC operates a critical infrastructure providing essential electric service to members. This is a responsibility the co-op takes very seriously and that is why it is taking important measures to help ensure the reliable electric service EIEC provides is not compromised during this national crisis.

Some of these measures include restricting employee travel outside the EIEC service area; closing access to the lobby at the Paxton location; implementing work from home for some employees; evaluating the postponement of the EIEC annual meeting; advising all employees who are not feeling well to stay home; and distributing information on best practices for staying healthy, among many others.

We encourage members to use technology to handle their business with the co-op from home. There are many ways members can pay their electric bill without coming into the EIEC office or leaving the comfort of their homes. Please be assured that all methods are safe and secure.

There are a wide array of payment options available to members:

- Call our 24/7 IVR Payment number at 1-888-836-2352.
- Mail in your payment to EIEC: P.O. Box 84, Paxton, IL 60957.



**MESSAGE FROM
THE PRESIDENT**

- Log into your SmartHub account and click "Make Payment".
- Drop off your payment at our drop box in front of the Paxton office near the flagpole in our parking lot.
- Visit our website: www.eiec.org and under the tab My Account, select Payment Options and click "Pay Now". You will need your account number and last name or business name to process a payment.

- Visit our website: www.eiec.org and under the tab My Account, select Payment Options and download the Automatic Payment Plan form.

Please call us at 1-800-824-5102, Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. with any questions or concerns. Eastern Illini will continue to monitor this situation closely.

Even though EIEC has temporarily suspended

disconnections of members' service, and waived collection of applicable late fees, members are still ultimately responsible to pay for their electric use, facility charges, and any other fees reflected on your monthly bills.

We would like to thank our members for their cooperation as the co-op makes necessary adjustments during these difficult times. We are fully committed to providing safe and reliable electric service to members every day.

Sincerely,

Bob Hunzinger

In this issue:

- Remembering a simpler time
- Henry/Wood Centennial Farm
- Electrical safety and teens
- Proposed bylaw amendment
- Credentials Committee
- We're all in this together

Important Notice:

The EIEC annual meeting is scheduled for June 18, 2020. The current COVID-19 pandemic may alter plans for the Eastern Illini annual meeting. EIEC will notify you of any changes.



- View your bill
- Make a payment
- Compare usage by month
- Review known issues
- Report an outage
- Update account information

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Your Touchstone Energy[®] Cooperative 

Remembering a simpler time

When you first meet Frances Wood, you are drawn to her hands as they tell the story of her life. Her hands are strong and weathered, but at the same time smooth and kind. She was born Frances Cornelia Henry on April 19, 1928 on the farmstead where she currently resides near Pesotum.

She remembers life on the farm before electricity. She says when she was a child life was simpler and there wasn't a great deal of time for other things, because she kept busy shucking corn, milking the cows, gathering the eggs, and tending the garden. Frances recalls that time was precious back then and family was everything. Life was rich with family gatherings, chicken dinners at church, get togethers with neighbors and friends, and going to school with cousins. She attended the Catholic school in Pesotum. On her bus ride to and from school, the homes and many of the farms she passed each day were those of an aunt, uncle, cousin or some someone who was related to her.

In her day, cousins were friends and her cousins could often be found playing at her house. Frances has always remained close to her cousin, Alice McDuffie, as they have forever been two peas in a pod. In reflection, Frances never really thought she'd live into her 90s. She feels she has had a good life and is thankful to still be in good health.

Frances remembers that winters weren't so easy. The cook stove heated the room, kerosene lamps provided light, and once a week, her parents heated water on the cook stove for bath water that was poured into a galvanized tub and used by all. Because there was no electricity, there was no furnace, so there was often a chill in the air in the rooms that weren't heated by the cook stove. At bedtime, Frances and her sisters would place hot water bottles under the covers at their feet to warm up the bed enough to get to sleep.



Frances C. Wood

When electricity came to the farm in the 1940s, it changed everything. Getting electricity ranked right up there with indoor plumbing. Her home was wired for electricity way before the rural electric cooperative extended electrical lines to her neck of the woods. In anticipation of the arrival of electricity, Frances and her sisters Eileen and Thelma Jean left all the light switches turned on, so when their home was finally connected, they'd be ready to use electric power.

Frances has very fond memories of going to the Tuscola movie theater with her Grandma Henry to see picture show favorites starring Shirley Temple. She says without electricity, that would never have been possible.

Frances married her high school sweetheart, Jim Wood, on February 5, 1948 and they had five children: Tom, Daniel, Judy, Michael, and Jayne. She kept busy with her children's school activities along with church events, and getting together with neighbors to play cards. Euchre is one of her favorite card games. She also worked for the University of Illinois College of Engineering and retired in 1987.

When she had a spare moment, she enjoyed knitting, crocheting, and painting with acrylic paint. Her rock painting is amazing. She has a wonderful artistic talent for carving and painting beautiful works of art on wooden chairs.

Frances is very proud that her family farm is a Centennial Farm. The Centennial Farms Program with the Illinois Department of Agriculture honors generations of farmers who have worked to maintain family farms in Illinois. The Henry/Wood farm has been in the family for over 100 years.

It's been said that knowledge comes from learning and wisdom comes from living. Frances has done some incredible living and offered some excellent advice:

- Honesty is the best policy. (Benjamin Franklin and Frances)
- Family comes first.
- I'd rather be tough than spoiled.
- If you can't have a brother, ask for a monkey.
- Be satisfied with what you have and make the best of it.
- You can live in a home with one bathroom and survive.

Frances continues to embrace life to the fullest. Her strong and weathered hands learned to use a computer while in her 70s, text in her 80s, and currently in her 90s, she is mastering the many features of her i-Phone. She hasn't yet revealed what technology she will incorporate into her life when she's 100, but you can rest assured whatever it is, Frances will keep strong and carry on.

EASTERN ILLINI MEMBER LIVES ON THE FAMILY FARM IN PESOTUM

Henry/Wood Centennial Farm



Electrical safety and teens

ELECTRICAL

Safety



for
Teens

Parents of teens can relate. You want to share important information with your teen but he or she braces for the next lecture. Your teen may give you the quintessential eye roll but sharing this safety information could help save his or her life. So, when the time is right, relay this information to your teenager to prevent electrical shock.

AT HOME

DO NOT use a cell phone near the bathtub or sink or with wet hands while it is plugged in and charging. **DO NOT** use an extension cord in the bathroom to extend your phone's reach closer to the tub. Teens have died after a charging phone dropped into bath water.

DO NOT sleep with your charging cell phone under your pillow or in bed with you. The phone can overheat, causing bedding to catch on fire or burn skin. Also, a short in the charging cord can cause electrical shock when using your phone. This is especially a risk when using generic or incompatible charging equipment. Always replace charging equipment with brand name/matching items. They cost more, but they are less likely to malfunction.

DO NOT charge your cell phone, tablet or other devices on soft surfaces such as a blanket, pillow or bedding. If you must charge your mobile phone while using it, use a portable charger such as a power bank.

These devices have the same voltage ratings of 5 volts, which don't yield enough power to electrocute users, whereas a live socket delivers 230 volts of electrical charge.

Never charge your cellphone from an electrical outlet in wet places such as bathrooms and swimming pools. Water is a good conductor of electricity, as the 230 volts of electrical charge from the

outlet can travel along the water trail to the cellphone user.

ON THE ROAD

If you are in an accident involving a downed power line **DO NOT** get out of your car. Call 9-1-1 immediately. Only get out if there is smoke or your car is on fire. If that's the case, make a clean exit from the vehicle (make a solid jump out without touching the car) and hop with feet together as far as you can.

DO NOT WALK. Whatever the lines touch may have electrical current running through it.

If you approach an accident with a downed power line, **DO NOT** attempt to help the victims and do not go near the scene. Instead, call 9-1-1 and warn others not to approach the area.

OUTDOORS

- **DO NOT** use plugged in devices near a pool, hot tub or in damp conditions.
- If you are swimming in a lake and feel odd sensations in your body, such as tingling or zaps, swim away from the dock. Sometimes electrical currents can leak into the water and can cause electric shock drowning. If you feel odd sensations in a wading pool, hot tub or swimming pool, get out.

Although you can't cover all these tips with your teen in one sitting, they are important to convey and could prevent injuries and save lives.



DO NOT use generic chargers or cords.

They could **overheat** or shock or burn you.



DO NOT put your cell phone **under your pillow** or take it to bed with you.



DO NOT use charging cell phones or other electrical devices **with wet or damp hands.**



DO NOT bring a charging cell phone or other electrical devices **near water**, including a **bathtub or pool.**



If you are in a car accident involving a downed power line, **DO NOT** get out of the vehicle unless you see smoke or fire.

If you must exit a burning vehicle near or on a downed power line, make a **clean exit from the car** and **land on both feet**; then **hop** with feet together, **DO NOT WALK**, to safety.



BYLAW AMENDMENT AND BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S ELECTION

2020 Annual Meeting

The Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative annual meeting is scheduled for June 18, 2020. The current COVID-19 pandemic may alter plans for the annual meeting. EIEC will notify you of any changes when the decision is made. In the meantime, we want to make you aware of a proposed bylaw amendment and provide information about the board of director's election.

Proposed Bylaw Amendment

The bylaw amendment will be voted on at the EIEC annual meeting or any alternate methods should the annual meeting be canceled or postponed. EIEC members who are not able to attend the annual meeting but wish to vote on the bylaw amendment may request a ballot be mailed to them prior to the meeting. The ballot must be returned prior to the annual meeting. Call us at 1-800-824-5102 to have a ballot mailed to you.

Proposed bylaw amendment up for vote by Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative members:

The Board of Directors of Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative is proposing a bylaw amendment at this year's annual meeting. The proposed change is to Article 3.3 Director Qualifications:

ARTICLE 3.3 DIRECTOR QUALIFICATIONS

A person shall not be eligible to become or remain a director of the Cooperative unless he or she is a bona fide member of the Cooperative receiving service from the Cooperative at his or her principal residential abode.

CURRENT BYLAW WORDING:

In addition, a person cannot become a director if he or she either in his or her own right or through a joint membership is in any way employed by, or has more than a minor financial interest in, any enterprise which operates electrical facilities, competes to a material degree with the Cooperative, or a business selling electric energy or merchandise to the Cooperative, or a business substantially engaged in selling electrical facilities, fixtures or supplies to the members of the Cooperative.

PROPOSED UPDATE TO BYLAW WORDING:

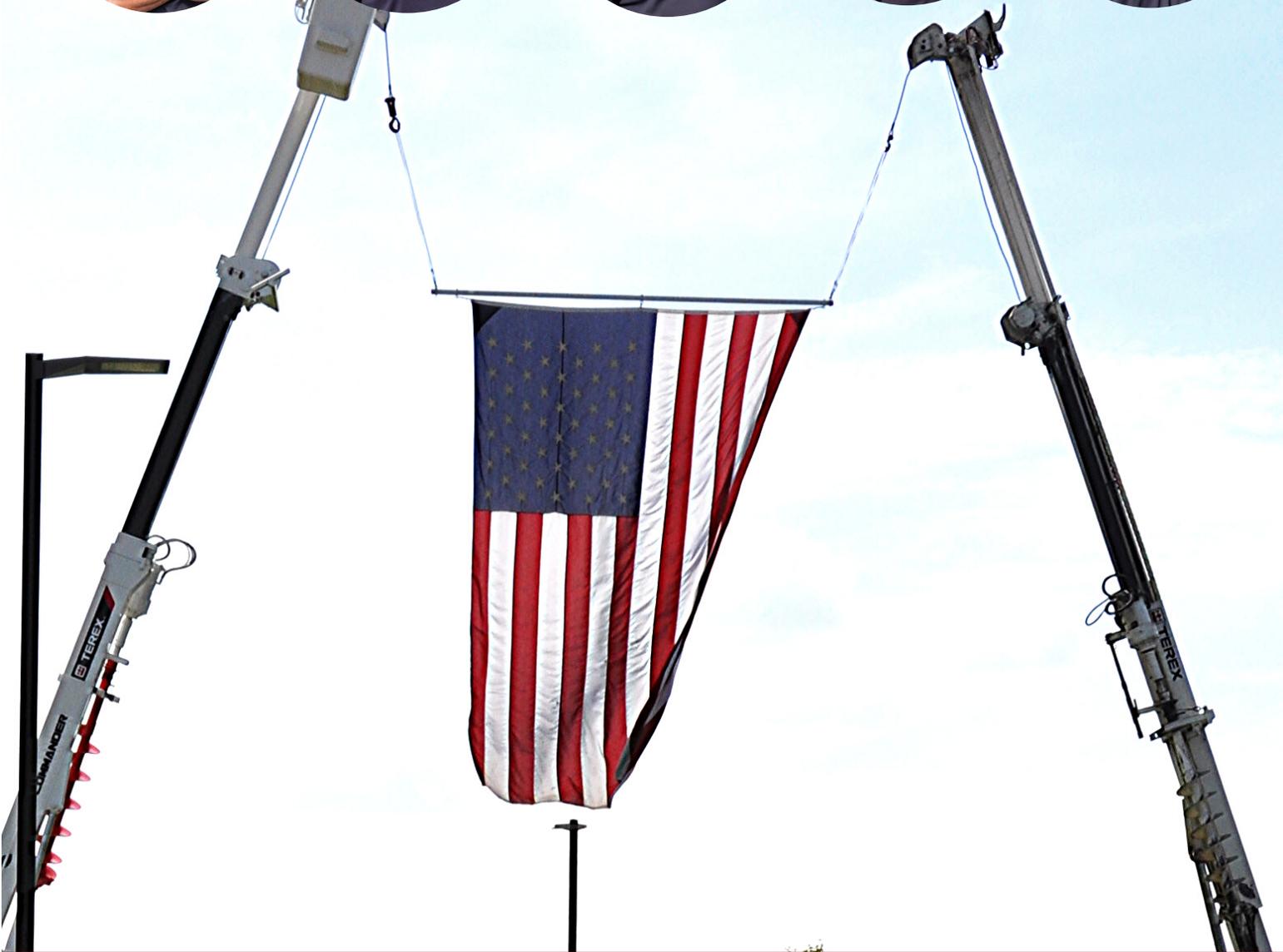
In addition, a person cannot become a director if he or she either in his or her own right or **directly or indirectly** through a joint membership, **spousal or civil union relationship, is an employee or former employee (who was employed by the Cooperative within five years prior to the subject director election) of the Cooperative;** or is in any way employed **in a managerial capacity with,** or has more than a minor financial interest in, any enterprise which operates electrical facilities, competes to a material degree with the Cooperative, or a business selling electric energy or merchandise to the Cooperative, or a business substantially engaged in selling electrical facilities, **materials,** fixtures or supplies to the members of the co-op.

Board of Director's Election

Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative's Board of Directors is made up of cooperative members just like you. They are tasked with setting the policies and guidelines that Eastern Illini's management team then carries out. Each year, three of the nine positions on the board are up for election. Board terms are for three years. In 2020, Directors will be elected in Directorate Districts 2, 5, & 9.

In accordance with the EIEC Cooperative bylaws, Article 3.6: The Board of Directors shall appoint a Credentials Committee comprised of five (5) members to be selected by the Board of Directors of the Cooperative whose duty shall be to review the qualifications of all candidates who have filed nominating petitions, to determine their eligibility to serve as Directors of the Cooperative. The EIEC Board of Directors appointed the following members to serve a 1-year term on the 2020 Credentials Committee: Skip Betka of Rankin, Megan Deck of Hoopeston, Jeremy Hoel of Tolono, Harold Loy of Beaverville, and Tim Totheroh of Wellington.

On Tuesday, April 21, 2020, the Credentials Committee met via Go To Meeting and reviewed the qualifications of Thomas Schlatter of Chatsworth, District 2; Kevin Moore of Hoopeston, District 5; and Lauri Quick of Tolono, District 9 who had each filed nominating petitions. No other candidates filed petitions. After reviewing the petitions, affidavits, and qualifications, the Credentials Committee determined that all candidates are eligible to serve as directors of Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative.



WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER.

We understand this is a difficult time for many of you who have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. We encourage you to stay as current as possible on electric bills. If you are experiencing difficulty paying your electric bill, please call us at 1-800-824-5102 and we will work with you.