

PowerLines

A monthly publication for member/owners of Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative

November 2013

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Scholarship opportunities

PLUS:

Co-op Connections Card
Take a chill out of winter bills

Office Closing

Our office in Paxton, and our warehouse facilities in Gilman and Pesotum will be closed on November 11 in honor of Veteran's Day, and November 28 & 29 as our employees celebrate the Thanksgiving holiday with their families.

As always, please call us at 800-824-5012 if you experience an outage or other issue.



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A Touchstone Energy®
Cooperative 

Why I'm thankful for EIEC

The Thanksgiving season offers a great opportunity to reflect on what's important.

At my family's Thanksgiving dinner each year, we all take turns saying something we're grateful for. My list is usually about the same—good health, wonderful family and friends, and a job serving the great member/owners of Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative.

I'm thankful to be a part of Eastern Illini. Our employees are some of the hardest working people I know. Our mission is to provide safe and reliable electric service to our member/owners, but we also aim to improve the quality of life in east central Illinois. It's a mission we all take seriously.

I'm thankful for Eastern Illini because it allows employees to live alongside those we serve. The beauty of a cooperative is that it's locally owned and operated; there are no distant shareholders pulling the strings behind the scenes. Member/owners like you elect members to serve on the board of directors and govern our co-op. We are your neighbors, your friends, your family.

I'm thankful for my co-op because it serves as a vibrant force in the local economy—partly because we are local. That means Eastern Illini is invested in the future of its communities. That's why we offer no-cost energy efficiency kits for our member/owners in need, and why we go to schools to teach our children about electrical safety and efficiency.

I'm thankful for my co-op because we care. From giving scholarships to young people, to reaching out to members with information that will help them save energy and money, we care about the people and the towns we serve.

I'm also thankful for the wonderful employees that keep the lights on and our board of directors that set the tone for our cooperative.

Finally, I'm thankful for you, our member/owners and faithful readers, because without you, there'd be no Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative.

It seems that as I conclude my 40-year career at Eastern Illini, I have a lot to be thankful for. We live in a wonderful part of the state and our strong rural roots run deep.

Please make a note to read next month's issue of this PowerLines, as I will officially say goodbye and offer some reflections on my career.

Happy Thanksgiving from all of us here at Eastern Illini Electric Co-op.

Respectfully,

Dave Champion



**MESSAGE FROM
THE PRESIDENT**



EVERYDAY SAVINGS

THAT'S THE POWER OF CO-OP MEMBERSHIP

Savings on everyday items. Like up to 85% off prescription drugs at participating pharmacies nationwide.



FIND ALL THE WAYS TO SAVE AT
CONNECTIONS.COOP

Take the chill out of winter bills

Take simple steps now to minimize higher winter bills.

Between holiday houseguests and shorter, colder days, electric bills tend to climb in the winter. Read on for ways to save energy when the temperature drops.

Lower your thermostat

Lower your thermostat to 68 degrees (or lower, if you can handle it). If you decrease the temperature by just two degrees, you can save up to five percent on heating costs. Consider a programmable thermostat that you can set to automatically lower the temperature when you are away from home and then increase it just before you return.

Reduce hot water temperatures

Heating water accounts for 12 percent of the average home's energy use. Set your water heater's thermostat to 120 degrees or lower—that's usually sufficient for a household's hot-water needs. Also, if you've had your water heater for more than 12 years, you might want to consider replacing it with a more energy efficient model.

Seal and insulate

This is the best way to keep heat

in and air out. Areas that may need sealing include corners, cracks, door frames, and windows.

Replace older appliances

Consider replacing old appliances, doors, and windows with ENERGY STAR-rated models: You can save about 15 percent of your normal energy use with these appliances and get better insulation on doors and windows for the price you pay. ENERGY STAR-rated items meet special efficiency standards set by the federal government.

Adjust blinds and curtains

Keep them open to let in sunlight during the day, and closed at night to keep heat inside and protect from drafts.

Free your vents

HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) systems will have to work twice as hard if vents are blocked by rugs, furniture, or doors. Keep vents clear for proper air flow.

Keep food cool

Don't make your fridge work too hard. A temperature set between 34 and 37 degrees Fahrenheit is usually sufficient.

A special holiday tip

Use LED lights to decorate. They're up to 75 percent more energy efficient than traditional incandescent lights and last much longer—but check for an ENERGY-STAR rating before you buy.



Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

If you're expecting guests for holiday festivities, consider giving your heating unit a break. With the oven cranked up and the house packed with people, the temperature will rise on its own. Also make sure it has a clean filter so it can work as efficiently as possible all winter long. Find more ways to save at TogetherWeSave.com.

Source: TogetherWeSave.com



Invest in Efficiency

The benefits of some home efficiency investments aren't seen as quickly as others. Here's how a few upgrades compare over time:



Set Water Heater to 120°

No Cost; Save \$73/yr

Open Window Blinds in Winter; Close in Summer

No Cost; Save \$35/yr

Adjust Thermostat 1° Down in Winter, 1° Up in Summer

No Cost; Save \$82/yr



ENERGY STAR Clothes Washer

Costs \$194 extra; Save \$140/yr

ENERGY STAR Refrigerator

Costs \$97 extra; Save \$100/yr

Wrap Hot Water Tank

Costs \$85; Save \$23/yr

Upgrade to ENERGY STAR Heat Pump (From 10 to 15 SEER)

Costs \$5,700; Save \$408/yr

Instant Benefit

1-5 Year Payback

Long Term Investment

Find more ways to save at **TogetherWeSave.com.**

Source: U.S. Department of Energy Home Energy Saver, Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives. Based on national average savings; actual savings will vary by climate.

Scholarship applications available

First set of scholarship applications are due by December 31.

Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative is proud to offer two separate scholarship programs for graduating seniors. The first one involves students from all of the electric cooperatives in Illinois. The second one, which will officially be announced next month, is exclusively for Eastern Illini member families.

In 2014, seven scholarships, of \$1,500 each, will be awarded to eligible high school seniors through the Illinois Electric Cooperative (IEC) Memorial Scholarship Program.

Four scholarships will be awarded to students who are children of an Illinois electric cooperative member/owner. All Eastern Illini member families are eligible. A fifth scholarship, the Earl W. Struck Memorial Scholarship, will be awarded to a student who is the child of an Illinois electric cooperative employee or director.

The sixth and seventh scholarships are for students enrolling full-time at a two-year Illinois community college who are children of Illinois electric cooperative members, employees or directors. The scholarship applications are due by December 31.

An eighth scholarship, of \$1,500, the LaVern and Nola McEntire Lineworker's Scholarship, will be awarded to help pay for costs associated with lineworker's school conducted by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives in conjunction with Lincoln Land Community College in Springfield.



Students who are children of an Illinois electric cooperative member/owner, or are related to an employee or director at an Illinois electric co-op are eligible, as are individuals who have served or are serving in the armed forces or National Guard. Applications for this scholarship must be postmarked by April 30.

Youth to Washington Scholarship

Eastern Illini's main scholarship contest, the Youth to Washington Scholarship program, offers two graduating seniors the chance to win a \$1,000 college scholarship, and earn an expenses-paid trip to our nation's capital in June.

While in Washington, D.C., the students will have the opportunity to see government in action while

visiting historical landmarks like the U.S. Capitol, the Lincoln Memorial, Arlington National Cemetery, Mount Vernon, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and the Smithsonian Museums.

More details for that scholarship will be available next month, and the application deadline is January 31.

To see the official rules and to download the scholarship applications visit our website at www.eiec.coop > Community Involvement > Educational Programs > Scholarships.

For more information, please contact Debbie Laird at debbie.laird@eiec.coop or 800-824-5102. Students can also see their high school guidance counselor.