

# PowerLines

February 2019

## Time to Reflect

While sitting in my office during an early January day I noticed fast moving clouds heading north passing by the window. It was an unusually warm day for January, as much as 25 degrees above the normal high temperature, giving this very windy day a March like feel and appearance. With the recent calendar change indicating a new year, our thoughts often turn reflective, possibly including:

- How does time, like the passing clouds, seem to go by so quickly?
- What will happen within our family this year?
- What will happen in the world at large this year?

I will allow you to reflect on your predictions on the last two items for family and world events. Even though the time in each year is always the same (except for the leap year every four years), it seems that time passes more quickly as we age. Maybe it is because we are so busy doing “things” and reacting to life events that we do not take time to adequately consider future plans.

Recently my wife and I updated our original will, which dated back to 1987. A lot changed in 31 years! The two children that were then three and five years old were joined by two others. All of the kids are now out on their own, ranging from 24 to 36 years in age, and are scattered across the country in four different states from their parents. I cannot explain why it took us that long to update such an important document.

The start of 2019 marked five years since I arrived at the cooperative. This time passed very quickly, even with time given

to annual plans and goals, and the longer term strategic planning undertaken. In these five years, the cooperative has met its mission to provide safe and reliable service to members, while improving its financial position. During this time there have been many changes to our cooperative family of employees and directors, and this will continue in the future as time passes. Thank you for your consistent and loyal support of Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative over the years.



**MESSAGE FROM  
THE PRESIDENT**

The utility industry in general is changing, seemingly at a more rapid pace as compared to history. Our longer-range view and plans must consider the possibility of viable alternative energy sources (such as wind and solar) paired with future battery storage that will challenge and possibly upset the cooperative business delivery model. Electric vehicles will likely become more prevalent as well, which will change energy consumption patterns.

If you made resolutions for the new year, now is the time to recommit to them. If you have not yet made or considered resolutions, there is still time – we can all improve in some facet of our lives.

I will make two bold sports predictions for 2019 – both the Cards and Cubs will make the playoffs, and both the Bears and Packers will make the playoffs. As a bonus prediction, Lovie and the Illini football team will win six games and go to a bowl!

Cooperatively,

*Bob Hunzinger*

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**SmartHub is your online and app portal to:**

- View and pay your bill
- Report an outage
- Track your electric use
- Update your account info

**Visit [www.eiec.coop](http://www.eiec.coop) to get started!**

## Need help with your bill?

You may be eligible for assistance in paying your winter electric bill.

Contact your local community action agency for more information, or give us a call at 800-824-5102 for a community action contact list.

Your Touchstone Energy<sup>®</sup> Cooperative

## CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE SELECTED

# Nominating Petitions Available February 21

**Nominating petitions will be available on Thursday, February 21, 2019 for the June 6, 2019 director election.**

The following members have been appointed by the Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative Board of Directors to serve a 1-year term on the 2019 Credentials Committee. Doug Anderson of Donovan, Dave Boomgarden of Chatsworth, Michele Cohen of Ogden, Leonard Boudreau of Donovan, and Marsha Klienmeyer of Camargo.

The Credentials Committee will meet at the cooperatives' headquarters on Tuesday, April 9, 2019, to review the qualifications of all candidates who file nominating petitions to determine their eligibility to serve as directors of the cooperative.

Directors in Directorate Districts 1, 7, 8, and 9 will be elected at the June 6, 2019 Annual Meeting. Incumbent directors Steve Gordon of Rantoul, District 7;

Chad Larimore of Bement, District 8; and Lauri Quick of Tolono, District 9, have indicated they will seek reelection. Harold Loy of Beaverville, District 1, has decided to not seek reelection.

Nominating petitions can be picked up beginning at 8 a.m. on Thursday, February 21, 2019, at Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative, 330 W. Ottawa, Paxton. Each member who desires to be elected to the Board of Directors must have a petition signed by not less than 25 members of the cooperative. Petitions must be filed at Eastern Illini's headquarters in Paxton no later than 5 p.m. on Friday, April 5, 2019.

The nominating process is conducted in accordance with the following provision of the EIEC Bylaws, Article III,

### *Section 3.5: Nominations:*

*Any member of the Cooperative in good standing who desires to be elected to its Board of Directors may be nominated by petition signed by not less than twenty-five (25) members and filed with the*

*Secretary/Treasurer of the Cooperative not less than sixty (60) days prior to the annual meeting of members. Nominations from the floor shall not be permitted. The Secretary/Treasurer of the Cooperative shall cause to be prepared and posted at the principal office of the Cooperative at least forty-five (45) days before the annual meeting, a list of the nominations for Directors thus filed with him or her.*

*A specimen ballot marked "Ballot for Directors" containing the names and addresses of all nominees listed in the order determined by lot conducted by the Board of Directors of the Cooperative shall be printed in or mailed with the notice of the meeting. The Secretary/Treasurer shall also have printed in or mailed with the said notice of the meeting or separately not less than seven (7) days prior to said annual meeting, a statement of the number of directors to be elected and the district from which they are to be elected.*



Eastern Illini's Board is made up of cooperative members just like you. Pictured, from left to right, are board members Harold Loy, Beaverville; Steve Meenen, Melvin; Steve Gordon, Rantoul; Brad Ludwig, Fithian; Chad Larimore, Bement; Tom Schlatter, Chastworth; Lauri Quick, Tolono; Kevin Moore, Rossville; and Bruce Ristow, Cissna Park.



## WAYS TO SAVE ENERGY

# Factors that influence your electric bill

You open your electric bill this month and immediately look around the house to see if a window or door has been left open, because the bill is some what higher than it was last month.

There are many factors that influence the amount of your electric bill - colder than normal temperatures, or more visitors over the holidays. You might have had kids home from school for Christmas break which generated more laundry, and required running the dishwasher extra times. Here are some reasons why your electric bill might vary each month:

### Reason #1: Each month is different

This seems simple, but it is true. The weather is different each month, and your lifestyle can change a bit from month to month. Both of those can have an impact on your electric bill.

Sometimes there are bigger things that can make a difference in your bill. If you look at this month's bill compared to last month, you might notice a big change.

There are two main reasons. One is the weather. It was a bit colder this past month than it was in December. The second, and larger reason, is last month's **Margin Rebate**.

Take a look at your bill from last month. You should notice a line item called the **Margin Rebate**. The Margin Rebate was a result of EIEC having a good year financially, and your ownership stake in the co-op. We had higher than budgeted electric sales. We also had lower whole-sale power costs than forecasted.

Lastly, we were slightly understaffed for much of 2018, so operating expenses were a bit lower. All of those factors contributed to more revenue than we anticipated. Since we're a member-owned cooperative, your Board of Directors decided to give that money back to you in the form of the Margin Rebate. In all, \$800,000 was distributed back to members like you.

When you review your next electric bill, please remember your last bill included the Margin Rebate, so the bill was probably lower than this month's bill.

### Reason #2: Extreme weather

Temperatures can change drastically in a 48-hour span, especially in Illinois. We have no control over those changing temperatures, but we do have control over how we respond.

If a cold wave moves in, do not change the thermostat to reflect the dropping temperatures. Instead, keep the temperature inside the house consistent, and ignore those brief plummets in the temperature. If it gets cold, bundle up!

**Reason #3: Light bulbs that are not energy efficient.** They might be slightly more expensive initially, but in the long run, LED light bulbs are a must when it comes to saving money on electricity. LED light bulbs use up to 90% less energy than traditional light bulbs, and last nearly forever.

**Reason #4: Your home could use some additional insulation.** When you crank up the heat on a cold winter night and your home is not properly insulated you will be wasting money. Old windows and drafty attics are the culprits behind your unusually high electric bill. Invest in new windows, and make sure your attic has proper insulation. The investment today will save you money down the road.

We offer Energy Audits to our members. An energy specialist will evaluate your home and make suggestions on ways to be more energy efficient. Call us at 800-824-5102 to set up an energy audit for your home.

**Reason #5: There's a space heater that runs in addition to your furnace.** People use space heaters to warm colder areas in their home. The assumption that space heating is more economical than cranking up the furnace, is not always true. Sometimes space heaters can inflate an electric bill, especially if they are used for comfort heat, on top of central heating systems to solve heating inadequacies.



**Reason #6: Running appliances that are not filled to capacity.** The dishwasher and the washing machine are two of the greatest inventions. Although these appliances are great for countless different reasons, they may be the culprit behind your unusually high electric bill. These appliances use a lot of energy. Only run the dishwasher when it is completely full. The same goes for the washer and dryer. Wait until the hamper is full before doing a that next load of laundry.

**Reason #7: Lights that are not used strategically in the home.** Every house needs some form of lighting, whether it be ceiling lights or lamps. But did you know that there is a way to eliminate unnecessary electric usage by being strategic with the lighting in your house? Ceiling lights might create a bright room, but they waste electricity and are not efficient. Try lamps instead. They provide direct light rather than ceiling lights. Another energy saving tip is to remember to turn off lights as you leave a room, which saves electricity.

**Reason #8: Unnecessary charging time for devices.** A charged phone or computer is necessary. Keeping that phone or computer plugged in overnight or all day isn't necessary. A phone needs around 2-3 hours to fully charge. Save electricity and unplug your phone when charged.



# IMAGINE NEVER GOING TO A GAS STATION AGAIN!

## Electric Vehicles are Gaining Momentum

The appeal of Electric Vehicles (EV) is gaining momentum as prices drop and range is expanding. EV owners can now confidently drive nearly everywhere with a bit of planning. Chances are you know someone who has purchased an EV. Thanks to the electric cooperative movement, electricity is available everywhere in the U.S., the majority of roads are paved and environmental concerns are increasing awareness about the value of driving EVs.

While many drawbacks of EVs are gone, there is still a major concern limiting EV growth dubbed “range anxiety.” This stems from the persistent limited range of all EVs. While the Tesla offering provides 270 miles for their all-wheel drive model and 355 miles on their standard models, that pales in comparison to most internal combustion cars. And, the lack of a rapid charging infrastructure is considered by some to be a drawback.

Fortunately, advances in battery technology are hammering away at the range issue. Range is steadily expanding and battery management systems are squeezing out more miles. At the same time, more companies and utilities are installing efficient charging stations at their places of business and in public locations. In the near future, range will no longer be an issue.

EVs have a bright future. Though only about 1 percent of U.S. vehicles are electric today, forecasts predict 65 percent of new U.S. vehicle sales in 2050 will be EVs. There are several reasons why EVs are getting a second look from consumers.

**Cheaper to operate:** There is a cost advantage by using electricity over petroleum. Given the considerable efficiency of electric cars compared to internal combustion models, the cost per mile to fuel an EV is approximately one-third to one-quarter the cost of gasoline. And because electric cars don't have

exhaust systems and don't need oil changes, maintenance costs are reduced. To maintain an electric car, just rotate your tires and keep them properly inflated.

**Quiet and quick:** It only takes one ride in a battery-powered car to understand the improved ride quality of an EV compared to a vehicle using a petroleum-powered internal combustion engine. An electric car is very quiet and smooth. What surprises people more is the high torque offered by EVs. Step on the accelerator and power is delivered immediately.

**Home Charging:** Imagine never going to a gas station again unless you need some snacks or a slushy. All you have to do is pull into your garage, reach over for a plug, and push it into the charging outlet. It's very convenient and quick. Wake up the next morning, and you are ready to go.



# STOP BY AND TEST DRIVE OUR NEW EV

## Eastern Illini Plugs in a Chevy Bolt



For the average American household, transportation is the second largest expense after housing. Swapping a gas-powered vehicle for an all-electric vehicle can save you money. The average cost to operate an EV is \$485 per year. Electricity costs are also less than purchasing gasoline and the price is more predictable. As battery technology continues to improve, the cost per mile will continue to decrease.

Stop by EIEC in Paxton and take a test drive in our new Chevy Bolt. You'll find it to be a lively electric vehicle with a spacious cabin and some awesome features. It has a longer electric-only range than other EVs. The Bolt has ample power and brisk acceleration. You can charge this car overnight with a 240-volt charger or use the available DC fast charger to get up to 90 miles of range in a half an hour. The Bolt feels lively when taking off from a stop. It also has excellent acceleration when passing other cars on the highway.

The Chevy Bolt can seat up to five and has heated seats and steering wheel. The Bolt has 16.9 cubic feet of space behind the rear seats. The back seat folds down to expand cargo space.

Standard equipment includes the MyLink infotainment system with a 10.2-inch touchscreen, an OnStar 4G LTE Wi-Fi hot spot, Apple CarPlay and Android Auto Smartphone integration, a six-speaker stereo, two USB ports, and satellite radio. The system's 10.2-inch touch screen is easy-to-use. MyLink provides both in-car entertainment and useful information for managing your charging and driving habits.

As a battery-electric vehicle, the Bolt EV's only power source is its lithium-ion battery pack. The EPA estimates its all-electric driving range to be around 238 miles on a full charge. The Bolt also has an efficiency rating of 128 MPGe in the city and 110 MPGe on the highway.

It's fun to drive regardless of road conditions, and its battery pack gives the car a low center of gravity, granting extra stability. Responsive steering and smooth, strong brakes enhance the driving experience. This vehicle is also coordinated, with good road grip and minimal body roll. Worthy of note is the Bolt's two driving modes that affect regenerative braking. In Drive mode, it operates much like a normal car. In Low mode, the regenerative brakes become more aggressive, allowing you to drive with one pedal. The car will slow down more

aggressively when you let off the throttle. There is also a Regen on Demand feature, which activates aggressive regenerative braking by pulling a paddle on the back of the steering wheel. Keep in mind that the brake pedal may still need to be used in some situations.

The Chevrolet Bolt EV is an appealing pick as a daily commuter, thanks in large part to its 200-plus-mile range, swift acceleration, and lively handling. Its cargo area and seats are spacious, and the Chevy's nicely equipped infotainment system is user-friendly.

Give us a call at 1-800-824-5102 to set up a test drive today. We will have the Chevy Bolt on display at upcoming events and it will be showcased at the annual meeting in June.

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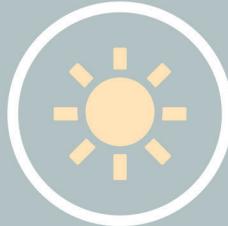
<b>Range:</b>	238 miles battery-only
<b>MSRP:</b>	starting at \$36,620
<b>Charge time:</b>	9.3h at 220V
<b>Battery:</b>	60 kWh 350 V lithium-ion
<b>MPGe:</b>	128 city / 110 highway

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# Space Heater Safety Tips

Space heaters are a great way to warm specific rooms in your home without having to crank up the thermostat, but using space heaters doesn't come without risk! Use the tips below to keep your home safe.

**DO:** Plug your space heater directly into the wall outlet.

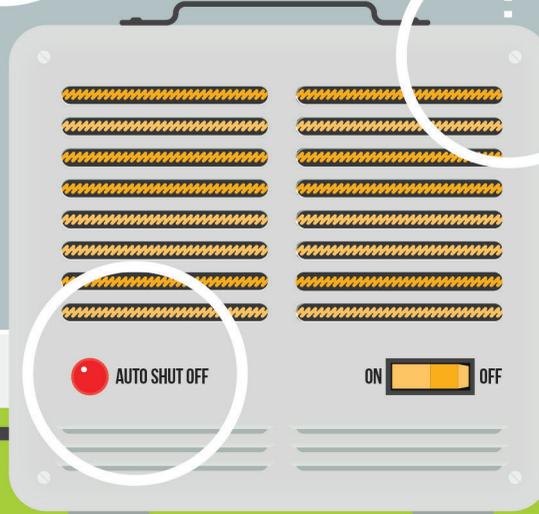


**DO:** Keep your space heater in low-moisture rooms.

**DO:** Keep your space heater at a safe distance (at least 3 feet) from kids, pets and flammable items.



**DO:** Buy a unit with an automatic shutoff in case the unit tips over, or you forget to shut it off.



**DO:** Always follow the directions and take a broken space heater to a qualified appliance service center.



**DON'T:** Leave your space heater unattended. Always unplug it before you leave the house or go to bed.



**DON'T:** Place your space heater near curtains, clothing, furniture or bedding.



**DON'T:** Use an extension cord to plug in your space heater. It can cause the heater to over-heat, and can be a tripping hazard.



**DON'T:** Try to repair a broken space heater yourself.



**DON'T:** Put your space heater in your bathroom. The moisture can damage the unit, which could cause it to malfunction.



AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES