

# PowerLines

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

October 2013

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Fill out our survey for a chance to win \$25

## PLUS:

National Cooperative Month  
Tax credit for geothermal

## Visit our website

Our website, [www.eiec.coop](http://www.eiec.coop), has been updated to provide you with a wealth of information.

Visit our site today to learn about our programs and services, and find tips to save money on your utility bills while you make your home more energy efficient.

Check it out today!



330 W. Ottawa | Paxton, IL 60957  
[www.eiec.coop](http://www.eiec.coop) | [info@eiec.coop](mailto:info@eiec.coop)  
800-824-5102

A Touchstone Energy®  
Cooperative 

## Above and beyond

**Electric co-op membership offers value far beyond safe and reliable electric service.**

Here at Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative, we work hard to deliver safe, affordable, and reliable electricity to our 12,000 member/owners every day. But we don't stop there. Because we're a cooperative, we strive to do much more, to find ways of providing real value to you and the communities we serve.

So what exactly does real value mean? Well, in some ways it's basic, like connecting with a real, local person when you call our office, rather than a recording. It could be finding a copy of the *Illinois Country Living* magazine in your mailbox every month, which keeps you informed about co-op business and items of interest in Illinois.

Or, it's getting the lights back on quicker after a major storm, thanks to our mutual-aid agreements that bring crews in from other co-ops to help us restore

power. Value also comes from our involvement in Touchstone Energy. Using your Co-op Connections Card to get discounts at local businesses and national retailers is a tangible benefit of being a member/owner of our co-op.



**MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT**

October marks National Cooperative Month, when we take time to celebrate co-ops and talk about why our not-for-profit, consumer-owned business model is special. Offering you, our member/owners, real value—and working to improve the quality of life in the communities we serve—is just one way we set ourselves apart.

Respectfully,

*Dave Champion*

## Spots still available for power plant tour on October 23

You can take a behind the scenes tour of the state-of-the-art power plant and coal mine, the Prairie State Energy Campus (PSEC), located in southern Illinois, near Lively Grove.

The tour includes transportation, lunch and dinner. A \$20 tour fee will help offset expenses. A chartered bus will leave Gilman at 6:30 a.m., Paxton at 7 a.m. and Pesotum at 8 a.m.

You can sign up for the tour by mailing your \$20 per person tour fee, and each person's name and contact information to us at:

**EIEC  
Plant Tour  
330 W. Ottawa  
Paxton, IL 60957**

The deadline to sign up is October 9.

# Cooperatives Hit the Mark with Consumers in National Playground

**P**laygrounds flood with games during school recess. A great example is hopscotch. The game can be played by one child or a large group, and the rules are simple. A course is laid out, typically drawn in chalk on pavement. Blocks are numbered in the order they must be hopped in, with a home, or safe, spot at the end. Then players toss a marker into designated squares and hop through the course.

In some ways, the game reflects how cooperatives were formed. Co-ops—not-for-profit, member-owned businesses—may serve a few people or large groups. But all co-ops use the same “course,” following seven key principles. By “hopping” on each principle, co-ops provide an efficient consumer resource focused on service, not profit.

October is National Cooperative Month. To celebrate we’re taking a look at the important role co-ops play in our community.

## What are co-ops?

Cooperatives are owned by their members—the people who receive services from them—and are found in many industries. For example, more than 900 electric co-ops serve 42 million Americans. According to the National Cooperative Grocers Association, 30 percent of farmers’ products are marketed through more than 3,000 farmer-owned cooperatives in America. Familiar brands like SunKist, Land O’Lakes, Cabot Creamery, Ocean Spray, and Sun-Maid are all co-ops formed to help farmers distribute products.

In banking, 10,000 credit unions provide financial services to 84 million members across the nation. Co-ops have also been formed to provide child care, insurance, and housing. Nearly 30,000 cooperatives operate at 73,000 locations nationally.

## Guiding Principles

The cooperative movement traces its roots to a store started by weavers in the town of Rochdale, England in 1844. The Rochdale model revolved around a set of guidelines drawn up by one of its members, Charles Howarth. When introduced into the U.S. by the National Grange in 1874, these “Rochdale Principles” fueled a

cooperative explosion.

Although stated in many ways, the Rochdale Principles hold that a cooperative must provide:

■ **Voluntary And Open Membership:** Membership in a cooperative is available to all who can reasonably use its services, regardless of race, religion, sex, or economic circumstances.

■ **Democratic Member Control:** Co-ops are democratically controlled, with each member having one vote. As a result, control remains in the hands of all customers. Directors are elected from the membership.

■ **Members’ Economic Participation:** Cooperatives provide services “at cost” and remain not-for-profit regardless of the value of benefits delivered. Any money left over after all expenses are paid—margins—belongs to the members. Each member’s share in the margin is determined by the amount of his or her use of the co-op’s services.

■ **Autonomy And Independence:** Cooperatives are self-sustaining, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If cooperatives enter into agreements with others or raise money from outside sources, they do so on terms that maintain democratic control as well as their unique identity.

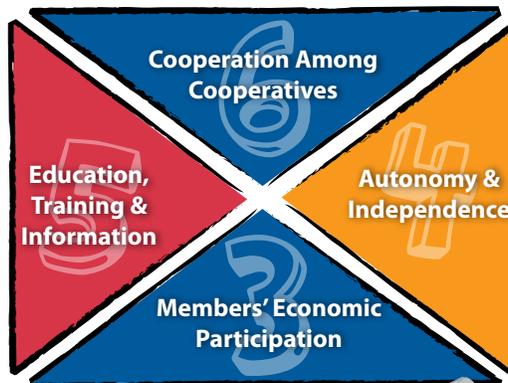
■ **Education, Training, and Information:** Keeping members, directors, managers, and employees up to date on issues so they can effectively govern the co-op. Communication, particularly with young members and opinion leaders, helps generate necessary public support for cooperatives.

■ **Cooperation Among Cooperatives:** Mutual support helps cooperatives improve services, bolster local economies, and deal more effectively with social and community needs.

■ **Concern For Community:** Cooperatives develop communities with programs supported by the membership.

## GUIDING Cooperative Principles

7  
Concern for Community



2  
Democratic Member Control

1  
Voluntary & Open Membership

To learn about electric cooperatives, visit [www.nreca.coop](http://www.nreca.coop). For details on different types of cooperatives, visit [www.go.coop](http://www.go.coop).

# Tax credit still available for geothermal

**If your HVAC system is getting old, going geothermal will save plenty on your utility bills.**

Your own backyard has the potential to be an energy source for heating and cooling comfort. Outdoor air temperatures fluctuate throughout the year with the changing seasons. In contrast, ground temperatures about four to six feet below the Earth's surface remain relatively moderate and constant all year.

That's because the Earth absorbs heat energy from the sun. A geothermal system circulates a water-based solution through a buried loop system to take advantage of these constant temperatures.

A single piece of equipment has the ability to heat and cool your home, while providing some or all of your home's hot water as well. Geothermal systems can save you 30 percent to 70 percent on your monthly utility bills.

## Positive Cash Flow

From the day you install your new geothermal system, you'll see immediate savings. A perfect example of this is in new home construction. The extra cost of installing geothermal marginally raises the mortgage payment but the energy savings more

than make up the difference. So, not only do you have better comfort, lower energy costs, and higher property value, it's like someone is paying you to live in your new home from day one! Retrofitted systems in existing homes can work much the same way.

## Heating Cycle

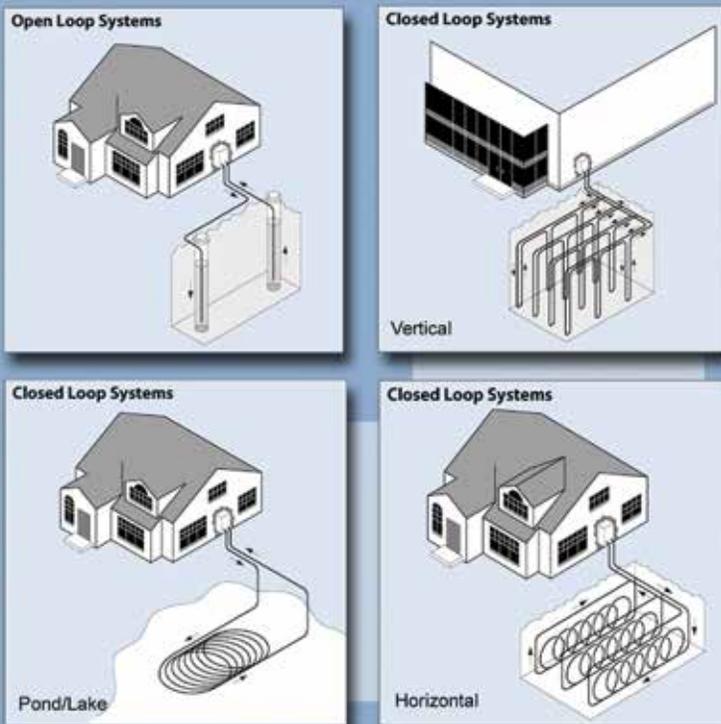
During the heating cycle, the fluid circulates through the loop extracting heat from the ground. The heat energy is transferred to the geothermal unit. The unit compresses the extracted heat to a high temperature and delivers it to your home through a normal duct system or radiant heat system.

## Cooling Cycle

For cooling, the process is simply reversed. Because the earth is much cooler than the air temperatures on a hot day, the geothermal system removes heat from the home and deposits it into the ground. The fluid is cooled by the ground temperatures and returned to the unit for cooling your home.

## Types of Geothermal Heat Pump Systems

There are four basic configurations for geothermal heat pump ground loops. Three are "closed-loop systems," where a water and antifreeze solution is continually moved through pipes; the fourth is an "open-loop system," where groundwater or well water is used.



Source: U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

## The Heart of the System – Geothermal Loops:

Your loop system is the heart of geothermal technology. Regardless of the option you select, it will deliver over 300-plus percent efficient comfort and savings for many years into the future. Your local geothermal dealer will help you select the proper loop system based on a site survey and by conducting a detailed energy analysis of your home.

## Tax Savings

Through 2016, you can get a 30 percent tax credit for the entire cost of your geothermal system. That tax savings makes the normally higher up-front cost more manageable.

For more information, visit the energy efficiency section of [www.eiec.coop](http://www.eiec.coop) or call us at 800-824-5102.



## Energy Efficiency

## Tip of the Month

Keep wintery drafts out of your home by sealing cracks and gaps. Weather stripping around doors and windows works well when you can see daylight between the frame and the wall or floor. Use caulk to seal around the frames where you see gaps. For more tips and tricks, visit [TogetherWeSave.com](http://TogetherWeSave.com).

Source: [TogetherWeSave.com](http://TogetherWeSave.com)

# Fill out our survey for a chance at \$25

Please take a few minutes to fill out this short survey. Answer the following questions, then simply mail it to us along with your electric bill payment. You can also fax the completed survey to us at 217-379-2936 or fill it out at our website: [www.eiec.coop](http://www.eiec.coop).

**All submitted surveys will be eligible to receive one of 10 \$25 bill credits!**

Please rate your satisfaction with Eastern Illini on each of the following:

	not at all satisfied								very satisfied	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Providing excellent customer service	<input type="radio"/>									
Ability to resolve issues or problems	<input type="radio"/>									
Conducting business in a professional manner	<input type="radio"/>									
Friendly and courteous employees	<input type="radio"/>									
Knowledgeable and competent employees	<input type="radio"/>									
Charging reasonable rates	<input type="radio"/>									
Providing valuable programs and services	<input type="radio"/>									
Delivering good value for the money	<input type="radio"/>									
Community involvement and support	<input type="radio"/>									
Providing information about energy efficiency	<input type="radio"/>									
Supporting renewable energy	<input type="radio"/>									
Having a minimum of outages	<input type="radio"/>									
Restoring power quickly after an outage	<input type="radio"/>									

For the following four questions, please rate your answers based on a scale of 1 to 10.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Considering all your experiences, how satisfied overall are you with Eastern Illini?	<input type="radio"/>									
not at all satisfied	<input type="radio"/>									
very satisfied										

To what extent has Eastern Illini fallen short of or exceeded your expectations?

falls short	<input type="radio"/>									
exceeds										
Imagine an ideal utility company. How well do you think Eastern Illini compares?	<input type="radio"/>									
not very close	<input type="radio"/>									
very close										

If you could choose your electric company, how likely is it that you would choose Eastern Illini again?

very unlikely	<input type="radio"/>									
very likely										
How do you view your relationship with Eastern Illini?	<input type="radio"/>									
I'm a member	<input type="radio"/>									
I'm a member/owner										
I'm an owner	<input type="radio"/>									
I'm a customer										

How often do you visit our website ([www.eiec.coop](http://www.eiec.coop))?

Several times per month	<input type="radio"/>									
Monthly										
Daily	<input type="radio"/>									
Weekly										
Rarely	<input type="radio"/>									
I never have										

What portions of our website do you find the most useful?

Energy efficiency	<input type="radio"/>	Tracking electric use	<input type="radio"/>	Viewing/paying your bill (via SmartHub)	<input type="radio"/>	Co-op Connections	<input type="radio"/>
Monthly publications	<input type="radio"/>	News and events	<input type="radio"/>	Outage information	<input type="radio"/>	Employee directory	<input type="radio"/>
				Co-op information	<input type="radio"/>		

Please list your account number so we can contact you if you are one of the winners of the \$25 bill credit drawing.

Your account number can be found on your electric bill. \_\_\_\_\_