

PowerLines

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

July 2015

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Holiday Information

Our office in Paxton will be closed on July 3 as we celebrate the Independence Day holiday.

Please call us anytime at 800-824-5102 to report an outage or for other power-related emergencies.

Have a wonderful 4th of July!



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A Touchstone Energy[®] Cooperative 

The Power of Independence

Eastern Illini Member/Owners,

Thank you for attending last month's annual meeting. We were very happy with the large turnout, and we hope you enjoyed the meal and festivities.

The Fourth of July is a festive day on which we celebrate our nation's independence with family and friends.

While we spend a lot of energy having fun, if we give any thought about our forbearers and their determined efforts to bring about our nation's independence, it's fleeting.

An independent spirit

However, it is worth reflecting that this uniquely American spirit of independence remains part of our collective DNA more than 200 years after the independent nation of the United States was formed and the Declaration of Independence was crafted. And this sense of independence has served us well.

For example, almost 80 years ago, an independent streak inspired groups of farmers across America's countryside to band together and improve their quality of life. Aside from President Franklin Roosevelt's promise of federal aid in the form of low-interest loans and engineering expertise, rural Americans had little help in bringing electricity to their homes.

So, they did it themselves by pulling together and working cooperatively – a shining example of American determination and ingenuity.

Energy independence

You now have an important role to play in the road to energy independence.

You don't have to wait for Democrats and Republicans to agree or

environmentalists and fossil fuel advocates to reach consensus on a path to energy independence. You can play a part in moving us toward national energy independence by taking action in simple, practical ways – insulating and caulking around windows, doors and electrical outlets; washing clothes in cold water instead of hot water; replacing air filters; installing a programmable thermostat; and using more energy efficient appliances.

If we all work together to achieve increased energy efficiency and reduce our overall energy consumption, we can make even more progress on our road toward energy independence, and save money on our bills while we do it.

So this Fourth of July, as you gaze up at the fireworks lighting up the night sky, reflect on the enduring spirit of independence that is integral to our American character.

Sincerely,

Bob Hunzinger



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Annual Meeting held June 11

On Thursday, June 11, 1,038 members and their families (totaling over 2,000 people) attended Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative's 28th Annual Meeting.

The event was geared for family fun and featured several children's activities, including two bounce houses, an inflatable obstacle course, miniature golf, a petting zoo and bucket truck demonstrations.

Other entertainment included the Gene Trimble Band and a pair of costumed energy efficient light bulb characters - CFL Charlie and LED Lucy.

A full meal of fried chicken, roast beef, noodles, potatoes, corn and green beans was provided by Niemerg's Catering, and the Rocking K Chuckwagon provided lighter fare and snacks for those relaxing outside.

All registered member/owners also received a \$25 attendance credit for joining the festivities.

Multiple seminars were also held during the day. The wide-ranging topics included a session by Mary Dickinson, a University of Illinois Master Gardener, offering tips about low-maintenance gardening. Other topics involved USDA loan and grant opportunities, and geothermal heating and cooling.

Mary Hannagan, of Gordyville USA provided a history of Gordyville and shared many stories. Ryan Christensen from the University of Illinois Solar Decathlon Team discussed their projects, and there was also a room dedicated to Eastern Illini programs and initiatives.

Several legislators attended the meeting to show their support for Eastern Illini and to mingle with the crowd. Among the attendees were State Senator Jason Barickman, State Representative Tom Bennett and Patrick Doggett, a staff member for U.S. Congressman Adam Kinzinger.

Bruce Ristow of Cissna Park, Steve Meenen of Melvin, Kevin Moore of Hoopeston, and Brad Ludwig of Fithian were each elected to the Eastern Illini Board of Directors.

Board Chairman Tom Schlatter, and Eastern Illini's President/CEO Bob Hunzinger discussed the current state of the cooperative during the business portion of the meeting.

In 2014, all financial goals were met, and kilowatt-hour sales were well above average. Over \$1.3 million in capital credits were retired during the year for member/owners that received electric service from 1982 and 1983. That retirement was part of an ongoing effort to get to a 25-year capital credit retirement schedule.

Eastern Illini's annual meeting is a tangible benefit of being much more than simply a customer. You are a member - and an owner - of your locally owned and governed electric cooperative.



Left and Right: A petting zoo was a new addition at Eastern Illini's 2015 Annual Meeting.

Far right: Eastern Illini's Board Chairman, Tom Schlatter, visits with CFL Charlie during the annual meeting.



There were many seminars held during the 2015 Annual Meeting. One of the more popular ones was led by Mary Dickinson, a University of Illinois Master Gardener. Here, one lucky member received a door prize.



Kevin Moore of Hoopeston, Steve Meenen of Melvin, Bruce Ristow of Cissna Park (standing, from left to right), and Brad Ludwig of Fithian (seated) were each elected to the Eastern Illini Board of Directors.



Renewable Energy Open House



**Saturday, July 11
9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Wishall residence
547 CR 900 East
Tolono, Illinois**

Attend Eastern Illini's renewable energy open house on Saturday, July 11 in rural Tolono to learn more about solar energy and geothermal heating & cooling technology.

Discover how an Eastern Illini member/owner is leveraging renewable energy technology to lower their utility bills. Free food and drinks will also be available.

The home is located south of Tolono, about 1.5 miles west of Route 45.

Beat the heat with “cool” products

You can package energy efficiency improvements with other home maintenance projects to save even more.

When temperatures soar in the summer, utility bills can do the same. There are several small ways to manage your energy use this summer – and Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative is always happy to help you with those simple, no- or low-cost ways to save – but for those who are considering remodeling or making larger purchases, here are a few ideas that may help keep your energy use in check and keep your wallet cool.

Remodeling?

If you are making esthetic changes to your home, consider products that will also make it work more efficiently. The biggest energy users in our homes are heating and cooling systems, so if you are making upgrades to your floors and cabinets, consider making some energy efficient upgrades to your HVAC system too.

If you’re making additions to your home or converting your attic or basement into living space, a ductless heating and cooling system is a great option. A ductless system does not require adding pipes or ductwork to a home’s existing system, making it a more affordable upgrade. Ductless systems tend to be more efficient, meaning homeowners will use less energy and save on their electric bills. Contact our energy efficiency experts for more information.

If making changes to your heating and cooling system doesn’t seem like the right upgrade for now, consider installing a smart thermostat. These “cool” devices learn your behavior and adjust heating and air

conditioning settings with a goal to save energy. Smart thermostats also have the capability to connect to the Internet, allowing homeowners to manage energy use via a smart phone app. There are several smart thermostat options available on the market, and they typically cost between \$200 and \$400.

Purchasing new appliances?

If you are considering purchasing new appliances that will use less energy, but may not have the budget for a complete appliance overhaul, your clothes dryer is a great place to start as dryers are big consumers of electricity. For example, dryers typically use around 900 kWh each year as compared to a refrigerator, which uses around 455 kWh each year.

There have been big developments with dryers in recent years, and Energy Star awarded two standouts – the LG EcoHybrid Heat Pump Dryer and the Whirlpool HybridCare™ Heat Pump Dryer – the 2014 Emerging Technology Award. Using heat pump technology, these dryers offer 40 percent in energy savings if operated on their most efficient settings and can save more than \$400 over the life of the dryer.

If you are interested in purchasing other appliances



Programmable “smart” thermostats like the nest can help you manage your heating and cooling system from anywhere.

or products, remember to visit energystar.gov and check out their “Most Efficient 2015” list to help you determine which products – from windows and HVAC systems to televisions and washers – are the most efficient for your home.

And don’t forget that Eastern Illini is your partner in energy savings. From interactive cost calculators and downloadable energy guides on our website (eiec.org) to energy efficiency experts trained to help you make good decisions for your home, we’ve got your needs covered!

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



By cleaning your air conditioner’s air ducts, you can lower your energy consumption by between 5 and 15 percent.

Source: energy.gov

More annual meeting images

