

PowerLines

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

January 2014

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Please see page two of this
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"Message from the President"
from our new President/CEO
Bob Hunzinger.



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A Touchstone Energy®
Cooperative 

Hunzinger named CEO

The Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative (EIEC) Board of Directors has named Bob Hunzinger as the cooperative's next President/CEO. Hunzinger will begin his duties on January 1, 2014.

Hunzinger has deep-rooted ties to Illinois. A native of Dieterich, Illinois and a graduate of the University of Illinois with a BS in Electrical Engineering, he has 20 years experience in the utility industry in Illinois working for Illinois Power (in Champaign-Urbana and Decatur) and Soyland Power Cooperative. More recently, he served as General Manager for municipal utilities in Kentucky and Florida. Hunzinger has over 30 years

of varied utility experience. Bob and his wife, Jennifer, have been married nearly 32 years, and have two daughters and two sons.

Hunzinger noted, "I am excited and humbled for this opportunity and the trust the board members have placed in me. I look forward to working closely with the board and the hard working employees of EIEC to continue their history and tradition of providing excellent service. Our member/owners' interests must drive our decisions, as they are the

reason cooperatives were formed more than 75 years ago."

He continued, "I recognize the value and importance of a culture of successful and dedicated service by our employees in providing service for our member/owners. This has been a focus of mine throughout my

career. I am a strong believer in cooperative principles and membership involvement."



EIEC's Board of Directors selected Hunzinger following a nationwide search conducted over many months. The board took this responsibility very seriously and interviewed several highly

qualified candidates – ultimately selecting Hunzinger. "I am very proud of the commitment from the board in doing its due diligence on behalf of our member/owners," said Marion Chesnut, EIEC's Board Chairman. Chesnut continued, "We are confident that Bob will serve our member/owners well, and that he is the right person to lead our cooperative into the future."

Hunzinger follows Dave Champion, as President/CEO. Champion retired on December 31 after 40 years of service to Eastern Illini's member/owners.

Message from the President

Hello, and Happy New Year!

Another year has arrived on the calendar. I trust that you enjoyed celebrating the holidays with family and also found some peaceful time for reflection.

Looking back, how would you characterize the past year? Is it a year that you would like to repeat? Unfortunately for us, time is one thing we cannot recapture – so we look to the future, but remember the past.

I first want to congratulate Dave Champion for his 40 plus years of dedicated and professional service to the cooperative system with Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative.

It is rare in any profession to serve this length of time within the same system. We know that Dave and his family will enjoy his well deserved retirement.

As Dave departs, I step in to help continue EIEC's excellent service tradition of more than 75 years. I'm excited to get the opportunity to work with our employees and board members (who are elected by and represent you) in providing you with safe and reliable electricity service and all the modern conveniences it allows.

I am very appreciative and grateful to you and the board for this opportunity to work with our team of excellent and dedicated employees to implement board policy for the long term benefit of you - our member/owners.

The utility industry will continue to change and evolve, but our focus as employees is to achieve our mission of providing the great service that you expect and deserve.

Jennifer, my wife of nearly 32 years, and I grew up in the farming communities of Island Grove and Dieterich (southeast of Effingham).

My first 20 years working in utilities were centered in the Champaign-Urbana and Decatur areas. We are both excited and looking forward to returning to east central Illinois.

As I wrap up this inaugural column, please know that all of my efforts will be with your best interests in mind for the long term benefit of the membership in total. Please stop in and say hi, or contact me if I can help you in any way.

Sincerely,

Bob Hunzinger



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Affordable. Innovative. Member Focused.

It's hard to predict the future, but one thing seems certain – **new government regulations will increase the cost of electricity.**

We want to work with you to keep your electric bills **AFFORDABLE**. We're controlling costs through **INNOVATION**, and no matter what the future holds we'll continue to put you, our members, **FIRST**.



Eastern Illini
Electric
Cooperative

Find out how we're *Looking Out for You* at
www.eiec.coop.

Looking Out
for You

Youth to Washington Scholarship Contest

Graduating seniors should apply for the \$1,000 scholarship and trip to Washington, D.C.

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.

Official Scholarship Rules

- Applicants must be sons or daughters of Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative member/

owners (consumers) currently receiving service from the Cooperative.

- Applicants must be high school seniors.
- Scholarships may be used for educational costs for an undergraduate course of study at an accredited two-year or four-year college or university, including vocational/technical schools.
- Scholarship winners will be expected to be "full-time" students (at least 12 hours).
- Winners must submit evidence that they are enrolled as full-time students before receiving the \$1,000 disbursements.
- Scholarships must be used within 12 months of high school graduation, are for one year, and are not renewable.
- Scholarships will be awarded based on grade point average, college entrance test scores,

work and volunteer experience, participation in school and community activities, biographical statement, and knowledge of electric cooperatives as demonstrated by a short essay.

- Deadline for receipt of completed applications is January 31, 2014.
- The "Youth to Washington" Scholarship Committee will select the winners.
- Scholarship winners will be notified by March 1, 2014.
- Immediate family members of employees and directors of Eastern Illini are not eligible.

The 2014 Youth to Washington Scholarship application is available on the following page.

For more information, please contact Debbie Laird at debbie.laird@eiec.coop or 800-824-5102.

Member/owners enjoy plant tour

The Prairie State Energy Campus is among the cleanest coal plants in the world.

On October 23, 51 Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative member/owners took a tour of the Prairie State Energy Campus in Lively Grove, Illinois.

The tour included a surface tour of the coal mine, and an in-depth walking tour of the 1,600 Megawatt power plant.

The attendees learned about the many features of the plant, including a \$1 billion investment that makes the campus one of the most environmentally friendly in the world.



2014 YTW Scholarship Application

Name _____

Date of Birth _____

Name of Parent(s) _____

Email _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Home Telephone (_____) _____

Mobile Telephone (_____) _____

High School _____

Counselor's Name _____

H.S. Grade Point Average (100 Point scale) _____

(if your school uses a 4.0 scale, multiply your GPA by 25; if your school uses a 5.0 scale, multiply your score by 20.)

Please list your test scores _____ A.C.T _____ S.A.T

Work and Volunteer Experience

List positions held, for what time period, and whether volunteer or for pay.

Participation in School and Community Activities

List activities (both school and non-school) in which you have participated, along with years of membership or participation.

Biographical Statement

Write a brief biographical statement that includes your educational goals, financial need and other pertinent information about yourself that you feel is important.

Knowledge of Electric Cooperatives Essay

Submit an essay of 500 words or less, in your own words, how and why the cooperative business model is important to you and your community.

*** Each of the above items should be typed, double-spaced, and attached to the application. Since the judging process is done "blind", please do not refer to any proper names or locations.

Statement of Applicant and Parent

I/We have examined this application, including accompanying submissions, and to the best of my/our knowledge and belief, it is true, correct and complete. Furthermore, I/We the undersigned, being the parent of the applicant do hereby agree that if he/she is a winner of this contest, I/We grant our consent for said applicant to take the expense paid trip to Washington, D.C. and the expense paid trip to Springfield, Illinois, sponsored by Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative and the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives.

Date _____

Signed _____
(Applicant)

Signed _____
(Parent/Guardian)

Please return this completed application (and supporting information) to:

Eastern Illini YTW Scholarship Contest

PO BOX 96

Paxton, IL 60957

Your application must be postmarked by January 31, 2014.

Don't blink?

Brief power interruptions prevent sustained outages.

There's no two ways about it - blinks are bothersome. A flashing digital alarm clock or Wi-Fi drop-off is enough to annoy even the most patient person.

But believe it or not, blinks are a key component of a properly operating electrical system. They save you - and your co-op - time, money, and trouble. In short, they're more help than hindrance when it comes to maintaining power quality and keeping your lights on.

Blinks are usually the result of protective equipment clearing a fault. Faults occur when an object - usually a tree limb - touches a power line. That's when our distribution system's self-defense mechanism kicks in - and your lights blink.

On again, off again

Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative's distribution system is equipped with protective devices known as oil circuit reclosers (OCRs), or breakers. OCRs respond to faults through a series of internal switching operations.

When a fault occurs, a relay directs the OCR to open a switch, interrupting power to the fault location. This momentary interruption gives the fault an opportunity to break contact, or clear itself from the power line.

After a second or two, the OCR switch closes. While the switch is open, homes and businesses on that part of the electric line experience a blink.

If the interruption clears the fault, the power stays on. You don't have to call for assistance, and no linemen are dispatched.

If the fault is still present, the process



repeats. After three attempts, the OCR switch remains open, resulting in an outage. At this point, you're no longer dealing with a blink. You're without power. You and other member/owners on that section of line call us, and we dispatch linemen to investigate, make repairs, and restore power.

Limiting momentary outages is a high priority for Eastern Illini. For years, we have pursued an aggressive right-of-way maintenance program to keep trees and branches clear of power lines.

Have blinks always occurred?

Yes! Many of today's electronics require a constant, uninterrupted

supply of power to run properly. Back in the day, we didn't have digital clocks, DVRs, and coffeemaker displays flashing 12:00 when our power blinked. Today we do, making blinks more obvious.

You can help

As a member/owner of Eastern Illini, you can help us keep blinks to a minimum. Please be mindful of power lines and stay clear of the right-of-way when you're planting trees. If you notice trees or limbs growing too close to our lines, we'd appreciate a call. You can reach us at 800-824-5102.

If you're experiencing an unusual number of blinks at your home, please let us know that as well.

You can also take steps to avoid some of the frustration that accompanies momentary outages. Consider purchasing an alarm clock equipped with a battery backup. When the power blinks, your clock doesn't, and you're less likely to find yourself waking up late for school or work.

If the power blinks while you're on your computer, you can lose your data. Plugging your PC into an uninterruptible power supply (UPS) will help protect your work. The UPS will keep your PC running so you have time to save your data and get your computer shut down.

Important NEW YEAR Resolutions . . .

That don't involve diet or exercise!



1. Make sure outlets have GFCIs in the kitchen, bathroom & laundry
2. Replace frayed electrical cords
3. Check for loose-fitting plugs
4. Replace missing or broken wall plates
5. Check for overloaded outlets
6. Make sure light bulb wattage matches the fixture requirements
7. Have an electrician check outlets that are warm/discolored