

PowerLines

October 2020

Fall, my favorite time of year

Cool, crisp mornings with sunny and high blue-sky days. Enjoy the cooler and less humid weather! Fall also brings us the harvest season with increased activity and long work hours. Please be safe in all farm related activities and while traveling the country roads.

COVID-19 has certainly made 2020 a different year with unique challenges. I am extremely proud of our employees' adaptability and work ethic to continue "normal" operation of the Cooperative during unusual circumstances.

EIEC is fortunate to have loyal and dedicated employees who strive to exceed our members' expectations. Please complete our annual survey on page 3. We use the results to ensure that we are doing everything possible to maintain our excellent level of service.

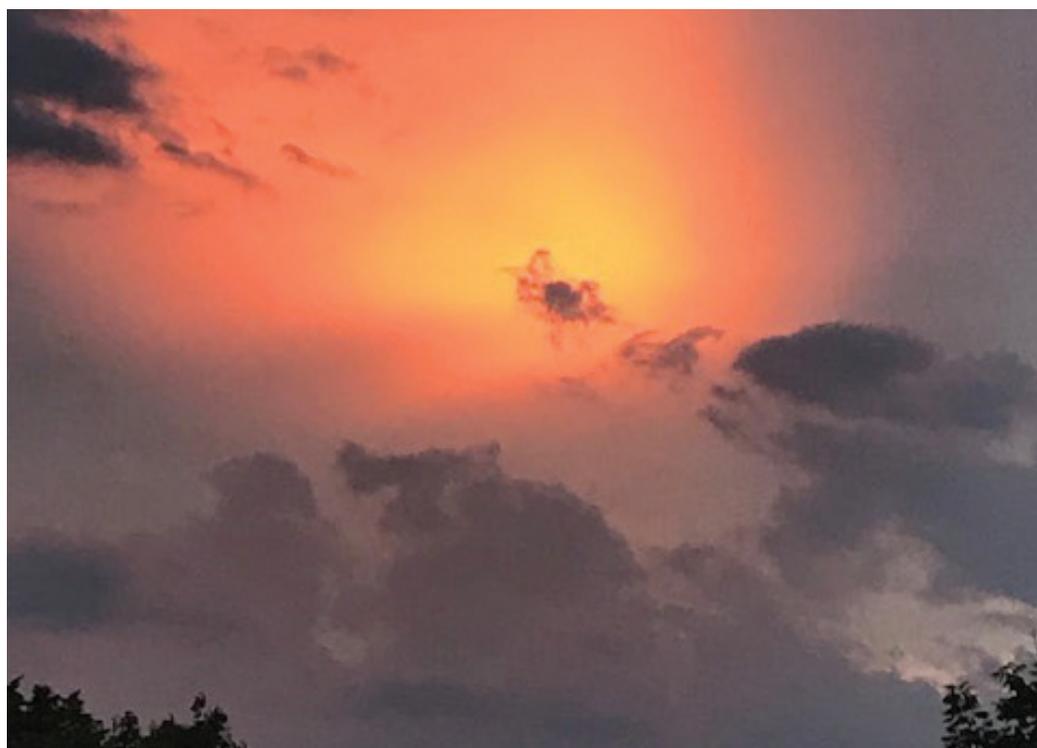
October is national cooperative month. One of the seven cooperative principles is "cooperation among cooperatives". We responded to our Louisiana cooperative brethren call for help in the aftermath of Hurricane Laura by providing linemen and equipment to help restore electric service. Please keep the people in Louisiana and along the gulf coast in your thoughts as they have a long road to recovery.

Cooperatives like Eastern Illini are in the business of helping to improve the quality of life of members – let us know how we can improve.

Stay safe.

Cooperatively,

Bob Hunzinger

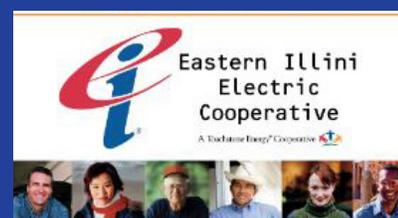


Late summer sunset approaching

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How do you want to save today?



Local Deals
Pharmacy Discounts
Cash Back Online
Hotel Savings

Visit www.connections.coop to register and start saving today.

Complete the member survey for a chance to win!

Please take a moment to complete and return the member survey on page 3. Your input is appreciated.

All submitted surveys will be eligible to win one of 10 \$25 bill credits being awarded to members.

Your Touchstone Energy[®] Cooperative

October is National Co-op Month

As an electric cooperative, our top priority is always to provide safe and reliable energy to you, the members we serve. Because we are a co-op, our mission is to enrich the lives of our members and serve the long-term interests of our local community—and this mission has never been more critical than in recent months. One of the seven principles that guides all co-ops is “concern for community.” This principle is the essential DNA of Eastern Illini, and it sets us apart.

October is National Co-op Month, and electric cooperatives across the country are highlighting the many ways we “Power On.” Keeping this theme in mind, we recognize the essential role we play in serving a special community like ours. Who would have fathomed in March that COVID-19 would amount to a test

of our community and our nation? The changing circumstances due to the pandemic have created both challenges and opportunities. Over the past several months, we’ve all been challenged to operate differently, and Eastern Illini has stepped up to help our members and strengthen the safety net for our more vulnerable neighbors.

As an essential service, and to ensure reliability of your power supply, we modified our operations to safeguard business continuity. Our line crews and other employees have modified their work to adhere to social distancing and the safety and wellbeing of members, co-workers, and the public. Some staff work remotely. In the office, we have limited and modified meetings. We ask that members wear masks when entering the lobby. In addition, we held the annual meeting at

the Harvest Moon Twin Drive-In Theatre in Gibson City. For the health and safety of everyone, we think these measures were the prudent course of action for the times. For our members impacted by COVID-19 who needed help with their electric bills, we waived late fees, delayed disconnects, and worked with those hardest hit to make special payment arrangements.

We share this information with you, not to boast about Eastern Illini, but to explain how much we care about this community—because we live here too. While the challenges caused by COVID-19 have been daunting, we are heartened to see how everyone is pulling together. Eastern Illini was established by the community to serve the community, and that’s what we’ll continue to do – **Power On.**

Then. Now. Always.
We’re proud to power your life.
October is National Co-op Month.



#PowerOn

COMPLETE AND RETURN MEMBER SURVEY

For a chance to win 10 \$25 bill credits

Please take a few minutes to complete this member survey. Answer the questions and mail it to us along with your electric bill payment. If you prefer, you can complete the survey on-line at **www.eiec.coop**. All submitted surveys will be eligible to win 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="checkbox"/>									
Ability to resolve issues or problems	<input type="checkbox"/>									
Conducting business professionally	<input type="checkbox"/>									
Friendly and courteous employees	<input type="checkbox"/>									
Knowledgeable and competent employees	<input type="checkbox"/>									
Providing valuable programs and services	<input type="checkbox"/>									
Community involvement and support	<input type="checkbox"/>									
Delivering good value for the money	<input type="checkbox"/>									
Providing energy efficiency information	<input type="checkbox"/>									
Supporting renewable energy	<input type="checkbox"/>									
Charging reasonable rates	<input type="checkbox"/>									
Having a minimum of outages	<input type="checkbox"/>									
Restoring power quickly after an outage	<input type="checkbox"/>									

For the following questions, please rate your answer 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?											
not at all satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	very satisfied									
To what extent has Eastern Illini fallen short of or exceeded your expectations?											
falls short	<input type="checkbox"/>	exceeds									
Imagine an ideal utility company. How well do you think Eastern Illini compares?											
not very close	<input type="checkbox"/>	very close									
If you could choose your electric company, how likely is it that you would choose Eastern Illini again?											
very unlikely	<input type="checkbox"/>	very likely									
How do you view your relationship with Eastern Illini?											
							<input type="checkbox"/>	I'm a member	<input type="checkbox"/>	I'm a customer	

List your account # so we can contact you if you are one of the 10 winners of the \$25 bill credit drawing.

Your account number can be found on your electric bill. Account #: _____

Ways to save energy in the kitchen

Ah, the kitchen. It's undeniably one of the most-loved rooms in our homes. It's where we gather with family and friends for our favorite meals and memories. But like most of us, you probably aren't thinking about saving energy when you're planning that perfect dish. Here are some ways you can save energy in the kitchen with minimal effort.

When possible, cook with smaller appliances. Using smaller kitchen appliances, like slow cookers, toaster ovens, and convection ovens is more energy efficient than using your large stove. According to the Department of Energy, a toaster or convection oven uses one-third to one-half as much energy as a full-sized oven.

Unplug appliances that draw phantom energy loads. Halloween is just around the corner, and it's possible you have energy vampires in your kitchen – these are the appliances that draw energy even when they're not in use, like coffee makers, microwaves and toaster ovens. The Department of Energy estimates that one home's energy vampires left plugged can add up to \$100-\$200 annually in wasted energy costs. Unplug them when they're not in use, or better yet, use a power strip for convenient control.

Help large appliances work less. There are small ways you can help your larger kitchen appliances run more efficiently. For example, keep range-top burners clean from spills and fallen foods so they'll reflect heat better. When it's time to put leftovers in the refrigerator, make sure the food is covered and allow it to cool down first. That way, the fridge doesn't have to work harder to cool warm food. An overstuffed refrigerator is inefficient. Be sure not to crowd your shelves too much. An overly stocked or crowded refrigerator can create warm spots and cool spaces, leading to food spoilage.



Make your life easier by cooking extra portions that you can easily reheat later. By doing this, you will not only save time the next day, you will also not have to worry about using any additional energy except what is required to reheat your food. Frozen home-cooked meals are also a great alternative to fast food since they are often healthier and less expensive.

Use your dishwasher efficiently. Only run full loads, and avoid using the "rinse hold" function on your machine for just a few dirty dishes. The rinse hold function uses 3-7 gallons of hot water each use. If you are so inclined, you can also save energy by letting your dishes air dry. If your dishwasher doesn't have an automatic air-dry switch, simply turn it off after the final rinse and prop the door open so the dishes will dry faster. Also keep in mind that hand washing uses 5 times as much water as an energy-efficient dishwasher.

When you're using your stove to cook, ensure that you are using the right size pots and pans. It would make sense that if you're preparing a smaller meal, then you should use a smaller pan. In fact, it has been estimated that a 6-inch pan on an 8-inch burner typically wastes 40 percent of the heat produced by the burner on

electric cook tops. Also, keeping a lid on your pots and pans helps keep the heat in, allowing you to use less energy to cook your meal. While these choices may seem small, they can actually make a pretty big difference in the long run.

Consider investing in high-quality cookware. A warped pan can waste 50 percent of the heat used on a stove top. However, a flat pan will utilize almost all energy. Similarly, if you use high-quality cookware that is made from highly conductive materials you will get the same results while using approximately 25% less heat. Glass or ceramic pans are better in the oven, and pans with a copper bottom are better on stove tops.

The best way to save energy is to not use it. Try a tasty, no-bake dessert recipe. Your sweet tooth (and electric bill!) will thank you.

A few simple cooking tips help save a small amount of energy here and there, but they all add up in the end. By slightly adjusting a few of your habits in the kitchen, you'll be well on your way to energy savings.

Make safety a priority this harvest season

It is harvest season and this time of year it's important to make farm safety a priority. The crops look good and increased yields translate into longer days and intensified logistics. The hectic work schedule can lead to problems with fatigue, loss of concentration and injuries. Even minor injuries from slips, trips, and falls on the farm during harvest sounds minor, but resulting injuries continue to be the leading cause of hospital visits for farmers.

Injury prevention is key. Keeping three points of contact when climbing structures, as well as simple measures to decrease tripping hazards in the workshop and grain storage area, are easy ways to prevent injury. As hospitals respond to COVID-19, avoiding emergency medical needs is important.

Who could have predicted that COVID-19 would be part of the equation for a successful harvest, so here are some ideas for staying healthy and safe during the pandemic.

- Schedule a brainstorming meeting with all family and employees to discuss possible scenarios and make a list of immediate changes that can lower risk.
- Minimize the exposure of outsiders. Use email, text, and cell phones to communicate with people who do not live on the farm. Observe appropriate social distancing if someone needs to visit the farm.
- Cross-train family members and employees regarding key functions and safe operation of equipment.
- Increase sanitation of workspaces. Make cleaning supplies readily available. Place disinfectant wipes and hand sanitizer on equipment and in truck cabs.
- Stay in the house if you are sick. If employees are sick, tell them to stay home. If family members are sick, ask them to isolate themselves and not visit the farm.

During harvest season, many farmers use GPS auto-steer which decreases driver error and maximizes productivity. Yet safety risks remain. This technology allows drivers to have their hands off the steering wheel, so less focus is needed on steering, which may lead drivers to think they don't need to be as aware of navigation issues.

One critical part of safety around electricity is awareness. It's important to remember that farm machinery is vulnerable to hitting power lines because of its large size, height and extensions. Be aware of the location of overhead power lines and plan a safe equipment route to reduce accidents.

Putting safety first requires alertness, focus and knowledge of potential hazards. Here are some safety guidelines to follow:

- Keep equipment at least 10 feet from power lines. Use a spotter when operating large machinery near power lines.
- Look up and use care when moving any equipment such as extending augers or raising the bed of grain trucks around power lines.

- Always set extensions to the lowest setting when moving loads to prevent contact with overhead power lines. Grain augers should always be positioned horizontally before being moved.
- Never attempt to move a power line out of the way or raise it for clearance.

If your equipment does make contact with a power line, do not leave the cab. Call 911 and warn others to stay away until the utility crew cuts the power.

The only reason to exit equipment that has come into contact with overhead lines is if the equipment is on fire, which is rare. However, if this is the case, jump off the equipment with your feet together and without touching the ground and machinery at the same time. Then, still keeping your feet together, hop to safety as you leave the area.

It is a busy time of year and with the additional challenges of COVID-19, we encourage everyone to make farm safety a priority this harvest season.



2021 Empowering Education Grants



The
application
deadline is
December 4
2020



Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative is awarding **\$500 grants** to teachers in school districts within the EIEC service territory.

The **Empowering Education Grant Program** is designed for teachers to help fund projects that will inspire students and provide memorable learning experiences.

Teachers may apply online at www.eiec.coop. Apply now through Friday, December 4, 2020.

A maximum of **40 grants** will be awarded and winners will be notified in early 2021. Previous winners are not eligible.

ATTENTION TEACHERS! \$500 GRANTS

To apply and for more information visit www.eiec.coop