PowerLénes

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

February 2015



Energy Efficiency Rebates

PLUS:

Space heater safety Technology offers efficiency Co-op Connections Card

Did you know?

Based on our strong 2014 sales (mainly due to the weather), we were able to return over \$639,000 right back to you, our member/owners, in the last few months.

This is a tangible benefit of being a member/owner at a cooperative.



330 W. Ottawa | Paxton, IL 60957 www.eiec.coop | info@eiec.coop 800-824-5102

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Learning the co-op principles

There are seven cooperative principles that give all cooperatives guidance.

One of my favorite bumper stickers is, "If you can read this, thank a teacher." The importance of education was drilled into me by my parents. It is no accident that we educate children from a very early age while their young minds are still dry sponges willing to absorb so much.

The original seven co-op principles set forth in 1844 contained the simple phrase, "Promotion of Education." Today Principle Five states that all co-ops should promote "Education, Training and Information." This is intended for the employees, members and the community at large. It is based on the simple premise that if people know more about the cooperative business model, they will be in a much better position to understand the benefits and promote better use of the co-op and its resources.

While there are almost one million people in the U.S. that work for cooperatives of all types (agriculture, housing, credit unions and many others in addition to electric co-ops) very few of us learn about cooperatives in school. That creates a real challenge when trying to explain the cooperative difference. People understand an investor-owned business is designed to make a profit or that the Red Cross serves the community.

Co-ops have both an economic and social purpose. We operate on a not-for-profit basis so that we can pass along the best price for our good or service to you, our member/owners.

Since the co-op business model is normally not taught by teachers, it is up to us at Eastern Illini, through publications like this one, to ensure that you know about the differences and benefits of being a co-op member.



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Consumer surveys by Touchstone Energy and others consistently affirm that people prefer to do business with a cooperative if given a choice.

So why don't they teach about co-ops in school? One reason offered is that the co-op community is so diverse that teaching about it only creates more confusion. We can address that by starting simple and educating one person at a time.

Learning about Eastern Illini through our website (www.eiec.coop), annual meeting, or stopping by the office to chat with our employees are all good ways to better understand the cooperative model you're a part of.

Also, Eastern Illini employees are more than willing to visit your schools or civic groups to discuss cooperatives.

Just let us know!

Sincerely,

Bob Hunzinger

Space heater safety tips

As temperatures drop this winter, many will look for supplemental heating sources for their homes.

Space heaters can be a good alternative for those who want to warm one area

of their home without turning up the thermostat on the central heating system. However, space heaters are also responsible for 32 percent of house fires, according to the National Fire Protection Association

If you have been using a space heater

in your home this winter, please review these tips from Eastern Illini to keep you, your family and your property safe.

materials

What are the components of your space heater made of? Parts like metal grating can be hot to the touch and may burn anyone who gets too close. Make sure you purchase a heater that is cool to the touch and has guards over the coils just in case little fingers get too close

Placement

While it can be tempting to place a small heater on a shelf so it is not in the way of pets and children, it is safest to leave the heater on a level floor on a nonflammable surface. Keeping the space heater on the floor can

keep it from falling over, preventing fire hazards. Also, remember that space heaters and bathrooms are not a good combination, unless the heater is designed for bathroom use. Moisture can damage the heater.

The most important rule about space heater placement is the three-foot rule. Whether you are using the heater in the bedroom, living room or kitchen, space heaters should always be kept three feet away from flammable materials and out of the way of children and pets.

Special Features Does your space heater have an auto shutoff function if tipped over? Auto shutoff can be a lifesaver. If you currently own a space heater without auto shutoff, consider purchasing a heater with this important safety feature.

Cords

You should never use an extension cord when plugging in a space heater as it can cause overheating. The space heater should be plugged directly into a wall outlet, and should be the only thing plugged in to the wall outlet. Also make sure cords aren't in a high-traffic area so they are not a tripping hazard

Use

Never leave a heater unattended while in use. If you are leaving your home or going to bed, make sure to turn it off. Or better yet, unplug it altogether.

Following these tips and making sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions can keep you safe and more comfortable this winter.

If you have more questions about space heater safety, please contact our office at 800-824-5102.

Did you know?

Space heaters are responsible for 32 percent of house fires, according to the National Fire Protection Association.



- * Place your space heater on a level, non-flammable surface.
- * Make sure your space heater has an auto shutoff function.
- * Never pair your space heater with an extension cord.
- * Never leave a space heater unattended when in use.
- * Purchase space heaters that are cool to the touch.

New technology for the grid

Aging infrastructure across the country is necessitating new technology in the electric grid.

You might not notice when you plug in your toaster or your iron, but the nation's electric grid is undergoing a revolution – a digital revolution. Recent advances in technology are transforming how we make and move electricity, and over time, these changes will greatly improve the efficiency and reliability of electric power.

Rural electric co-ops have been helping lay the groundwork for this transformation with a \$68 million "smart grid" research project funded in part by the Department of Energy. A group of 23 co-ops in 12 states deployed an array of new technologies and installed more than 270,000 pieces of equipment.

Now, we have a better understanding of how we can move forward to modernize our electric system. Despite the relatively small size of most electric co-ops, we are adopting these new technologies at a faster rate than the larger utilities – in part, because we stand to gain more.

Here are some of the benefits these upgrades now offer you:

Reliability

Digital meters send information about outages back to our operations center. Armed with this information, linemen don't have to spend nearly as much time looking for the cause of an outage, and restoration times have decreased.

In addition, new "smart feeder switching" allows us to reroute power during certain outages, thereby minimizing the number of member/ owners who lose power.

Efficiency

Digital meters can provide you with data about your energy use. Member/owners have discovered broken appliances, safety hazards and other problems using data supplied by their meter. More frequently, however, the data gives member/owners a better idea of how they are using electricity – and how they can lower their bills.

With our recent release of SmartHub,

accessing your use data is simpler than ever. Simply visit our website at eiec.coop or visit the app store on your phone or tablet (search for SmartHub) to get started.

So in the future, when you use your phone to see if you remembered to turn off your iron, remember that your electric co-op helped bring about the revolution that made that feat possible.

Electricity Meters: A Field Guide

Meters have evolved beyond spinning dials, and electric co-ops are leaders in deploying new meter technology. While the device on your home could be a classic, you may be suprised at what it can do.



Electromechanical Meter

Invented in 1888, this meter tracks electricity use with spinning dials.

Pros: Inexpensive

Cons: Dials slow with age and require testing

every few years

Can only be used for measuring kWh consumed



Solid-State Electronic Meter

An LED screen displays electricity use on this digital meter.

Pros: Accurate, without a need for testing,

and inexpensive

Cons: May not include advanced features



AMR Smart Meter

Supports Automated Meter Reading, which sends use information to a central database. **Pros:** Can record and analyze electricity use, and be upgraded to support AMI (see below)

Cons: Expensive



Advanced (AMI) Smart Meter

Supports Advanced Meter Infrastructure, which allows for two-way communications with the utility.

Pros: Co-op can offer consumers enhanced options, such as variable time-of-use rates

Cons: Expensive

Image Source: Elster Metering Holdings Ltd.

HomE rebates available for a limited time

The third round of this exciting rebate program is now live.

The HomE program (pronounced home E) started in 2010 with grant funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act program (the Stimulus Program) through the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's State Energy Plan.

Eastern Illini and other co-ops across the state have helped make energy efficiency improvements to hundreds of homes with these funds. The HomE program's initial success meant there would be approval for a second round of funding. And now there is a third round, but it is smaller and will likely be the final offering.

If you didn't get a chance to participate in the first or second round of rebates, you now have a third and final chance. HomE 3.0 rebates are available until funding runs out, or until May 31. The program starts on February 1 and funds are on a first-come, first-served basis. So act now!

"We know a lot of members were unable to participate in the first two rounds of the HomE program for a variety of reasons," Eastern Illini Vice President of Marketing and Economic Development Bob Dickey noted.

"All cooperative members are now eligible for HomE 3.0. These rebates, plus the federal income tax credits that are available for some of the projects, make this a great time to make your home more energy efficient."

Rebate eligibility and guidelines

- The property must be served by Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative
- Only the homeowner can receive the rebate, and it must be for their primary residence
- Rebates apply to both existing homes and new construction
- The maximum rebate per member is \$1,000
- Funding is limited...we expect the rebate dollars to run out by the end of April 2015
- We will create a waiting list for eligible projects, in case additional funds become available

For more information about this rebate opportunity, please contact our office at 800-824-5102.

We're also working with many area contractors, and they should have information about the program. They can also help you fill out the rebate form.

HomE Rebates

\$1,000 Rebate

Geothermal system

\$500 Rebate

Air-source heat pump (16-SEER or higher)

30% - up to \$500 Rebate Insulation and weatherization

\$250 Rebate

Heat pump water heater



How to request the rebate

- An invoice, dated after February 1,
 2015, must be submitted to Eastern
 Illini before a rebate can be processed
- A "project rebate form" (right) must also be submitted to Eastern Illini before a rebate can be processed
- Eastern Illini representatives may inspect the energy efficiency upgrade
- Rebate checks are usually sent within 90 days
- You can send rebate materials to Eastern Illini via email, fax, mail or in person

Mailing Address:

Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative HomE Rebates PO Box 96 Paxton, IL 60957

Fax:

217-379-2936

Email:

bob.dickey@eiec.coop



Project completion date: _

Account # or map location:

HomE 3.0 Rebate Program Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative



Project Rebate Form

The project indicated below has been completed and I wish to receive the appropriate rebate from Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative in cooperation with the Association of Ilinois Electric Cooperatives and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.

Rel	bate for:		Total Proj	Total Project Costs		
	Geothermal heat pump	\$1,000	\$		Maximun Residential Rebate is \$1,000	
	Air-source heat pump	\$ 500	\$		Nebate 13 71,000	
	Heat pump water heater	\$ 250	\$			
☐ Insulation/air sealing - 30% of project costs			(pro	jected total cost) x .30) =(\$500 max)	
Contractor/supplier name:				Phone:		
□ equ	Please attach a copy of your uipment. Please also complete				r and serial number of the new t the equipment is replacing.	
		Equi	pment Info	rmation		
New equipmment				Replaced (old) equipment		
Brand:				Туре:		
Model number:				Estimated age:		
	rial number:					
☐ I certify that I am a member of Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative, this project was for my principle place of residence, and that it is served by the cooperative.				Send this form and a copy of your invoice to: Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative HomE Rebate PO Box 96		
Name:				Paxton IL 60957		
Sigi	nature:			Va aan alaa fath	:f	
Address:				You can also fax the information to 217-379-2936 or email it to bobd@eiec.coop.		
City	y, State, Zip:			or critain it to book	ie ciccicoop.	
	To be completed by Eastern	Illini Electric C	о-ор		Eastern Illini	
Da	ite of EIEC's inspection:					

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उ Kose haet Los S Kisses Chalates Wine .. **CE** ian' c adlelight Dinner His Hers Boy end Girlt Isband Wife Crush Secret Admirer Card uffed Animal Red Heart Togethan Fore. welry Valentine Romana mored Honey S Jue Dear HE rub Cupid Poem Presents ' - Roniance - In Lovebirds Sentiment Liev Sweetic Flowers Roses Bouc 4d Poem Pre rt Hugs Kisses / `andlelight 「 hand V

Take a lesson from Cupid. Don't miss the mark on Valentine's Day savings.

This Valentine's Day, let Eastern Illini's Co-op Connections Card help you cover the flowers, chocolates, dinner, and everything else you need for a romantic evening.

Find all the ways to save at

Connections.coop

