

PowerLines

September 2017

Back to School

Can you believe it! School has started and there has been a hint of early fall in the air for most of August. In a sense, our board of directors attend school on a continual basis through various state and national electric cooperative training sessions. Directors are required to take continuing education classes to remain a board member, so they can best represent you.

During the second week of August, your EIEC directors participated in a two-day strategic planning process that concentrated on the next five-year period, along with a review of long-term business trends and industry changes. The directors reaffirmed the core purpose and business of EIEC – which is to provide safe, reliable, and economically priced electricity and services to our members.

In addition, there was a lot of discussion on how the cooperative can remain relevant with all types of members, especially younger ones. There were a couple of sessions devoted to the trends in the rural economy, specifically in Illinois and the ten-county area served by EIEC. The question is, how can the cooperative help to strengthen the communities and the region it serves?

There is not a simple answer to this question. However, the seventh cooperative principle is “Concern for Community”, where cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies

supported by the membership. Recently, one of our employees, Susan Brown, chaperoned the Youth to Washington (YTW) trip for Illinois students. The YTW program brings thousands of cooperative students from across the country to the nation’s capital for education, camaraderie, and leadership skills, with a specific emphasis on



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

America’s electric cooperatives. EIEC helped to sponsor five local students. The group got a first-hand lesson in crisis management in government as they were there when the Congressional ball field shooting occurred.

Our directors discussed services that could help to improve the quality of life or provide other benefits to our rural area. They gave direction for staff to begin researching high-speed internet, along with solar and other renewable energy sources.

Take time to enjoy your local high school sporting events this fall, and root for the Illini! Please be safe in all that you do, especially as harvest begins later in the month.

Please know that all of our employees are dedicated to providing excellent service to our members. If we can answer any questions or provide any information, please contact us.

Cooperatively,

Bob Hunzinger

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SmartHub is your online and app portal to:

View and pay your bill
Report an outage
Track your electric use
Update your account info

Visit www.eiec.coop to get started!

Labor Day

Our office will be closed on Monday, September 4 for Labor Day. As always, please contact us at 800-824-5102 to report an outage.

Your Touchstone Energy[®] Cooperative

Community Involvement: Empowering Education Grant Program

Our new Empowering Education Grant Program will give each school district in our service area a chance to earn a \$500 grant.

Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative is proud to introduce a new grant program designed to give each school district in our service territory an education grant of up to \$500 each year.

The Empowering Education Grant Program is designed to help fund projects that will inspire and benefit students. Eastern Illini's President/CEO Bob Hunzinger noted, "We are excited to be able to help students in our communities. With our service territory being so spread out, we think this grant program is a practical way to reach our entire service territory."

Hunzinger continued, "School funding is often tenuous. We hope this new grant program will give teachers the opportunity to engage their students with projects that otherwise wouldn't be funded."

The grant program is easy to apply for, and the simple application form is on our website. For the

first round each school year, every district (public or private) that has students from Eastern Illini member families is eligible to be awarded a grant. We will select one grant recipient from each district.

If all of the grant dollars are not distributed in the first round, a second round may award additional grants to a district.

Grants will be awarded based on several factors, including how many students the project will impact, how innovative the project is, and how the project fosters creative learning experiences for students.

FAQs Who is eligible?

Any teacher who teaches grades K-12 at any public or private school located in Eastern Illini service territory is eligible to apply for an Eastern Illini Electric Co-op Empowering Education Grant.

When is the deadline?

The deadline for the 2017/18 school year program is December 1, 2017.

Can multiple teachers from the same school apply?

Yes, but each school district is only guaranteed one grant per year. If additional funds are available, a district could earn more than one grant.

Can a teacher apply for multiple grants?

No, a teacher may only apply for one grant per school year.

Do the grant requests have to be for energy or electricity projects?

No! Any project that positively impacts students is eligible for an Empowering Education Grant.

What is the maximum grant amount?

The maximum grant amount for each grant is \$500. Some grant requests may be partially funded.

What qualities is Eastern Illini looking for in the grant applications?

Several qualities, including innovative learning experiences for students, a clearly defined plan of implementation, how it directly involves students, and providing an adequate budget summary.

When will I know if I have been awarded a grant?

Grant winners will be notified as they are approved. There is no set time frame on announcements.

Who judges the applications?

A panel of judges will review the applications and select the Eastern Illini Empowering Education Grant recipients.

Does Eastern Illini accept applications from private schools?

Yes! Our program accepts applications from private schools.

More information, as well as the application form, can be found on our website at www.eiec.coop. Look for the grant program image on our main page!



Safety: Tips for a safe harvest

Harvest workers urged to take time to reap a safe harvest this fall.

It can be an exciting and exhausting time, the culmination of a season of hard work. However, the rush to harvest can also yield tragic outcomes. Each year, dozens of farm workers are killed and hundreds are injured in accidents involving power lines and electrical equipment.

“Things people see every day can fade from view and in the busyness of harvest time, it’s easy for farm workers to forget about the power lines overhead,” says Richard McCracken of the Safe Electricity Advisory Board. “But failure to notice them can be a deadly oversight.”

Make sure you inspect the height of farm equipment to determine clearance. Keep equipment at least 10 feet away from power lines – above, below and to the side.

“Always lower grain augers before moving them, even if it’s only a few feet,” says Bob Aherin, PhD, CSP & University of Illinois Professor and Agricultural Safety & Health Program Leader.

“Variables like wind, uneven ground, shifting weight or other conditions can combine to create an unexpected result. Also use extreme caution when raising the bed of a grain truck.”

Farm workers should remember these steps to ensure a safe harvest:

- Use care when raising augers around power lines.



- Use a spotter when operating large machinery near power lines. Do not let the spotter touch the machinery while it is being moved anywhere near power lines.

- As with any outdoor work, be careful not to raise any equipment such as ladders, poles or rods into power lines. Remember, non-metallic materials such as lumber, tree limbs, ropes and hay will conduct electricity depending on dampness, dust and dirt contamination.

- Never attempt to raise or move a power line to clear a path!

- Don't use metal poles to break up bridged grain inside bins. Know where and how to shut off the power in an emergency.

Operators of farm equipment or vehicles must also know what to

do if the vehicle comes in contact with a power line: Stay on the equipment, warn others to stay away and call 911. Do not get off the equipment until the utility crew says it is safe to do so.

“If the power line is energized and you step outside, touching the vehicle and ground, your body becomes the path and electrocution is the result,” Aherin said. “Even if a power line has landed on the ground, the potential for the area nearby to be energized still exists. Stay inside the vehicle unless there’s fire or imminent risk of fire.”

It is very important that all farm workers are informed of electrical hazards and trained in proper procedures to avoid injury.

For more information about electrical safety, visit www.SafeElectricity.org

Happy Labor Day!



To the generations of workers who through blood, sweat and tears, and the spirit of cooperation, have built the strongest nation in the world, we salute you!

Happy Labor Day from Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative. Your local, member-owned connection to powerful solutions.



Community Involvement: Sharing Success Program

Two location organizations have received a total of \$8,000 from Eastern Illini and CoBank.

Save the Lorraine Theatre, a local non-profit organization in Hoopeston dedicated to revitalizing a classic theatre, and the Bryce Ash-Grove Education Center, a co-op public school serving students with disabilities in grade K-12, have each received a \$4,000 donation from Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative and CoBank, a cooperative bank serving vital industries throughout rural America.

The principal of Bryce Ash-Grove, Trent Eshleman, noted, “With the uncertainty and inconsistency in school funding, especially in rural areas, we are grateful for EIEC’s and CoBank’s commitment to partnering with us in “providing light” to our students in both their educational needs as well as their physical learning environment. This partnership exemplifies what cooperatives like ours stand for.”

Eastern Illini’s donations were matched by CoBank through its Sharing Success program. Sharing Success was established in 2012 to celebrate the International Year of the Cooperative. Since the program’s inception, CoBank and its customers have together provided more than \$25 million in support to charitable organizations across the nation.

“Sharing Success has had a broader and deeper impact than we ever imagined,” said Tom Halverson, CoBank’s president & chief executive officer. “We are delighted with the growing



participation in the program by our customers, and deeply grateful to them for their assistance in identifying worthy charitable causes deserving of our support.”

If you know of an organization (non-profit or school system) that may want to participate in the Sharing Success program, please contact Mike Wilson at 800-824-5102.

Check Presentations Above, from left to right: Eastern Illini’s President/CEO Bob Hunzinger, Bryce Ash Grove Principal Trent Eshleman, Eastern Illini board member Kevin Moore, Bryce Ash Grove Secretary Renee Rapp, and CoBank’s Aaron Johnson. Below, from left to right: Hunzinger, Save the Lorraine board members Jim Richards, Jeanette André, Marilyn Tyler, Carol Hicks, and Alex Houmes, and Johnson.



