

Halfway through summer

After a three-month hiatus from writing a column due to the annual meeting information editions, welcome to halfway through summer! I hope you enjoyed celebrating our country's 248th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. It seems like the remaining days of summer really start to accelerate after July 4th. School will be starting soon, as will high school and college football, along with all the other fall sports and school activities.

Our employees and directors really enjoyed interacting with the Eastern Illini members that attended one of the three annual meeting events during early June. It was great to see everyone, partake in a delicious meal and each other's company - and we certainly lucked out with brilliant weather days. Thank you for attending, and for your loyalty and dedication to your cooperative!

The Illinois legislative session ended without any significant bills passing that negatively impacts electric cooperatives. However, there were bills introduced into the committee process concerning transparency and solar energy which received much discussion. Similar bills may be considered in the fall veto session or in the 2025 legislative session. We will keep you updated.

Please take time to read the article about the recently installed updated metering system. It has many different capabilities, including increased information available to the member and EIEC, improved outage notification and restoration processes, and we plan to add more automated switching

for more timely outage restoration on the meter communication platform.

Capital Credits – At recent Eastern Illini Board of Directors meetings, your directors took the following actions:

May meeting - 2023 Allocation Voted to allocate the 2023 capital credits to members, which represents the members' equity contribution. This helps to provide funding to operate,

maintain, and upgrade facilities while reducing borrowing costs. The amount of your individual equity contribution for the prior year is shown annually on the August bill statement. This allocation is returned to members at a future time, presently on a 25 year levelized cycle basis.

> June meeting - General **Retirement Payment** Authorized a return of \$1.2 million to be paid to members in late November/early December 2024. These cash

payments (which were previously allocated as capital credits) are returned to Eastern Illini members that received electric service in 2002 and 2003. If you have any questions about the capital credit process, or anything in general, please give us a call at 800-824-5102.

Thank you for allowing EIEC to be your local and trusted energy provider. Stay safe in all that you do.

Sincerely,

Bob Hunzinger

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- View your bill
- Make a payment
- Compare usage by month
- Review known issues
- Report an outage
- Update account information

SmartHub is available online or through an application on your cell phone. Sign up today!

CAPITAL CREDIT ALLOCATION

You will see your capital credit allocation on your bill this month. It represents a tangible demonstration of your ownership in Eastern Illini - your electric cooperative. We allocate the margins to members as capital credits based upon your use of electricity during the year.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

MANUFACTURING & DATA CENTERS REQUIRE ROUND-THE-CLOCK POWER Demand for electricity is increasing

For the first time in two decades, the demand for electricity is set to increase in many parts of the U.S. Starting in 2021 a growing emphasis on energy efficiency for the most part counterbalanced the increasing demand for electricity. Fast forward to 2024 and things are changing and shifting rapidly. The questions that keep surfacing include: Can the grid keep pace? Are electric cooperatives, utilities, and regulators prepared for the significant increase in demand for electricity?

What is driving the increase in the demand for electricity?

The main drivers for increased electricity demand over the next five years are investments in new manufacturing and data centers.

BMW High-Voltage Battery Assembly Plant in South Carolina

BMW Group broke ground on a new high-voltage battery assembly plant in Woodruff, South Carolina. The facility will produce sixth-generation batteries to supply fully electric vehicles at nearby BMW Manufacturing in Spartanburg.

NorSun Powers Up in Tulsa

Norwegian solar company, NorSun, has announced a significant investment in Tulsa, Oklahoma, marking its first manufacturing facility in the U.S. The company plans to invest \$620 million to establish a 5 GW silicon ingot and solar wafer manufacturing plant. This facility will address the growing demand for domestic manufacturing of solar cells and panels, bolstering the renewable energy sector.

This upswing in manufacturing investment can be largely attributed to the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and the CHIPS and Science Act, both of which are channeling investment into domestic supply chains for critical energy transition components, with the IRA already accounting for more than 200 planned manufacturing facilities.



Increasing interest in artificial intelligence (AI) has further amplified the growing electricity demand, with data center electricity consumption projected to increase from 3% of total US consumption in 2022 to 8% by 2030.

Microsoft to build data center in Mount Pleasant, Wisconsin

Microsoft will invest \$3.3B between now and the end of 2026 to expand its national cloud and AI infrastructure capacity by developming a state-of-the-art datacenter campus in Mount Pleasant, Wisconsin.. Microsoft will also partner with Gateway Technical College to build a Data Center Academy to train and certify students for IT sector jobs.

Google building it's first data center in Kansas City, Missouri

Google is expanding its presence in the Midwest with a \$1 billion data center in Kansas City as well as a new power purchase agreement with Ranger Power that will support 400 MW of new-to-the grid carbon-free energy capacity.

One of the challenges associated with manufacturing and data centers is that they typically require round-the-clock power, something that traditional renewable generation, such as solar and wind, cannot consistently meet. In addition, factors such as the accelerated rollout of electrical vehicles (EVs), and heightened peak demand from high temperature and extreme weather, contribute to the ever-increasing demand for electricity.

The need for more electricity will continue for the forseeable future. It will require expanding generation capacity and bolstering the transmission and distribution infrastructure. We are cognizant of this at EIEC and recently implemented a modified rate structure that adds a demand component to our pricing. Because electricity can't be stored in large quantities, the generation, transmission, and distribution of electricty needs to have the capacity to meet the demand of all our members at any given time. The demand charge reflects the cost of maintaining the level of service to meet the forecasted demand. EIEC supports engines of economic development in our 10-county service territory and encourages manufacturing and data centers to locate on EIEC lines and bring additional demand for electricity and new jobs to our area.

Visit us Online at www.eiec.coop

EASTERN ILLINI ALLOCATES MARGINS TO EACH MEMBER Your Capital Credit allocation is on your bill



CAPITAL CREDITS ARE A BENEFIT OF MEMBERSHIP WITH EASTERN ILLINI





Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative keeps track of how much you pay for the electricity you use all year.





Eastern Illini calculates if the overall revenue collected for the year is more than the costs of operation. If there is more revenue than expenses, it's called margin.





EIEC allocates margins to each member as capital credits based upon the amount each member paid for electricity that year. The allocation is added to your capital credit account and it is always yours, even if you move.





Capital credits stay in your account to "go to work" funding the operations of the co-op. We use those dollars to offset other types of financing like taking out loans.*

*Capital credits are not available to be used any other way until retirement. A deceased members estate may opt for early retirement at a discounted rate.





Over time, and based on the financial condition of the cooperative, the board of directors may authorize the retirement of capital credits. Those payments are sent via check, so it is important to keep us up-to-date on your address if you move.





EFFECTIVE OUTDOOR PROJECTS TO LOWER YOUR MONTHLY ENERGY BILL Ways to save energy outdoors



Do you like to spend a lot of time in the great outdoors? If so, a great way to spend some of that time is making your home more energy efficient. With these simple, low-cost outdoor projects, you can lower your monthly energy bills and make your home more comfortable. Now, that's outdoor time well spent.

Switch to LED outdoor lighting

Outdoor lighting is important for safety and security, but also for illuminating your outdoor space for evening fun with friends and family. Why not upgrade your outdoor lights to highefficiency LEDs? They use about 75% less energy than conventional incandescent bulbs, and they last a lot longer. For security lights, add motion sensors to save even more energy and stay safe.

Outdoor solar lights can help highlight your landscaping. They're easy to install, virtually maintenance-free and they won't increase your energy bills. The lights convert sunlight into energy, store it in a battery and then use it at night.

Seal gaps around doors

Gaps around exterior doors waste energy, adding an unwelcome addition to your monthly bills. Weatherstripping is a great idea and it's easy to do to fill those gaps. There are several products you can use such as foam and rubber adhesives. Just cut them to length and attach them. Door sweeps can fill gaps underneath. There are many kinds of sweeps. Some will require fasteners, some will slide onto the door, and others use adhesives.

Caulk windows

Cracked or peeling caulking around windows can create gaps that let air conditioning escape. You can fix the problem yourself following these steps:

- Buy exterior caulk at your local home improvement retailer.
- Scrape away the existing caulk and make sure the area is clean and dry.
- Spread the caulk evenly along the crack between the window and the frame.
- Use a damp finger to smooth the caulk.

Landscaping for energy savings

If you have a green thumb and a little more ambition, planting trees around your yard can help you save energy and stay more comfortable inside. Leafy trees on the south and west side of your home provide cooling summer shade. The leaves fall off in autumn to let warm sunshine through on cold winter afternoons. Evergreen trees on the north and northwest sides of your home provide year-round windbreaks. Remember to call 811 before beginning any digging project to have all underground utility lines marked.

Swimming pools

Few things are more refreshing than cooling off in a pool during the hottest days of the summer. Over time the costs of owning a pool can add up. Electricity use and maintenance can be significant. Here are a few tips to reduce the amount of energy your pool consumes.

- Clean your pool filter regularly. Clogged filters make your pool pump work harder and consume more energy.
- Use a pool cover to keep heat in and save up to 70% per year.
- Avoid running your pool pump all day. Use an automatic timer on your pool pump to control electricity use.
- Turn off the heater or heat pump when on vacation.
- Consider upgrading to a 5-star, energy-efficient pool pump.

Use timers

Using timers is another great way to save on outdoor energy costs. Hooking your sprinkler system up to a timer lets you decide when you want to water your lawn and garden. This can help you save on your water bills too. Timers are also suitable for use with holiday lighting and security lighting you use outside too.

Roofing

Use these roofing tips to increase your energy savings.

- Insulate the roof from inside the attic to reduce the amount of air conditioning you need.
- Choose reflective coating when you re-roof to decrease heat buildup. Inspect you roof for leaks.

Now you can rest easy knowing that all your hard outdoor work will help make your home and property more energy efficient.

Visit us Online at www.eiec.coop

JOB WELL DONE!

EIEC metering system upgrade is complete

Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative has replaced almost 14,000 meters throughout the EIEC service territory over the past year, so it was a significant accomplishment when at the beginning of July, the last meter was swapped out at the home of board member, Mark Slagel, in Strawn, IL.

The team of Tim Kulow, Todd Moore, and Mike Bristle did the honors. Tim recalled that he had been on the crew that installed the existing meter at this location back in 2006.

In August 2020, the board of directors, in their strategic planning meetings, made the decision to replace old meters with state-of-the-art new meters. After much analysis, research, talking with other cooperatives, and numerous conversations with meter manufacturers, a contract was signed in 2021. During COVID, supply constraints slowed the progress of acquiring new meters. In July 2023, the first meter was replaced. It was a group effort by many Eastern Illini employees and WESCO (Sensus meters). The new metering system was pivotal for the implementation of a demand component for billing that began in April 2024.

The last meter installation included a sigh of relief as well as a sense of accomplishment. It certainly has been a job well done by all involved. EIEC is looking forward to using many of the new meter features and advanced applications to provide safe and reliable energy solutions and exceptional service to our members.



Tim Kulow, Mike Bristle, and Todd Moore installed the last new meter in July at the home of board member Mark Slagel in Strawn, IL.



The metering system project team included: Brad Smith, Vice President Operations; Mike Bristle, Electric System Technician; Paul Crutcher, Engineer; Todd Moore, Electric System Technician; and Tim Kulow, Electric System Engineering Foreman.

Truth be told, your electricity comes from people power.



Thankfully, there's one energy source that you can always depend on – the hard-working dedication and efficiency of Eastern Illini employees who provide safe and reliable energy solutions and exceptional service.



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