

PowerLines

January 2021

2021 - At Last!

Let us all welcome 2021 and the hope and optimism that comes with the advent of a new calendar year.

It is a safe bet to say that most of us are glad to see 2020 in the rear view mirror, for various reasons. Of course, the main reason is the havoc caused for all of us by COVID-19. We still have at least a portion, and maybe more, of 2021 to get through before reaching more normal conditions. The recent news of upcoming availability of vaccines has been welcome news. Despite the unusual circumstances, we are striving to continue to provide safe and reliable service for our members.

We made the decision to close the office lobby to members and the public in mid-November after the Governor implemented Tier 3 mitigation measures. Our expectation is that the lobby will remain closed through at least mid-January, and possibly longer. Please contact us if we can provide assistance or answer any questions you may have.

2021 Rate Adjustment

Your Board of Directors (BOD) voted at the November meeting to approve a 1% overall gross revenue increase to be effective with the March 2021 usage billing (April bills). This decision is the culmination of over two years of review of the cost to provide service, along with the associated rate design study. There are a few rate classifications that need substantial adjustment relative to the cost

to provide service. Depending on each member's specific energy use and load factor, the rate impact will not only be different between rate classifications, but also within rate classifications. We will provide more detailed information via our website and other means over the next few months.

Money Back



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Be on the lookout for a Margin Rebate with this bill! Your BOD also voted at the November meeting to provide a substantial return of net operating margins to members to help as much as possible in these unusual times. The projected return of a total of \$1 million via the margin rebate will be based on your 11-month average use from January through November, prorated among the use of all members. This is an immediate and tangible

benefit of being a member-owner of your not-for-profit electric cooperative.

We thank you for the trust you have placed in our employees to serve you. On behalf of all your cooperative's employees and directors, we wish you a happy, safe, and successful 2021. By working together, we can all look forward to a return to more normal conditions in 2021.

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!

Need help with your bill?

You may be eligible for assistance in paying your winter electric bill. Contact your local community action agency for more information, or give us a call at 800-824-5102 for a community action contact list.

Your Touchstone Energy[®] Cooperative 

Member driven and community focused



EIEC member, Roger Gualandi (R), was selected as the winner of \$250 for completing the AIEC bi-annual survey. Cliff Miller (L), Gilman serviceman, made the check presentation.



For the past several years, EIEC has worked with local agencies to provide holiday gifts for children in need in our area. Again, this year, EIEC employees generously donated gifts to local families.

Shana Batte (L), Gayle Ford (C), and Brooke Carlson (R) are some of the many Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative employees who were part of our commitment to community at Christmas.

Stay comfortable and safe this winter

Baby, it's cold outside! When you're feeling chilly at home, there are several budget-friendly ways you can keep comfortable without turning up the thermostat. Here are some easy ways to stay cozy this winter.

1. Whether you are experiencing extremely cold winter temps or you simply "run cold," an electric blanket can deliver quick warmth like a regular throw or blanket cannot. Electric blankets can include a variety of features, like timers and dual temperature settings (if your cuddle buddy prefers less heat). This winter consider an electric blanket instead of turning up the heat, and your energy bill will thank you.

Before plugging in electric blankets, check for any damage and inspect cords for frays, cracks, or cuts. Do not tuck electric blankets under the mattress and place nothing on top of the blanket while it's in use, including comforters and bedspreads. It's best not to allow pets to sleep on the electric blanket.

2. One of the easiest ways to stay cozy at home is to keep your feet warm. Our feet play a critical role in regulating body temperature, so when your feet are warm, your body automatically feels warmer. Try a pair of comfortable wool socks or house slippers to stay toasty.

3. On winter days when the sun is shining, take advantage and harness natural warmth from sunlight. Open all curtains, drapes and blinds in your home to let the sunshine in – you'll be able to feel the difference.

4. Another way to make your home cozier is to use a humidifier. Cold air doesn't hold water vapor like warm air, so by adding humidity inside your home, you can feel a little warmer. A favorable level of humidity inside

your home can also help clear sinuses, soften skin and improve sleep.

5. Beyond adding visual appeal to your home, area rugs can also provide extra insulation and a warm surface for your feet on cold winter days. Use large area rugs in rooms where you spend the most time. You'll enjoy the new colors and textures of the rug, and the additional warmth will help keep your home comfortable.

6. Consider an electric fireplace. Electric fireplaces convert all of the energy they produce into heat, ensuring they're 100% energy efficient. They cost on average only 8-12 cents an hour to run, totaling about \$25 a year. Because electric fireplaces do not use natural resources, no combustible byproducts are released into the atmosphere, reducing air pollution.

These are just a few ways you can stay cozy this winter without turning up the thermostat. Don't forget the hot chocolate!

Here are a few more ideas:

- Reverse your ceiling fan's rotation to push cool air upward and mix with the rising heat.
- Replace your furnace filter.
- Have your heating system inspected annually by a HVAC professional.
- Keep vents clear of dust and debris.
- Avoid changing thermostat temperatures by more than 10 degrees as it makes your furnace work harder.



Tis' the season many are using their space heaters to stay warm. Although comfortable and cozy, space heaters can cause a significant increase in home fires. Below are a few safety tips when using a space heater:

- Place your space heater on a flat level surface. Don't put it on a shelf or in a high traffic area.
- Plug a space heater directly into an electric outlet. Avoid using an extension cord.
- Never leave space heaters unattended.
- Only use space heaters that are tested and certified in a lab.
- Keep your space heater 3 feet away from anything, especially flammable items, pets, and children.

During the winter, the average U.S. heating costs are somewhere between \$500 and \$1,500. Folks who heat their homes with natural gas tend to be on the lower end of the price spectrum, while those who use propane or heating oil end up on the higher end. Consider these budget-friendly ways to stay cozy, warm, and safe this winter.

Kyle Finley: a man of many hats



Kyle Finley is a man of many hats. That term is often associated with meaning a man of many talents. That is true of Kyle. He is an accomplished farmer, devoted Christian, committed husband, proud father, doting grandfather, skilled skier, and an engaging speaker when it comes to sharing his experiences as a former electrical lineman. Kyle is a long-time Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative member who worked for the co-op in the mid 90s. He also owned and operated Live Line Demo for many years and traveled the country giving educational demonstrations about safety and electricity.

Kyle also owns many hats, and they adorn the ceiling of his office in Alvin, Illinois. The hats are a myriad of colors and represent seed corn brands, special events, and favorite sports teams. Kyle recently put on his John Deere hat as Safe Electricity was on his farm producing a video about what to do in the event a piece of farm machinery or any vehicle comes in contact with a power line. Kyle gave expert advice on how to handle the situation. He emphasized to call 911 and only exit the vehicle in the event of fire and then keep both feet together and bunny hop away ASAP.

The Finley's have farmed in Vermilion County for seven generations and Kyle's son, Klayton, will make it the eighth generation. Together they farm 550 acres of corn and soybeans.

Kyle can trace his family roots back to Scotland, Ireland, and Bucks County, Pennsylvania. The Finley's have always had the pioneer spirit. Descendants of Kyle's knew Daniel Boone and accompanied him through the Cumberland Gap in 1769, blazing a trail known as the Warrior's Path. This is documented in The Heritage of Vermilion County published by the Vermilion County Museum Society in 1973.

If you visit the Finley Farm in the summer months, you are likely to see Kyle's wife, Carol, out in the garden where they grow sweet corn, lots, and lots of sweet corn. They host sweet corn days where they shuck, clean, cook, bag, and freeze sweet corn with family and friends.

Kyle met Carol on a church hay ride when they were teens. According to Kyle, Carol made the first move and asked Kyle to the Sadie Hawkins dance. They will celebrate 40 years of marriage in April. Kyle says he and Carol are Yin and Yang. Kyle is the adventure seeker who lives to see the world and Carol is more of a home body who enjoys gardening, their grandchildren,



and being involved in community and church activities.

They have been blessed with two sons, Chad who is an attorney in Glen Carbon, Illinois. He is married to Heather and they have two children, Nora and Audrick. Klayton, is a banker at Longview Bank and Trust. He is married to Chelsee. They have two children, Brooklyn and Blair.

Kyle learned about electricity while working for Woodrum Electric and White's Electric in the late 1970s. He joined Illinois Power in November 1981 and worked in the Danville area. He then worked for EIEC.

The business of electrical safety had been Kyle's hobby, which he eventually turned into a business in 1998. Kyle was the owner of Live Line Demo, an eye opening safety program for schools, fire and police departments, farm safety groups and organizations interested in promoting safety especially around electricity. About one third of his Live Line Demo business was working with fire departments and emergency response teams. Kyle educated these groups about how to react quickly and safely to emergencies involving electricity.

Electrical safety advocate

Kyle used live electrical lines to show how easily 7,200 volts of electricity can be transferred and kill people.

Kyle often gave demonstrations at co-op annual meetings, county fairs, and the Farm Progress Show. Over the years, he gave his presentation in 13 states. His message was *if it's not grounded, it's not dead*. His record for number of presentations in one month was 86 times.

Kyle lives life to the fullest. Some might say his personal motto is Carpe Diem, seize the day! He wakes up with the knowledge that every new day provides the possibility for something new and exciting to happen.

He has bungee jumped the Nevis (400 feet) in Queenstown, New Zealand. He snowmobiles in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, and he has skied at over 50 ski resorts including Steamboat Springs,

CO; Whistler, British Columbia; and the Swiss Alps. Some say Kyle is an adrenaline junkie. Anyone who has ridden on the back of a snowmobile with him will agree.

Being self-employed afforded him the ability to control his schedule and plan activities around planting and harvest season. In his farming operation, he embraces new and innovative farming practices. He leverages precision farming tools including yield data, auto steer, and field mapping to improve efficiencies on the farm. Kyle uses more of a minimum tillage approach and has embraced the use of vertical tillage.

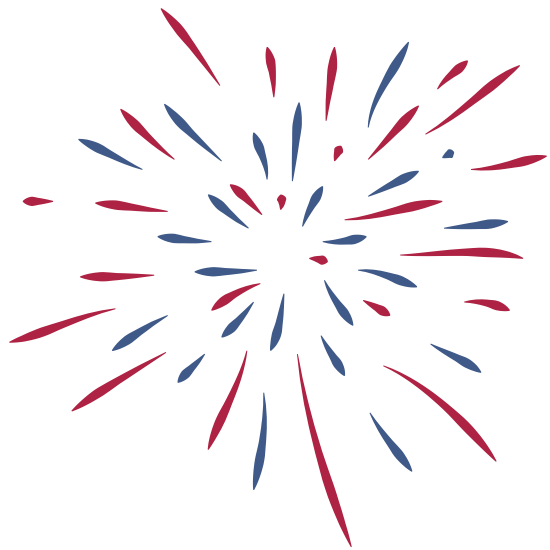
Kyle has an incessant drive to make an impact on the world. He doesn't like failure and expects the best out of himself and others. He is the chairman of Missions at CrossRoads Christian Church in Danville. He has traveled on five mission trips to the Dominican Republic.

He has also been to southeastern India to do electrical work at an orphanage.

Kyle and Carol have visited all 50 states. They are in the midst of planning a trip to Prince Edwards Island and Nova Scotia soon. Kyle's game plan is ferry his motor home from Canada to Bar Harbor, Maine.

Kyle knows no strangers. He gladly opens his home and workshop and willingly shares information. When meeting Kyle, you will always receive a warm greeting and a smile. Kyle makes visitors feel like a relative returning to his farm for the first time in years. Kyle Finley is the real McCoy. He takes pride in his life's work. He has compassion for the less fortunate. He practices servant leadership. He has the utmost respect of the land. Kyle shows kindness to others and his love of God and family radiates from within.





HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Your Eastern Illini board of directors is pleased to return over **\$1 million** of 2020's operating margins to members in the form of a margin rebate on this month's bill.

Your credit is based on the amount of electricity you used in 2020, and is the result of lower operating costs during the year. This is a tangible benefit of being a member of our cooperative!

You will find your credit amount as a line item on your bill and it will be listed as **MARGIN REBATE**.



Eastern Illini
Electric
Cooperative

May 2021 bring you new beginnings and the best of everything.