

PowerLines

July 2024

37th Eastern Illini Annual Meeting

We want to thank Eastern Illini members who attended the Annual Meeting events in Tuscola, at the Ford County Fairgrounds, and at the Iroquois County Fairgrounds.

It was great to be able to enjoy a sit-down fried chicken meal and talk with members, friends, and neighbors. We hope everyone enjoyed the meal and music. Hats off to our employees who went above and beyond to ensure everything ran smoothly. The final Annual Meeting event at the Iroquois County Fairgrounds culminated with the Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative business meeting which began at 6:00 p.m. in the 4-H Building.

Kevin Moore, Chairman of the Eastern Illini Board of Directors, confirmed the notice and proof of mailing for the meeting. The meeting minutes and Treasurer's Report were approved. Members heard an update from President/CEO, Bob Hunzinger. He provided information about the new

meter installation project and the rate restructuring that was implemented earlier this year.

Guy Hall, attorney for Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative, determined that quorum had been achieved. He announced that three members of the Board of Directors ran uncontested and were reelected for three year terms.

DISTRICT 3: Steve Meene, Melvin
DISTRICT 4: Bruce Ristow, Cissna Park
DISTRICT 6: Bradley J. Ludwig, Fithian

Since there was no unfinished business or new business, Chairman Moore thanked members for attending and adjourned the meeting. The EIEC Board held a reorganization meeting following the annual meeting and elected officers.

CHAIRMAN: Kevin Moore
VICE CHAIRMAN: Bruce Ristow
SECRETARY/TREASURER: Steve Meenen
ASST. SECRETARY/TREASURER: Chad Larimore

Thank you very much!



On behalf of the Eastern Illini board of directors and all of our employees, we want to thank our members who attended the 2024 Annual Meeting Events!

In this issue:

- 2024 Annual Meeting Event photos
- Is your swimming pool safe?
- Restoring your power safely and quickly
- Unmask energy scams
- Have a safe 4th of July



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

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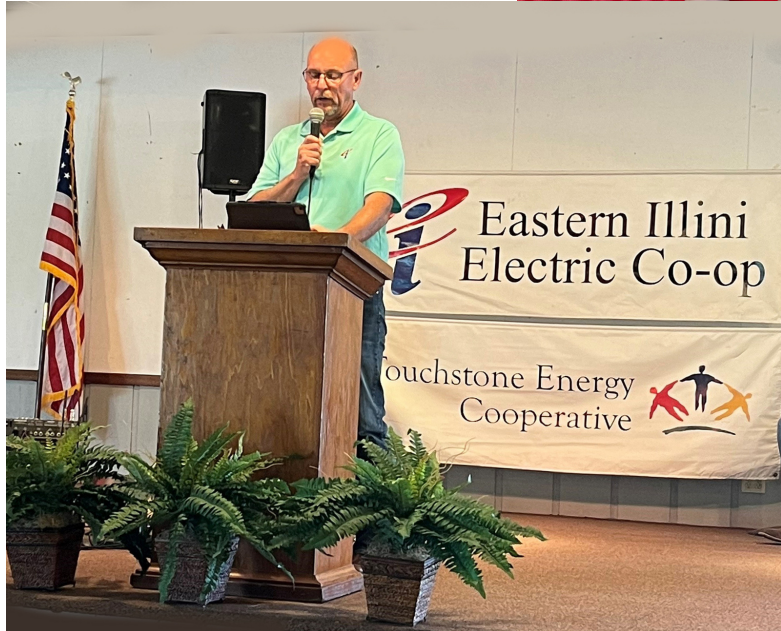
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Setting the fan's blades to spin counter-clockwise can help you feel cooler by creating a cool breeze. When using a ceiling fan and air conditioning simultaneously, you can raise your thermostat setting by 4 degrees with no change in comfort.

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BEFORE JUMPING IN, CONSIDER ELECTRICAL HAZARDS

Is your swimming pool safe?

Summer is here, and that means spending more time outdoors. To cool down, many take a dip in a pool. Or to relax in the evening, a hot tub provides a nice way to soothe aching muscles.

One aspect of owning a pool or hot tub that can be overlooked is its electrical system, which can pose a significant or even deadly hazard. Since pool and hot tub areas mean wet skin and wet surfaces, the chance of electrocution increases when electricity is present. Electricity around pools, hot tubs and spas can be found in underwater lights, electric pool equipment (e.g., pumps, filters, vacuum), extension and power cords, electrical outlets or switches, electrical devices such as TVs and overhead power lines.

To keep swimmers and hot tubbers as safe as possible and to help prevent electric shock drowning, be sure to have the electrical system inspected, repaired and upgraded to local and National Electrical Code by a licensed contractor. Also, do not set up a pool (temporary or permanent) where power lines are overhead or within 25 feet of the water.

Electrical safety also includes the following, according to Safe Electricity and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC):

- Making sure ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) are installed:
 - On underwater lighting circuits operating at 15 volts or more.
 - On all electrical equipment, including 120- and 240-volt heaters close to the pool.
 - On all outdoor receptacles (outlets) within 20 feet of the water's edge.
- Testing permanently installed GFCIs monthly. Test those that are portable or connected to a cord before each use.



PREVENT ELECTRIC SHOCK DROWNING

Ensure there is GFCI protection on underwater lighting circuits, as well as lighting around pools, hot tubs and spas.

- Looking for signs of mold or other growth on the inside lenses of lights, which can indicate water leakage.
- Ensuring that the power switch and GFCI for underwater lights are clearly marked and easily accessible in an emergency.
- Labeling power switches for pool, hot tub and spa equipment, as well as lighting.
- Using battery-operated electronics when ever possible.
- Ensuring that hands and feet are dry while using electrical devices.
- Keeping long-handled tools and poles away from nearby power lines, including the drop-down lines to the home.
- Holding pool skimmers and other long-handled tools as low as possible to the ground.
- Keeping electrical cords, wires and devices out of reach and at least 5 feet from the water.
- Unplugging a device that has fallen into the water before touching it. Even submersible pumps designed to run under water may not be safe to use when someone is in the water. It's better be safe than sorry. Always unplug.

Here are some signs of shock or faulty wiring that should be never ignored.

Swimmers may feel a tingling sensation, experience muscle cramps or may not be able to move. Individuals can display panic behaviors or appear as a motionless swimmer in the water. If there is an electrical issue, underwater lights can flicker, dim, or show other signs they are not working properly.

If you suspect you are being shocked while in the water, move away from the source of the shock and get out of the water. If possible, exit without using a metal ladder; touching metal may increase the risk of shock.

If you think someone in the water is experiencing an electrical shock, immediately turn off all power. If the power is not turned off, rescuers can also be shocked or electrocuted. After the power is disconnected, call 9-1-1, or have someone else make the call.



WE DO OUR BEST TO AVOID POWER DISRUPTIONS

Restoring your power safely and quickly

COMMON CAUSES OF POWER OUTAGES

There is never a good time for the power to go out, but if it happens on a sunny day, you might be left wondering why. Here are the most common causes of a power outage.

WEATHER

High winds, snow and ice can cause tree limbs to fall on power lines. Other weather effects, like wildfires and lightning strikes, can cause major damage to equipment.

CRITTERS

Squirrels, birds, snakes and other animals can inadvertently contact power lines, causing short circuits and disruptions to electrical supply.

Scheduled MAINTENANCE

Occasionally, we plan outages to perform upgrades or repairs to parts of the local grid.

ACCIDENTS

Vehicles can crash into utility poles, bringing down power lines. Construction and excavation work can also result in disruptions to underground lines.

When your power goes out, we all work together to get your lights back on.

1. We assess the situation first. Every outage is different, and we don't know how dangerous it is or what equipment might need to be replaced. When responding to outages, we first need to see what happened, then figure out what materials we need and a plan for how to fix the problem without compromising electric flow for other members.

2. Restoration is normally prioritized by the largest number of members we can get back on in the shortest amount of time. Our crews

Have you ever watched a video or TV show where a person is cooking a meal, then suddenly, they snap their fingers, and the meal is plated and ready to eat? That's called a jump cut.

While we wish we could "jump cut" from a power outage to power restoration, it can often take a lot more effort and people to make it happen. We often hear from members inquiring about when their power will be restored after an outage. Given our reliance on electricity, there's simply never a good time to be without it.

We'd like to share some information about the restoration process so members have a better understanding about what is happening behind the scenes to get your lights back on as quickly and safely as possible.

WE NEED YOU! We have installed new meters within our service territory and they are reporting outages near real time, which means we have excellent information about when your power

goes out, but we still need you to let us know as it might be just at your home or small section of a neighborhood. There is a chance we may not know about it, and no one has reported it. We rely on you to let us know if your power is out. You can report it through SmartHub or call us at 800-824-5102.

OUR EMPLOYEES MIGHT BE AFFECTED TOO. Because Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative is a local electric cooperative owned by the members we serve, our employees are local too. They are your neighbors, friends and familiar community volunteers. When you're without power, our people might be too. Eastern Illini has more than 20 employees who live on our lines.

IT'S A TEAM EFFORT! Everyone at EIEC works to get your power restored safely and quickly. Member services representatives are taking your calls, engineers are surveying damage, the vegetation team is clearing hazards, operations is organizing crews, and communicators are keeping everyone informed and up to date.

focus on responding first to public safety issues and critical services. Then we complete work that impacts the largest of number of people first.

3. Our employees face many dangers. Besides working around high voltage electricity, our crews are on alert for wild animals, weather elements, falling trees and fast-moving cars.

4. Flickering lights may be a good thing. Some folks mistake flickering lights for outages, but sometimes these "blinks" are important because they indicate our equipment worked and prevented a possible outage.

5. Sometimes it's a waiting game. Our portion of the power grid is connected to other electric utilities, and we maintain positive relationships with power providers interconnected to our system. If our outage is due to an issue from their feed into our system, we must let them do their repairs and be mindful of what they're going through to fix it.

Unmask energy scams

Consumers with water, gas and electricity connections have long been targets for utility scams. But in today's digital world, every swipe and click increases the risk of potential scams.

Scammers are more sophisticated than ever before, and they understand our increasing reliance on technology. With their sharpened digital knives, scammers have adapted their tactics to trick unsuspecting consumers through a variety of methods.

Eastern Illini wants to help you avoid energy scams, whether a financial loss or leak of your personal information. Here are some of the latest utility scams, as well as tips to help you stay safe from even the craftiest scammers.

Scammers typically disguise themselves—either physically or digitally—as utility employees or representatives to steal consumers' money or personal information. A common trick is to claim a consumer's bill is past due and threaten to disconnect service if payment isn't received immediately. Scammers approach consumers through a variety of means, including phone calls, text messages, emails and even in-person visits. However, the digital line of attack is increasingly more common.

For example, new capabilities disguising caller ID or "spoofing" can make the phone number you see on caller ID appear to be from a trusted source. Spoofing makes it easier for scammers to deceive you because it's more difficult to immediately verify the call. Another recent scam uses fraudulent websites that are identical to a utility payment webpage—and what's worse, these pages are often promoted on search engines to trick consumers into clicking and making a payment.

Another recent scam involves phone calls, text messages or emails claiming you overpaid your electric bill and will

receive a cash or banking refund. This offer may seem too good to be true, and it is—it's likely a scam aimed to steal your personal information.

There are several red flags you can watch for to identify an energy scam. Scammers often use high-pressure tactics to create a sense of urgency, like claiming your electricity or other services will be disconnected if a payment isn't made immediately. Additionally, scammers may ask for unusual payment methods such as gift cards or cryptocurrency. If someone is pushing for an unusual payment method, it's likely a scam.

You've probably noticed that many digital scams, like emails or text messages, include poor grammar, spelling errors and odd email addresses. These are red flags, so when you see these dodgy forms of communication, consider it a scam.

For peace of mind, please be aware of the following: Eastern Illini will never demand an instant, immediate payment and threaten to disconnect your service without prior notice or warning. We strive to resolve challenging situations and work with our members to avoid disconnects.

Eastern Illini will never ask for your Social Security number or banking details over the phone or through email. We offer several secure payment options that include in-person, our website: www.eiec.coop, and SmartHub applications.

Whether in-person, over the phone or online, always be suspicious of an unknown individual claiming to be an Eastern Illini employee requesting banking or other personal information. We will only send you text messages if you have opted in for important alerts.

If you're ever in doubt about a potential energy scam, please call us at 800-824-5102. One of our knowledgeable Member Care Representatives will assist you in sorting out the situation.

Eastern Illini wants to help protect you against utility fraud, and by notifying us about potential scams, you can create the first line of defense. We encourage you to report any potential scams so we can spread the word and prevent others in our community from falling victim.

SIGNS OF AN

ENERGY SCAM

High-Pressure Tactics

Scammers will pressure you, creating a sense of urgency. Claims that your power will be disconnected without immediate payment are common with utility scams.

Sketchy Payment Methods

Scammers may ask for unusual payment methods like gift cards or cryptocurrency. In these cases, it's likely a scam.

Dodgy Communication

Whether an email, text message or letter, utility scams typically include poor grammar, spelling errors or unusual email addresses. These are common warning signs of a scam.











To ensure you have the best Fourth of July possible, we would like to remind you of a few important safety tips from The American Red Cross.

NOTHING SAYS "FOURTH OF JULY" LIKE A SPECTACULAR FIREWORKS DISPLAY!

The safest way to enjoy this part of the celebration is to head to a local fireworks show. But, if you want to put on your own show at home, be sure to follow these safety tips:

-  Always follow the instructions on the packaging and never give fireworks to small children.
-  Keep a supply of water close by as a precaution.
-  Make sure to wear protective eyewear when lighting fireworks.
-  Light only one firework at a time and never attempt to relight a "dud."
-  Store fireworks in a cool, dry place away from children and pets.
-  Never throw or point fireworks toward people, animals, vehicles, structures or flammable materials.

EASTERN ILLINI ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
wishes you a safe and enjoyable 4th of July