

# PowerLines

May 2024

## OFFICIAL NOTICE

### EASTERN ILLINI ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

#### 2024 ANNUAL MEETING

**June 6, 2024**

Thursday, June 6 2024

Iroquois County Fairgrounds 4-H Building

Registration and Chicken Dinner: 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Business Meeting: 6:00 p.m.

Notice is hereby given that the 37th Annual Meeting of Members of Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative will be held on Thursday, June 6, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. at the Iroquois County Fairgrounds in the 4-H Building. The meeting will be called to order at 6:00 p.m. and action will be taken on the following:

1. The reports of officers, directors, and President/CEO.
2. The election of three directors, one each from Directorate Districts 3, 4, and 6.
3. In connection with the election of directors, the following candidates have been nominated by petitions: Steve Meenen of Melvin, District 3; Bruce Ristow, Cissna Park, District 4; and Bradley J. Ludwig of Fithian, District 6.
4. To consider and transact all other business which may properly come before said meeting or any adjournment(s) thereof.



**Steve Meenen**  
Secretary/Treasurer

### In this issue:

- Nothing is more important than your safety
- Make an impact by attending
- Ways to lower your electric bill
- 2024 Director election candidates
- Winner winner chicken dinner

### You are invited to:

## 2024 ANNUAL MEETING EVENTS

May 30: Tuscola Community Bldg.

June 4: Ford Co. Fairgrounds

June 6: Iroquois Co. Fairgrounds

### Chicken Dinner:

4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Business Meeting: 6:00 p.m.

### REGISTER TODAY!

[www.eiec.coop](http://www.eiec.coop)

or

800-824-5102

Your Touchstone Energy<sup>®</sup>  
Cooperative 

DON'T BE SHOCKED! AVOID POTENTIAL ELECTRICAL HAZARDS

Nothing is more important than your safety

# ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH



Safety at work, home and play – that's what we live by at Eastern Illini. Safety first and safety always. Nothing is more important than the safety of our members, employees and the public. And while Eastern Illini focuses on safety year-round, May is National Electrical Safety Month, a good time to raise awareness and help members avoid potential electrical hazards.

In the U.S., home electrical failures or malfunctions cause more than 50,000 fires each year, resulting in 450 deaths, nearly 1,500 injuries, and over \$1.5 billion in property damage. There are always ways to secure your home from indoor and outdoor electrical hazards.

## INDOORS:

**Inspect your system** - Have a licensed electrician inspect your home's electrical system to ensure that it's running properly and meets current electrical codes.

Flickering lights, sparks, tripping circuits, and non-functioning outlets may indicate a problem.

**Check cords** - Replace or throw away electrical items that have frayed or cracked electric cords.

**Keep electrical items away from water** - Install ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) on outlets near water sources and never use electrical appliances or tools close to water or with wet hands.

**Plug-in one high-wattage appliance at a time** - Plug only one high-wattage appliance - such as a coffee maker, toaster, iron, space heater, etc. into an outlet at a time to avoid overloading it.

**Only put electrical plugs into outlets** - Teach children to never stick fingers or objects into electrical outlets or appliances with openings such as toasters. Cover or cap outlets you are not using to protect children from harm.

**Before wiring, turn it off** - Turn off the power at the breaker before working on electrical devices or wiring.

## OUTDOORS:

**Stay away from power lines** - Keep yourself and anything you are touching more than

10 feet away from neighborhood power lines and at least 100 feet from larger high-voltage lines. This includes ladders, tools to trim trees, kites, metallic balloons and flying toys.

**Report fallen power lines** - Stay away from a power line that has fallen and anything it may be touching. Call 911 immediately to report it.

**Call 811 before digging** - Call ahead before doing any digging to have underground utilities marked. It's free and it's required by law.

**Avoid planting trees underneath power lines** - Tall growing trees should be planted a minimum of 20 feet away from power lines, and 50 feet away to avoid future pruning. Don't plant near underground utility services. Tree roots can grow to interfere with underground pipes, cables, and wires.

**Check before using tools outdoors** - Are the electrical appliances and tools marked for outdoor use? Make sure they are and avoid using them close to water or in the rain.

## STOP LOOK LIVE:

Each year, people are injured or killed by accidental contact with electrical equipment, contact that can be avoided if we all stop to think about our safety. If you are unsure whether an activity poses a safety risk, you should:

**STOP.** Stop doing what you're doing.  
**LOOK.** Look around for potential utility hazards and ways you might come into contact with utility infrastructure, and find a way to avoid the hazard.  
**LIVE.** Your safety is in your hands.

If your equipment comes in contact with a power line, stay inside the cab. DO NOT EXIT. Call 911 and Eastern Illini at 800-824-5102 for help and warn anyone nearby not to approach your equipment. Only exit the machinery after you are told by emergency personnel that it is safe to do so.

# CHICKEN DINNER FOLLOWED BY BUSINESS MEETING

## Make an impact by attending

When you sign up for electric service with Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative, you become a member/owner of our not-for-profit cooperative. This means the co-op's annual meeting events are designed with your interests in mind! We encourage you to attend one of our upcoming annual meeting events that begin with a fried chicken dinner and end with a brief business meeting.

Annually, we hold three meetings. The first meeting will be held on Thursday, May 30th at the Tuscola Community Building. The second meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 4th at the Ford County Fairgrounds. The third meeting will be held on Thursday, June 6th at the Iroquois County Fairgrounds.

You are welcome to attend whichever meeting is closest to you or works best for your schedule. We ask that you let us know how many people will be attending, so we have plenty of food ready for you. You may register at [www.eiec.coop](http://www.eiec.coop) or feel free to call us at 800-824-5102 to let us know you will be joining us.

The events begin with a fried chicken dinner and all the fixins. The free meal is served between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. and you are welcome to come anytime during that two hour time frame. We do encourage you to bring your appetite!

While you eat, music will be provided by Jimm Wood. We will also host a seminar at 4:30 p.m. put on by a Master Gardener. In previous years, those seminars have been informative and enjoyable, so make sure to catch their presentation.

Beginning at 6 p.m., the business meeting of the cooperative will begin. Kevin Moore, Chairman of the Board of Directors will lead the meeting and give members an update on the business of the cooperative over the past year.

You may be asking yourself, why should I attend one of the annual meeting events? Here are a few reasons why:

**MEET and EAT!** - Annual Meeting Events are wonderful opportunities to reconnect with friends and neighbors and interact with co-op directors and employees. As a community event, all members are welcome and encouraged to attend and enjoy a delicious fried chicken meal.

**LEARN!** - We believe it is important to learn something new every day, no matter your age! During the business meeting, you'll get an update about the co-op, find out

what's been happening, what's new, and what's planned for the future.

**VOTE!** - Every year, three of our nine board members are up for re-election. At the annual meeting event, you'll be given a ballot for your board of directors, who are fellow co-op members, just like you, who have volunteered their time and service to serve on the co-op board. The board creates policies that directly impact you and all co-op members.

We look forward to seeing you at one of our upcoming annual meeting events. Register today to attend!

### EASTERN ILLINI ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

# ANNUAL MEETING EVENTS 2024

Thursday  
**May 30, 2024**  
Tuscola  
Community Bldg.

Tuesday  
**June 4, 2024**  
Ford County Fairgrounds

**RSVP at:**  
[www.eiec.coop](http://www.eiec.coop)  
800.824.5102

- **MASTER GARDENER SEMINAR**
- **BUCKET TRUCK RIDES**
- **BOUNCE HOUSE** (June 4 & 6)
- **RATE RESTRUCTURING Q & A**

Thursday  
**June 6, 2024**  
Iroquois County  
Fairgrounds



**CHICKEN DINNER: 4 P.M. – 6 P.M.**  
**BUSINESS MEETING: 6 P.M.**

# DON'T BE IN THE DARK WHEN IT COMES TO ENERGY USE

## Ways to save on your electric bill



It's an all too familiar conversation in many homes - we aren't going directly from heating to AC this spring because electricity costs a lot of money and we don't have a money tree!

If you are like many of us, we don't really know how much energy a fridge vs. a light bulb, air fryer, water heater, iPhone charger or big screen TV uses or how much it costs to operate for a certain amount of time. So here are some ways to save on your electric bill that are easy to implement.

### HEATING AND COOLING

Home heating and cooling are some of the biggest culprits behind hefty electric bills — and the best places to look for cost-cutting opportunities.

#### **Keep up with routine maintenance**

Maintenance matters to keep your HVAC and appliances running efficiently. That can be as simple as regularly swapping out the air filter of your heating and air conditioning system. It's also wise to hire a reputable repair company for an annual check. For the fridge, you'll want to clean the refrigerator coils once a year and keep it away from heat sources to reduce energy use.

#### **Give your thermostat a nudge**

This one is easy. Set your thermostat down or up 7 to 10 degrees (depending on the season) when you're asleep or away from home. Doing so for eight hours can lower your annual heating and cooling costs by around 10%. A programmable thermostat does the work for you.

#### **Adjust your fridge and freezer temperature**

Set your fridge to 37 degrees and your freezer to 0 degrees. This will keep your food fresh, but your fridge and freezer won't need to work as hard to maintain the temperature.

### WATER

Hot water is the second-largest expense in powering most homes, according to the Energy Department. Cutting back on your hot water usage — in the shower, laundry and dishwasher — can make a sizable dent in your overall energy bill.

#### **Take shorter showers**

Standard showerheads go through 2.5 gallons of water a minute, according to manufacturer Waterpik. That means trimming just two minutes off your shower time could save 5 gallons of water. Taking a shorter shower will reduce the energy used to heat the water too.

#### **Replace your showerhead**

An efficient showerhead — that uses no more than 2 gallons per minute — can reduce household water usage by 2,700 gallons per year, according to the Environmental Protection Agency. Look for one with the WaterSense label, which is certified to meet efficiency criteria set by the EPA.

#### **Wash clothes in warm or cold water**

Stick to warm or cold water when you do laundry to lower your electric bill. Doing so can also help prevent clothes from shrinking, fading and wrinkling.

#### **Adjust your water heater temperature**

The default temperature setting on some water heaters is 140 degrees. Lowering it to 120 degrees can reduce your energy costs by 4%-22% annually.

#### **Purchase energy-efficient appliances**

If you're in the market for a new washer, dishwasher or water heater, buy an energy-efficient model to yield long-term savings. A dishwasher with the EPA's Energy Star label uses 12% less energy and 30% less water on average than a regular model. Prioritize appliances that run most often, like the fridge, dishwasher, TV, washer and dryer.

### POWER AND LIGHTING

Keeping the lights on accounts for roughly 15% or more of a home's energy use.

#### **Switch to LED lighting**

Save around \$225 per year by swapping out incandescent bulbs and old light fixtures with LEDs. Doing so will certainly help you cut costs, but the switch to LEDs is inevitable. Energy Department efficiency rules that went into effect in 2022 will take most incandescent bulbs off the market.

#### **Install dimmer switches**

Dimmers let you set the brightness in a room to suit your needs, setting the mood and saving electricity.

#### **Use smart power strips**

Some electronic gadgets — such as TVs, computers, and speakers — never truly power off. Instead, they sit in standby mode using a trickle of power that can account for 5%-10% of home energy use and \$100 a year. Plug these electronics into a smart power strip, which cuts off the current when the devices aren't in use.

If you haven't yet determined how to grow a money tree, try a few of these tips to monitor your electric bill for savings in the months ahead.

# 2024 CANDIDATES FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION

## Eastern Illini board member responsibilities

Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative has nine co-op members who serve on the board of directors. Directors advocate for the cooperative business model and establish the strategic direction of the electric cooperative.

Directors attend all regular monthly board meetings, usually held on the fourth Tuesday of the month at the Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative office in Paxton. Directors also attend special board meetings, committee meetings, and EIEC annual meeting events as well as seminars and conferences.

Directors are required by bylaw to complete their NRECA Credentialed Cooperative Certificate within nine years or three terms. Directors also participate in continuing education offerings and stay updated on financial reports regarding the cooperative as well as current information provided by state and national associations.

A director represents all members of Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative, not a geographic region or directorate district. In their role, board members are entrusted with the direction and oversight of a co-op's assets and resources.

The Credentials Committee met on April 9, 2024 to review the qualifications of all candidates who filed nominating petitions. The Credentials Committee determined that per bylaws Article III, Section 3.6, each of the candidates are eligible to serve as an EIEC director. Directors in Directorate Districts 3, 4, and 6 will be elected at the annual meeting event on June 6, 2024.

Directors aim to uphold the mission of Eastern Illini which is to provide members with safe and reliable energy solutions and exceptional service.

### 2024 Director Election Candidates

A sample ballot can be found on the Eastern Illini website: [www.eiec.coop](http://www.eiec.coop)



**Directorate District 3  
Steve Meenen**

Melvin, IL

Steve Meenen has served on the Eastern Illini Board of Directors since 2006. He currently serves as District 3 Director and as the Secretary/Treasurer of the Board of Directors. He received NRECA Credential Certification in 2008.

Meenen is a farmer, a DuPont Pioneer Hi-Bred seed sales representative, and highway commissioner in Wall Township. He is also President of the Ford County Fair Association.

Meenen resides in Melvin and has two sons, Mitchell and Spencer.



**Directorate District 4  
Bruce Ristow**

Cissna Park, IL

Bruce Ristow has served on the Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative Board of Directors since 2006.

He is currently District 4 Director and serves as Vice Chairman of the Eastern Illini Board of Directors.

He received the NRECA Credentialed Certification in 2008, the Board Leadership Certification in 2017, and NRECA Director Gold Certification in 2019.

Ristow is a farmer. He and his wife Pam, reside near Cissna Park in Iroquois County.



**Directorate District 6  
Bradley J. Ludwig**

Fithian, IL

Bradley J. Ludwig has served on the Eastern Illini Board of Directors since 1985. He has served as chairman, vice chairman and Secretary/Treasurer.

Ludwig has received the NRECA Credentialed Certification, NRECA Board Leadership Certificate, and the NRECA Director Gold Certificate. Earlier this year, Ludwig received Director Gold Recertification.

Ludwig is a farm owner/operator in Vermilion County and a retired insurance agent. He and his wife Sally, reside near Collison.

YOU ARE  
INVITED

EASTERN ILLINI ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE  
**2024 ANNUAL MEETING EVENTS**



BUCKET TRUCK RIDES



ELECTRIC VEHICLES



FRIED CHICKEN DINNER



MASTER GARDENER SEMINARS



BOUNCE HOUSES (JUNE 4 & 6)



CO-OP BUSINESS MEETING

**COME FOR THE MEAL  
& STAY FOR THE MEETING**

MAY 30: TUSCOLA COMMUNITY BLDG.

JUNE 4: FORD COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

JUNE 6: IROQUOIS COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

CAST YOUR VOTE FOR BOARD MEMBERS

**CHICKEN DINNER: 4PM - 6PM**

**BUSINESS MEETING: 6PM**

REGISTER TO ATTEND AT: [WWW.EIEC.COOP](http://WWW.EIEC.COOP) OR CALL US AT 800-824-5102