

# PowerLines

October 2022

## Fall Season

I love fall with its crisp, cool mornings and sunny days with clear blue skies.

October is national cooperative month. Electric cooperatives, like EIEC, are just a small subset of the approximately 30,000 various cooperatives in the United States.

Your valuable input in our annual member survey included with this newsletter (or on-line at [www.eiec.coop](http://www.eiec.coop)) is one tool we use to ensure that we are continually maintaining our excellent service level to our members.

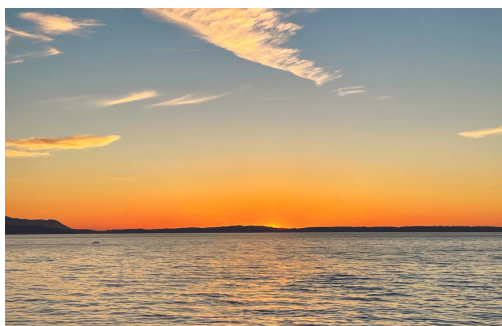
With recent passage of various federal and state legislation, there are numerous incentive and grant programs for renewable energy. If you are considering a solar installation or the purchase of an electric vehicle (EV), please contact us ahead of time, so that we can ensure your electric service is sized appropriately.

Most importantly, please stay safe during harvest and fall activities by taking those few extra minutes to plan your work or activity in the safest manner.

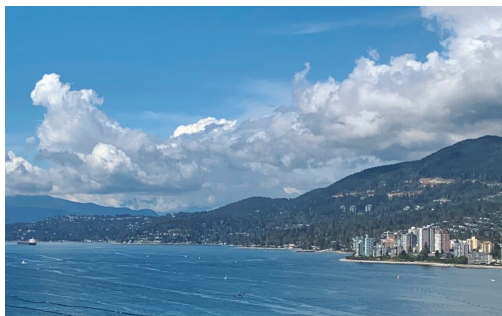
Enjoy the pictures of my recent trip out west to visit our daughters.

Sincerely,

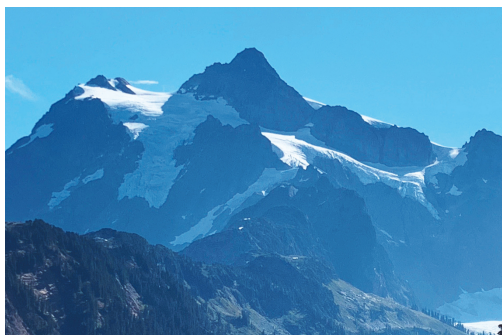
*Bob Hunzinger*



**Bellingham Bay, WA at sunset.** Bellingham is the last major city before the U.S. coastline meets the Canadian border. It's 85 miles north of Seattle and 50 miles south of Vancouver, B.C.



**Vancouver Harbour** in British Columbia, is Canada's largest shipping port with 80 ships arriving and departing daily and more than 220 vessels in the port.



**Mount Shuksan** is in the North Cascades National Park, just 11 miles south of Canada. The mountain's name Shuksan is derived from the Lummi word [séqsən], which means "high peak".

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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!

## Member Satisfaction Survey

We are interested in your feedback. Please take a moment to complete the Member Satisfaction Survey on the back page and return it to us. The survey can also be completed on-line at [www.eiec.coop](http://www.eiec.coop)

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

# October: Cybersecurity awareness month

In today's digital world, cyberattacks are unfortunately nothing new. Cyber criminals can attack on a multitude of levels, from large-scale attacks targeting corporations to smaller phishing attacks aimed to gain an individual's personal information.

October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month and this year's theme is "See Yourself in Cyber" – because we all have a part to play in cybersecurity. When we hear about massive data breaches, it can feel overwhelming and lead us to think we're powerless as individuals to stop cyber criminals.

The truth is, there are several practical steps we can take to safeguard our devices and data. Here are four easy ways to stay cyber secure:

## **ENABLE MULTI-FACTOR AUTHENTICATION.**

Also known as two-step verification, multi-factor authentication adds a second step when logging into an account (to prove you are really you), which greatly increases the security of the account. This second step may be an extra PIN, answering an extra security question, a code received via email or a secure token. Regardless of the type of authentication, this additional step makes it twice as hard for cyber criminals to access your account.

## **USE STRONG PASSWORDS AND A PASSWORD MANAGER.**

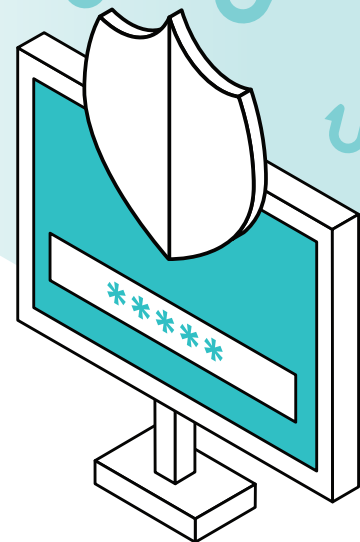
Remember, passwords are the "keys" to your personal home online. Your passwords should always be long, unique, and complex. Create passwords using at least 12 characters. Never reuse passwords. Use a combination of upper- and lower-case letters, numbers, and special characters. Consider using a password manager to store passwords easily and securely if you have a significant number of passwords.

# See Yourself in Cyber.

## October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month

### Improve your cyber hygiene by doing these four things:

1. Enable multi-factor authentication
2. Use strong passwords and a password manager
3. Update software regularly
4. Recognize and report phishing attacks



### **UPDATE SOFTWARE.**

It may seem obvious, but regularly updating software is one of the easiest ways to keep your personal information secure. Most companies provide automatic updates and will send reminders so you can easily install the update.

If you're not receiving automatic software updates, set a reminder to do so quarterly. Be aware that some cyber criminals will send fake updates; these typically appear as a pop-up window when visiting a website. Use good judgment and always think before you click.

### **RECOGNIZE AND REPORT PHISHING ATTACKS.**

Don't take the bait when cyber criminals go phishing. The signs of a phishing attack can be subtle, so take the extra time to thoroughly inspect emails. Most phishing emails include offers that are too good to be true, have an urgent or alarming tone, misspellings, ambiguous greetings, strange requests or an email address that doesn't match the company it's coming from. Cyber criminals are here to stay, but when we all take a risk-based approach to our cyber behavior, we're creating a safer internet for all.



EASTERN ILLINI SUPPORTS SCHOOLS, TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

# \$500 Empowering Education Grants



EASTERN ILLINI ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

## ★ ATTENTION TEACHERS ★ 2023

## EMPOWERING EDUCATION GRANTS

Eastern Illini supports our schools, teachers, and students by funding projects that inspire and engage students and provide valuable learning experiences.

Each school district in the Eastern Illini service territory has a chance to earn a \$500 Empowering Education Grant. Teachers may complete the application on-line at [www.eiec.coop](http://www.eiec.coop). Previous winners may apply again every three years.

Apply by  
**December 9, 2022.**



Eastern Illini  
Electric  
Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Grant winners will be  
notified in **March 2023.**

Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative provides members with  
safe, reliable energy solutions and exceptional service.  
[www.eice.coop](http://www.eice.coop)



## For the love of flowers



the family for over 100 years and continue the rich tradition of farming through their flower fields.

There are several other significant contributors to the success of Nettie's Petals. Danette's mom, Donna, can often be found tending to the flowers. She is a woman of purpose when it comes to eradicating the weeds that waggle their way into the flower beds. And the other family member who plays an important role on the flower farm is Esther, the family dog. She is the welcoming committee, property protector, and makes herself available if visitors need to pet a furry friend.

Flowers are her passion – beautiful flowers, vibrant colored flowers, freshly cut flowers, hand-delivered flowers. Danette Johnson grows flowers - lots and lots of flowers! As you drive down the long winding lane to her home and flower fields, you will see sunflowers, zinnias, dahlias, snapdragons, gladiolus, and a wide array of other annuals and perennials. Having fields of fresh flowers at her fingertips allows Danette to be creative in her floral designs, and she enjoys showing the beauty that each season has to offer.

Danette and her husband, Daron, own and manage Nettie's Petals, a cut flower farm that sells seasonal flowers to florists, individuals, and at farmers markets in and around the Paxton area. What started as a hobby and a love of flowers for Danette, has blossomed into a thriving business that just keeps growing.

Daron wears many hats on the flower farm. By day he is a teacher at Paxton-Buckley-Loda Junior High School and when he's not teaching science to 8th graders, you will find him putting netting over the flowers to protect them, building a cooler to store flowers, and making deliveries. Both Daron and

Danette consider themselves professional rock movers, as they move rocks around to hold down landscape fabric and frost cloth to safeguard the blooms and plants from harm.

Daron also enjoys tending to a flock of free-range chickens and guineas who make their home among the flower fields. Daron and Danette live on a farm that has been in Daron's family for over a century. The home they live in was built in 1918 and the surrounding land was corn and soybean fields farmed by Daron's father, Dennis Johnson, and grandparents, Paul and Ruby Johnson. Daron and Danette feel fortunate to be able live on the farm that has been in

Danette is always open to planting new or unique flowers. Her customers often ask her to grow flowers that are difficult for them to acquire from wholesale distributors or that are extremely expensive. One of her most sought-after flowers is lisianthus, which looks like a rose, but last longer in the vase and is in great demand for bridal bouquets and other special-occasion flower arrangements. Nettie's Petals uses no chemical pesticides on their flowers. They do use an organic solution called neem oil. They pay close attention to soil composition and rotate planting different varieties in different areas to minimize insect infestation and maximize soil nutrient absorption.





## Nettie's Petals: the power of flowers



purchased at Ruby Jewel Antiques and Gifts in Paxton. Nothing evokes the spirit of Christmas like the smell of fresh-cut pine branches and the beauty of the wreaths puts you in the holiday spirit.

Winter is also the perfect time to plan for the spring to come. The Johnsons use a breezeway in their home to start seedlings in February. They grow the seeds indoors and transplant to the ground in the spring.

People often ask Danette what her favorite flower is and she responds by saying that it is similar to naming your favorite child. She does have a soft spot for peonies and her flower farm has numerous peony bushes of various colors and types. Danette cuts her peony buds while they are still closed and stores them in the cooler until she needs them for an arrangement.

The Johnson's have come a long way from the first workshop they attended on small farms. It was a leap of faith for them to plant those first seeds of sunflowers, zinnias, and cosmos. Danette has started drying flowers and her sister, Darla Hill, is using them to create dried flower wreaths and arrangements. Nowadays Danette and Daron are also thinking ahead to future endeavors. They are considering hosting on-the-farm workshops where participants make memories while learning about flowers and floral arranging.

Nettie's Petals offers a local bouquet subscription. Danette loves delivering bouquets to customers. Witnessing the profound impact that a simple bouquet can have on a person amazes her. The subscription sign up happens on Black Friday every year. Visit Nettie's Petals Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/nettiespetals> to learn more about subscription options.

Flowers provide happiness, evoke memories, and show someone cares. Danette says every season her flower gardens grow and expand so does her love of flowers. She is excited to see what blooms next for them at Nettie's Petals.



Danette says she spends so much time in her flower gardens that she gets to know what's going on and can head off problems by paying close attention to the flowers, insects, fungus, and other changes happening in her floral oasis.

As Nettie's Petals business has expanded, Danette has extended her growing season. She has found that the beauty of planning around the seasons is that it doesn't matter about frost dates, you can grow an abundance of flowers that coincide with seasonal change. She finds something magical about experiencing changing seasons through flowers. She is much more present in the moment and connected to the seasonal shifts. Danette creates her bouquets based on what's in bloom and currently available. Visit [www.nettiespetals.com](http://www.nettiespetals.com) to find out more or pick up a bouquet at Ruby Jewel Antiques and Gifts, Paxton; Cedar Oak Farms, Paxton; or TD Lee Farms, Melvin.

During the winter, Danette and Daron regroup and let the land rest. Their winter business is creating evergreen wreaths and greenery for decorations during the holidays. Starting in mid to late November, holiday wreaths can be

# MEMBER SATISFACTION SURVEY

**Complete & return for a chance to win one of 10 \$25 bill credits**

We'd love your feedback. We created this survey to hear all about what's important to you. Take a moment to complete this short survey for a chance to win one of 10 \$25 bill credits. You can complete the survey on-line at [www.eiec.coop](http://www.eiec.coop) or mail it in with your electric bill payment.

Please rate your satisfaction with Eastern Illini on each of the following:	not at all satisfied							very satisfied		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Providing excellent customer service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ability to resolve issues or problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conducting business in a professional manner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friendly and courteous employees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Knowledgeable and competent employees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Providing valuable programs and services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community involvement and support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delivering good value for the money	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Providing energy efficiency information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting renewable energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Charging reasonable rates	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Having a minimum of outages	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Restoring power quickly after an outage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**For the following questions, rate your answer based on a scale of 1 to 10**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

**Considering all your experiences, how satisfied overall are you with Eastern Illini?**

not at all satisfied ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ very satisfied

**To what extent has Eastern Illini fallen short of or exceeded your expectations?**

falls short ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ exceeds

**Imagine an ideal utility company. How well do you think Eastern Illini compares?**

not very close ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ very close

**If you could choose your electric company, how likely is it that you would choose Eastern Illini again?**

very unlikely ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ very likely

**How do you view your relationship with Eastern Illini?**

Member ☐ Customer ☐

First and Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

List your account # so we can contact you if you are one of the 10 winners of the \$25 bill credit drawing.

Your account number can be found on your electric bill. Account #: \_\_\_\_\_