

PowerLines

April 2025

Goodbye and Best Wishes

Well, the hourglass on a forty-three-year career in the utility industry is about to run out. Your Board of Directors will have a new CEO chosen by early April. I have been extremely fortunate to experience many, many different work areas and jobs in the electric, natural gas, water, wastewater, and telecom arenas during this time. None of this would have been possible without my wife, Jennifer, and our four children, who endured my travails and provided great support over the years.

It would be very hard to choose even a handful of highlights among many, but the last eleven years here at EIEC have been among the most rewarding. It's a bittersweet time, yet one full of anticipation. I've been fortunate to work with so many great people in many different locations for all these years.

At the recent all-employee meetings, I felt a surge of emotions, as I realized the finality of reaching retirement. Regardless of where I worked, my decision process always tried to balance the needs of the members/customers vs. the organizational needs, based on the best information available at that time. This routine and responsibility will be missed, but others will step in to continue in an admirable fashion.

To everyone at Eastern Illini, thank you for welcoming me into your Cooperative eleven years ago. During

this time, over half of our current employees have been hired. It has been my distinct honor and pleasure to have worked at EIEC, and to represent you, our members, during this time. I am immensely proud of the team of employees, along with the Directors (six of nine are also new during this time).



MESSAGE FROM
THE PRESIDENT

There have been the usual (and some unusual) challenges and opportunities that we have met as an exceptional team. The industry is getting increasingly complex with ever advancing technology. This will no doubt continue, but so will the dedication, loyalty, integrity, and service from our employees and Directors to meet this head on. I am confident that Eastern Illini's best days are still to come, and the next CEO will continue the great service tradition at EIEC and advance the organization into an even more successful future.

It's now time to express my deepest heartfelt thanks to everyone that I have met over the years, to those that helped me during this time even when I did not realize it, to our employees, to our Directors, and most of all to you, our members, who make this such a great Cooperative.

Farewell and God Bless,

Bob Hunzinger

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EIEC ANNUAL MEETING: JUNE 5

Mark your calendars and plan to attend the 2025 Eastern Illini annual meeting being held on Thursday, June 5 at the Gibson City Bible Church in Gibson City. A chicken dinner meal will be served between 3:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. followed by the business meeting at 6:30 p.m. Let us know you are coming by registering at www.eiec.coop.



- 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!

Your Touchstone Energy[®] Cooperative 

Respect the zone so we all get home



Eastern Illini reminds drivers to be mindful of lineworkers on the job. Utility trucks are equipped with flashing lights and reflective materials. Work zones are marked on the road with orange cones. And line crews wear reflective clothing when working near roadways. But even with these measures in place, work zones are dangerous.

When driving through a work zone or past a line crew, remember workers are doing their job and what

they're doing is simply to help you. We can help keep workers, other drivers, and passengers safe by following these tips:

- Pay attention to warning signs and follow instructions provided by flaggers.
- Be alert when you approach and enter a work zone.
- Don't speed or tailgate in and around work zones.
- Obey traffic laws and signs.
- Avoid distractions such as talking or texting on the phone, changing your radio station, eating, or drinking when approaching or in work zones.
- Keep your attention on the road, not on what the workers are doing.
- Turn your headlights on to make your vehicle more visible to workers and other drivers in the vicinity.
- Watch for brake lights or slow-moving vehicles who may negatively impact the movement of traffic in the work zone.

We understand work zones can be frustrating, especially when you're in a hurry. But road crews and lineworkers work diligently to reduce the effect of roadside activities during your commute. They need your full attention to get the job done quickly and safely. Please slow down and, when possible, move over. We understand you have places to be, but simply taking the time to slow down and move over will ensure both you and our crews can remain safe and go home to their families unharmed.

Our crews are especially at risk. The temporary nature of power line repairs can surprise motorists. A roadside construction project might close a lane for days or weeks, allowing time for people familiar with the area to anticipate the changed traffic pattern. Utility work, however, can start and finish in a few hours, possibly raising risks with drivers who might think they know the road ahead.

Protecting line crews is a top priority for Eastern Illini, and staying safe is everyone's responsibility. We encourage every driver to respect the zone so we all get home.



While Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative crews and lineworkers are outside all year, additional projects are set in full motion when the weather warms up. Some of our projects include right-of-way tree trimming, pole inspections and replacements, power line placement, line laying and more.

One of our top priorities at Eastern Illini is to bring you, the member, reliable power. These projects help ensure we can reliably deliver power to your home or business. However, another top priority we have is safety: both for you and our employees especially in work zones when we are repairing, replacing, or restoring power.

We have all heard the public service announcements warning drivers to be aware of road construction, and the possible consequences of not being mindful of these sometimes-hazardous work zones. This year, National Work Zone Awareness Week is April 21 – 25 and Eastern Illini reminds drivers to be mindful of lineworkers on the job. The theme this year is *Respect the zone so we all get home.*

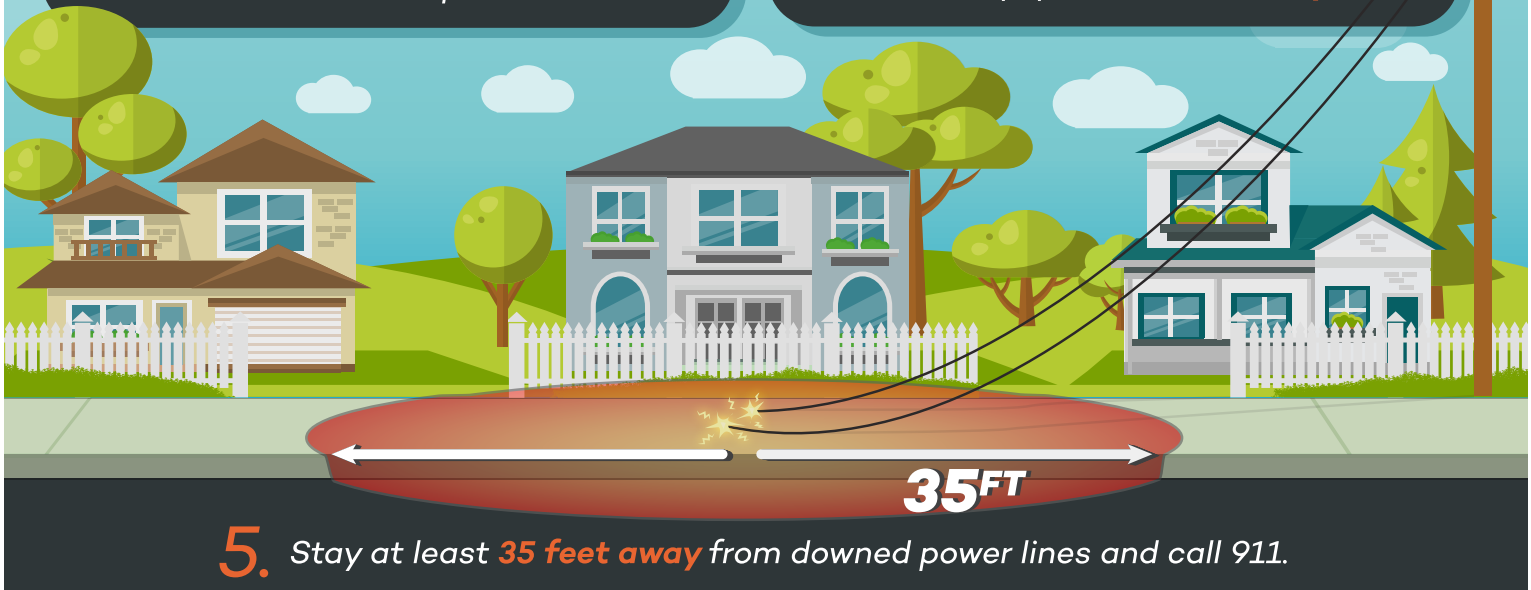
ALWAYS LOOK UP ALWAYS

Home electrical safety

As the weather warms up and you begin working in your yard and around your house, be alert about where the power lines are located, and know how high they are hanging. Whether you're working on the roof, trimming trees, or painting your siding, it's important to

stay safe. Always be aware of the location of power lines, particularly when using long metal tools, like ladders, pool skimmers, and pruning poles. Lower your long equipment when moving it. Carry ladders and other long items horizontally. Take a moment to be aware of your surroundings.

If your projects include digging, like building a deck or planting a tree, call JULIE (8-1-1) before you begin. Never assume the location or depth of underground utility lines. Call JULIE is a free service and can help you avoid serious injury.



FREE INTERNET SERVICE INSTALLATION AND MONTHLY DISCOUNT
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Sow seeds of safety this planting season

To ensure a safe and successful planting season it's important to prioritize equipment maintenance, follow chemical handling protocols, be aware of your surroundings, wear appropriate PPE, and prepare for any weather condition. It's also important to follow safety precautions related to electricity to avoid potential hazards.

Prioritize Equipment Maintenance:

- **Pre-Season Check:** Before heading out to the fields, thoroughly inspect all equipment, including tractors, planters, and other machinery, for any potential issues.
- **Safety Gear:** Ensure you have proper personal protective equipment (PPE) such as safety glasses, earplugs, and appropriate clothing and shoes or boots.
- **Seatbelts:** Always wear your seatbelt when operating equipment and avoid loose or baggy clothing that could get caught in machinery.

- **Weather Considerations:** Be prepared for any weather conditions that may arise during the planting season. Wear appropriate attire and be aware of potential hazards like strong winds, thunderstorms, or tornados.

Safe Chemical Handling:

- **Storage:** Store all pesticides and other chemicals in a safe and secure location, away from children and pets.
- **Labels:** Ensure all containers are clearly labeled with the product name, instructions, and any necessary safety warnings.
- **Protocols:** Follow all safety protocols when handling chemicals, such as wearing the appropriate PPE and avoiding contact with skin or eyes.

Environmental Awareness:

- **Visibility:** Ensure good visibility, especially during dawn and dusk.



- **Surroundings:** Be aware of your surroundings and potential hazards, such as traffic, livestock, or falling objects.
- **Safe Access:** Ensure all areas are accessible safely and do not pose a hazard when entering.

Personal Health and Well-being:

- **Stay Hydrated:** Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated, especially during hot and humid weather.
- **Take Breaks:** Take regular breaks to avoid fatigue and reduce the risk of accidents.
- **Nutrition:** Eat healthy meals and avoid consuming alcohol or drugs that can impair your abilities.

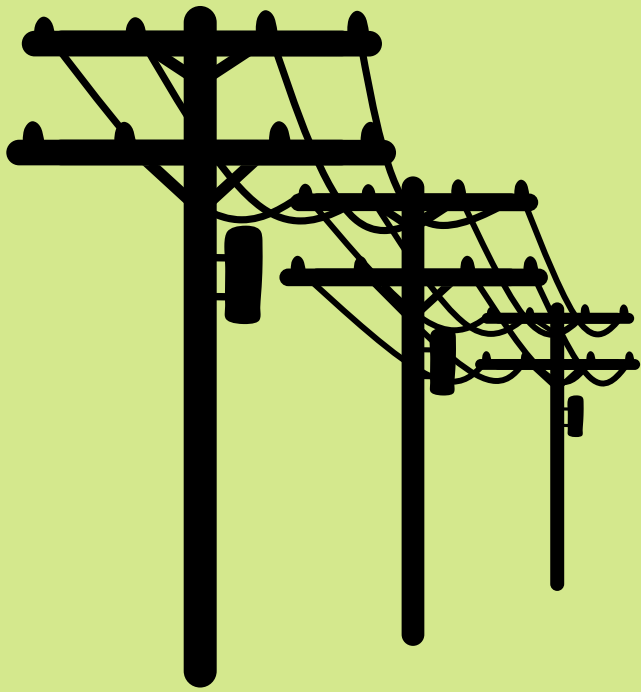
Emergency Preparedness:

- **Know where to find help:** Make sure all family members know how to get help in an emergency, including contacting 911 or the poison control center.
- **First Aid and CPR:** Be prepared to render first aid and take a CPR class if possible.
- **Communication:** Always communicate your location and schedule with family or coworkers to ensure you can be reached in an emergency.

Whether you've been through 30 planting seasons or three, be alert to the dangers of working near overhead power lines. You and those working on your farm should know and follow safety precautions related to electricity to avoid potential hazards.

- Always keep yourself & equipment 10 feet away from power lines.
- Be aware of increased height when loading and transporting.
- Lower extensions to the lowest setting before moving loads.
- Never attempt to raise or move a power line to clear a path.
- If you are on equipment that contacts a power line, don't exit the equipment. Call 911 or Eastern Illini and wait for help to arrive.
- If a pole or line has been damaged, call us at 800-824-5102.

As you move full speed ahead into the planting season, we hope you will prioritize safety and have a productive and injury-free planting season.



LINEWORKER APPRECIATION DAY

APRIL 14, 2025

Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative



We greatly appreciate the hard work and dedication of Eastern Illini lineworkers. They work safely and tirelessly to ensure our members have power 24/7. Our team of linemen maintain and upgrade more than 4,400 miles of energized line across ten counties. It's a big job - and, one they do exceptionally well.