

PowerLines

August 2021

Can it be August already?

Now that the calendar has reached August, the weather has continued, and on some days increased, its hazy, hot, and humid pattern. Fall is fast approaching with Labor Day (the unofficial end of summer) only about a month away. August also brings the return of students to schools and the related activities, hopefully in a much more normal fashion this year than we experienced in 2020. I am personally looking forward to being able to attend Illini football games at Memorial Stadium later this summer and fall.

The past year and one-half seemingly raced by and presented many different challenges for all of us. Although the Governor moved the state to Phase 5 reopening on June 11, even with the availability of vaccines, COVID-19 (with variants) is still present. Please continue to take the proper precautions to protect yourself and others so that we can all return to "normal" soon.

CAPITAL CREDITS

2020 Allocation

At the May EIEC Board meeting, your directors voted to allocate the 2020 capital credits to members. These represent members' contribution to equity in the cooperative. This equity provides funding to help operate, maintain, and upgrade cooperative facilities, while helping to reduce borrowing costs. Member economic participation is one of the seven cooperative principles that contribute to a unique and successful business model.

The amount of your equity contribution for the prior year is shown annually on the August bill statement. Take a moment to peruse your August bill statement for your 2020 calendar year allocation. In the cooperative not-for-profit business model, current allocated margins (such as 2020 above) are returned to the members in a future period. The present Board approved payment cycle is about 25 years.



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

2021 Payment
At the June EIEC Board meeting, your directors authorized a return of nearly \$1.2 million to be paid to members in late November/early December 2021. These cash payments in the form of a check (that were previously allocated as capital credits) will be mailed to EIEC members that received electric service in 1996, 1997, and a portion of 1998. We have now achieved the Board's goal of a 25-year payback cycle for allocated capital credits. If you have questions about the capital credit process, or anything else, call us at 800-824-5102.

A big THANK YOU to members that recently attended one of our member drive-through appreciation events in Paxton, Sidney, and at the Iroquois County Fairgrounds. Thank you for allowing Eastern Illini to be your local and trusted energy provider.

Please stay safe and cool!

Bob Hunzinger

In this issue:

- Trade filling up for plugging in
- EV charging levels
- Power surges and blinks
- Avoid scammer schemes

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Pharmacy Discounts
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Follow us on Facebook: Eastern Illini Electric Co-op for current updates.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Pros and cons of electric cars

Trade filling up for plugging in



The electric car has gone mainstream with sleeker, more affordable options to choose from. Electric car models are newer than their gas-powered counterparts and offer many advantages to today's driver in the market for a new vehicle. Here are some pros and cons to owning an electric vehicle.

PROS

- Lower operating costs
- Reduces carbon footprint
- Low maintenance needs
- High-quality performance
- At home charging
- No oil changes

CONS

- Limited charging stations
- Long charge time when traveling
- Long trips could be problematic
- Slightly higher upfront costs

PROS OF ELECTRIC CARS

If you're comparing the merits of an electric car to those of conventional vehicles, be sure to keep the following benefits in mind:

Charging an electric car is much more affordable in the long run as opposed to refueling a gas-fueled car. This is especially true when taking into account the fact that you can charge your electric car at home.

According to the EPA, one traditional gas-fueled passenger vehicle with a 22-miles

per gallon range emits an average of 4.6 metric tons of carbon dioxide per year. Non-hybrid electric cars emit zero tons of CO₂, making them much more environmentally friendly.

Mechanical engines have a lot of moving parts and require oil changes. Because electric vehicles don't have as many components that need replacing, less maintenance is necessary and they usually last longer. Because there is no exhaust system, electric cars are known for operating smoothly and quietly. Electric motors also tend to react much quicker than mechanical engines, providing more torque and agility while driving. Additionally, electric cars usually operate more efficiently and use less energy in stop-and-go city traffic.

A lot of people mistakenly think that electric cars are more inconvenient since you have to find charging stations, which aren't as easy to find as gas stations. But the ability to charge electric models at home is a great advantage, and more charging stations are popping up around the country all the time. Some newer electric cars even have voice-enabled systems so all you have to do is ask where a charging station is and the car will lead you there.

CONS OF ELECTRIC CARS

Although electric cars have more than their share of advantages, they are not without their drawbacks. Finding charging stations can be challenging. More areas are embracing EV charging stations and

many hotel chains have started to include EV chargers in their parking lots.

Adding gas to a fuel tank doesn't take much longer than five minutes, whereas charging an electric car can take some time to do, especially if the battery is fully depleted. It can take upwards of two days to get a full charge on a battery pack using normal outlets. Even the fastest charging stations will take 30 minutes to get near 80 percent capacity.

The driving range of a gas-powered car is much longer than that of an electric car, which can range anywhere from 100 miles to 400 depending on the car. This can be problematic if you're planning a long-distance trip, but should be fine for daily commutes.

Is owning an EV right for you? Hopefully, these pros and cons can help you determine if an EV makes sense for your driving needs.

If you want a new car for your daily commute, take a look at electric cars. In the long run they may save you money and are better for the environment.

With more car companies committing to all-electric, the electric car is here to stay and gaining speed.

If you would like to drive the Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative electric car, give us a call at 800-824-5102 and we will schedule a test drive.

UNDERSTANDING THE RECHARGING PROCESS

Electric vehicle charging levels

We've been refueling our cars with gasoline for more than a hundred years. There's a few variants to choose from: regular, mid-grade or premium gasoline, or diesel. The refueling process is relatively straightforward, everybody understands how it's done, and it's completed in about five minutes.

However, with electric vehicles, refueling—the recharging process—isn't quite as simple, or as quick. There's a number of reasons why that's so, such as the fact that every electric vehicle can accept different amounts of power. There are also different types of connectors used, but most importantly, there are different levels of EV charging that determine how long it takes to charge. There are three common EV charging levels:

Level One Charging: 120-Volt

Level One is the most basic charging

level. If you choose this option, your EV will usually include an adapter that plugs into a typical 120-volt outlet. This is the easiest and cheapest charging solution, but it will take much longer to charge your EV.

Level Two Charging: 208-Volt to 240-Volt

Level Two is about three to five times faster than Level One, but this level of charging often requires separate purchases and installation. The EV is plugged into a 240-volt outlet, which is used for larger appliances, like a clothes dryer. Most homes do not include 240-volt outlets in garages, so have the outlet installed by a licensed professional.

DC Fast Charging: 400-Volt to 900-Volt

DC Fast Charge stations are typically seen near high-traffic public areas, like gas stations, rather than in homes. This is the fastest charging level, with the ability to charge an EV at 80 percent in under

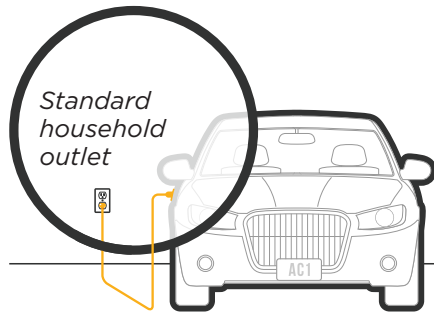
30 minutes. As EVs continue to become more popular, you can expect to see more DC Fast Charge stations throughout the state of Illinois.

When an electric vehicle is plugged in, there's a communication process before the charger is energized. The car asks the charger how much power it can deliver, and then the car calls for the maximum amount of power that the station can deliver and the vehicle can accept. The car always determines how much power it accepts, so there's no need to worry about plugging into a charging station that can deliver more power than your EV can handle. The car will not allow the charger to deliver too much power.

If you're charging an EV at home, contact Eastern Illini at 800-824-5102. By letting us know about your EV charging levels, we can help ensure you are prepared for the additional energy consumption.

Electric Vehicle Charging Levels

AC Level One L1



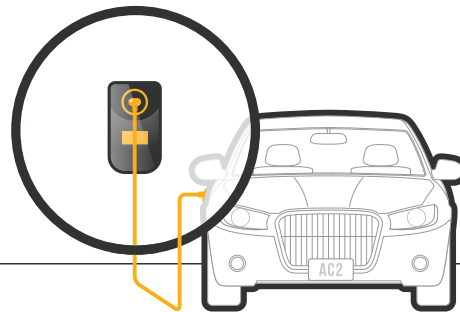
VOLTAGE:
120V 1-Phase AC

AMPS:
12-16 Amps

CHARGING LOADS:
1.4 to 1.9 kW

VEHICLE CHARGE TIME:
3-5 Miles per Hour

AC Level Two L2



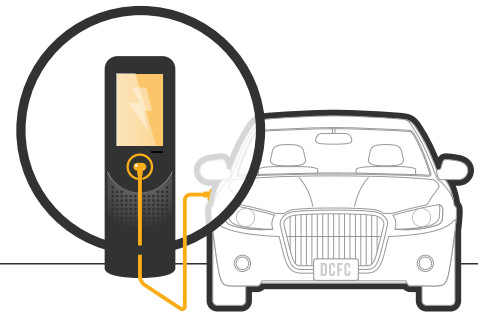
VOLTAGE:
208V or 240V 1-Phase AC

AMPS:
12-80 Amps (typ. 32 Amps)

CHARGING LOADS:
2.5 to 19.2 kW (typ. 6.6kW)

VEHICLE CHARGE TIME:
10-20 Miles per Hour
20+ for some EV models

DC Fast Charge



VOLTAGE:
208V or 480V 3-Phase AC

AMPS:
<100 Amps

CHARGING LOADS:
50-350 kW

VEHICLE CHARGE TIME:
60-80 Miles in 20 Minutes

WHY IS THE MICROWAVE CLOCK BLINKING?

Understanding power surges and blinks



Have you ever noticed your lights blink during a thunderstorm? Or perhaps you've noticed a blinking microwave clock when you arrive home. When this happens, you've likely experienced a brief disruption to your electric service, which could result from a power surge or blink. While the symptoms of surges and blinks can appear similar, what's happening behind the scenes can be quite different.

What's a power surge?

Power surges are brief over voltage spikes or disturbances of a power waveform that can damage, degrade or destroy electronic equipment within your home or business. Most electronics are designed to handle small variations in voltage; however, power surges can reach amplitudes of tens of thousands of volts—this can be extremely damaging to your electronic equipment.

Your home is filled with items susceptible to power surges. Anything containing a microprocessor is especially vulnerable - the tiny digital components are so sensitive that even a 10-volt fluctuation can disrupt proper functioning.

Microprocessors are found in TVs, cordless phones, computers, microwaves, and even seemingly "low-tech" large appliances like dishwashers, washing machines and refrigerators.

Large power surges, as with a lightning strike, can cause instantaneous damage, "frying" circuits and melting plastic and metal parts. Fortunately, these types of power surges are rare.

Low-level power surges won't melt parts or blow fuses, but they can cause "electronic rust," gradually degrading internal circuitry until it ultimately fails.

Small surges won't leave any outward evidence, so you may not even be aware they're happening - even though they may occur dozens or even hundreds of times each day.

Eastern Illini encourages all members to install surge protective devices (such as surge protector power strips) to safeguard your sensitive electronics. If you're experiencing frequent surges and you believe the cause is internal, contact a qualified electrician to inspect your electrical system.

What's a power blink?

Power blinks are also brief service interruptions, but they're typically caused by a fault (short circuit) on a power line or a protective device that's working in reaction to the fault. Faults can occur through a variety of instances, like squirrels, birds or other small animals contacting an energized line;

tree branches touching a power line; or lightning and other similar events. When it comes to power disruptions caused by critters, squirrels reign supreme. In 2019 alone, squirrels were responsible for more than 1,200 outages nationwide.

Any of these events can cause your power to blink, but you may also experience a brief interruption when protective devices that act like circuit breakers are working to detect the fault. Believe it or not, these brief power blinks caused by protective devices are actually good because that means the equipment is working as it should to prevent a prolonged outage.

The first line of defense against power surges is prevention. While most external surges can't be controlled, you can eliminate some common causes of internal surges.

The easiest way to avoid power surge problems is to unplug devices that aren't being used. Take a look around your home, and you'll likely find dozens of idle items plugged in. There's no need to leave toasters, power tools or small appliances plugged in.

If you have an older home, inadequate wiring could be the cause. Electrical systems in homes built before the 1980s weren't designed to handle large-capacity refrigerators, entertainment systems and computer equipment. Some visible signs of inadequate wiring are frequent blown fuses or tripped circuit breakers, or lights that flicker or dim when the refrigerator or another large appliance kicks on. Ask your electrician to establish dedicated circuits for each large appliance, and to divide rooms with multiple devices into separate circuits.

Any time you experience repeated disruptions to your electric service, let us know. Resetting the microwave clock all the time gets old and it's important to determine the cause of the power surge or blink and get it resolved.

Avoid scammer schemes

Scam phone calls and cyber hacks are increasing in frequency. Almost all of us receive daily calls from unknown numbers. We block them and ask them not to call, but the calls continue.

Through their persuasion, it is easy to fall for scammer schemes. Through recent developments in technology, scammers are finding ways to manipulate caller IDs and attempting to represent businesses, non-profits, and government entities. The scammer may say you owe the IRS or threaten to shut off your power if you don't pay.

U.S. consumers received nearly 4 billion robocalls per month in 2020. The FCC knows that these calls are a major concern of millions of Americans, and scam calls can result in very real financial losses and serious consumer frustration. In 2020 alone, scam phone calls have caused Americans to lose over 19 million dollars.

Here are a few recommendations for how to handle scam calls:

- Don't answer calls from unknown numbers. Let them go to voicemail.

- If the caller claims to be from a legitimate company or organization, hang up and call them back using a number found on their website or on your latest bill if you do business with them.

- If you answer and the caller (often a recording) asks you to press a button to stop receiving calls, or asks you to say "yes" in response to a question, just hang up. Scammers use these tricks to identify, and then target, live respondents, or to use your "yes" to apply unauthorized charges on your bill.

- Be Aware: Caller ID showing a "local" number no longer means it is necessarily a local caller.

Not only have scam calls increased, but also security breaches within software and hardware through cybersecurity hacks. Co-ops across the nation are bettering their cybersecurity, and with the generous donation from the U.S. Department of Energy's Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL), the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's cybersecurity is guaranteed to grow and combat scam calls and security breaches.

Eastern Illini's IT professional, Chris Johnson stated, "Fortunately, a cyber hack has not happened at Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative."

He explained that Eastern Illini is being more diligent and taking note of what is happening around our world. Johnson added, "As we continue to watch the cyber-attacks grow, we are taking note of that. We are doing all that we can to keep you and your family safe from getting breached through any of our cyber machines."

Scams target people of all backgrounds, ages and income levels. There's no one group of people who are more likely to become a victim of a scam, all of us may be vulnerable to a scam at some time.

Scams succeed because they look like the real thing and catch you off guard when you're not expecting it. To protect yourself, keep your personal details secure and keep your mobile devices and computers secure. Beware of any requests for Social Security numbers, bank accounts, and money requests. If you suspect a utility scammer, you can always call us at 800-824-5102.

Thank you to all the members who took part in Member Appreciation Days in June. All those who registered were eligible to win 10, \$100 bill credits. Here are the lucky winners:

Congratulations to our \$100 bill credit winners

- | | |
|------------------|-------------|
| N. Butterick | Tuscola |
| D. and J. Coy | Sidney |
| J. Ehmen | Paxton |
| J. Fortin | Chebanse |
| D. Gordon | Penfield |
| J. Halleran | Buckley |
| P. and B. Luedke | Broadlands |
| M. Marquez | Cissna Park |
| M. Rogers | Martinton |
| G. Talbert | Onarga |

Thank you for attending Eastern Illini Member Appreciation Days!

Truth be told, your electricity
comes from people power.



Thankfully, there's one energy source that you can always depend on – the hard-working dedication and efficiency of Eastern Illini employees who provide safe and reliable energy solutions and exceptional service.

