

# PowerLines

May 2025

## OFFICIAL NOTICE

### EASTERN ILLINI ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

#### 2025 ANNUAL MEETING

**June 5, 2025**

Thursday, June 5 2025

Gibson City Bible Church, Gibson City, IL

Registration and Chicken Dinner: 3:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Business Meeting: 6:30 p.m.

Notice is hereby given that the 38th Annual Meeting of Members of Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative will be held on Thursday, June 5, 2025, at the Gibson City Bible Church, Gibson City, IL. The meeting will be called to order at 3:30 p.m. The business meeting will commence at 6:30 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 1, 7, and 8.
3. In connection with the election of directors, the following candidates have been nominated by petitions: Tyler Finegan of Ashkum, District 1; Steve Gordon of Rantoul, District 7; and Chad Larimore of Bement, District 8.
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:

- New President/CEO: Bradley W. Smith
- You're invited to EIEC's Annual Meeting
- Stop! Look! Live! Stay safe
- 2025 Director Election Candidates
- Winner winner chicken dinner

#### You are invited to:

### JUNE 5, 2025 ANNUAL MEETING

GIBSON CITY BIBLE CHURCH  
309 N. State, Rte 47, Gibson City

- Health & Home EXPO
- Bounce Houses
- Ice Cream

#### Chicken Dinner:

**3:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.**

**Business Meeting: 6:30 p.m.**

#### REGISTER TODAY!

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

or

**800-824-5102**

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

# VICE PRESIDENT OPERATIONS AND ENGINEERING PROMOTED

## Bradley W. Smith named President/CEO



Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative Board President, Kevin Moore, announced that Bradley W. Smith of Paxton has been named President/CEO of Eastern Illini. Smith began his duties as President/CEO on Monday, April 7, 2025.

Smith brings a wealth of experience in the electric utility industry and EIEC specifically. He was the Vice President of Operations and Engineering for the cooperative. After serving our country as a United States Marine, he began his EIEC career working for a subsidiary of the cooperative in 2002. He quickly transitioned to an apprentice lineman position and has risen through the ranks in the operations group since then, as a Journeyman Lineman, Line Foreman, and Operations and Safety Coordinator. He became the vice president of the department in 2017.

The Eastern Illini Board of Directors selected Smith following a thorough and thoughtful search process focused on identifying a leader who will continue to build on the cooperative's legacy of

successfully serving its members with reliable electricity and excellent service. "We are excited to welcome Bradley to his new role at EIEC," said Board Chair Kevin Moore. "The Board is confident that he will bring the right blend of leadership, vision, and experience to guide us forward while remaining deeply committed to serving our members."

Smith succeeds Bob Hunzinger, who is retiring after more than 11 years of dedicated service to EIEC and over 40 years in the electric utility industry. Under Hunzinger's leadership, the cooperative made significant strides in system reliability, financial strength, and community engagement. His steady leadership and unwavering focus on members will leave a lasting legacy.

"I am honored to be named the next President and CEO at EIEC. I'm excited to continue our strong tradition of serving our members," said Smith. "This is a dynamic time for the electric cooperative industry, and I look forward to working with the board, employees, and members to shape a strong and sustainable future together. I'd also like to thank Bob for his great leadership, and we all wish him well in his retirement."

The cooperative will host an opportunity for members to meet Smith at the Annual Meeting on June 5th in Gibson City. Smith will be available to answer questions and provide information to members during the Health and Home Expo being held from 3:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

He will also speak at the business meeting and share his vision for the future of Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative.

**ELLA ROGERS**  
**AND**  
**GARRETT KOESTER**

*Congratulations!*



# You're invited to attend EIEC's Annual Meeting!

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

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.

A delicious fried chicken dinner that includes chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy, green beans, coleslaw, homemade noodles, rolls and butter, and dessert, will be served between 3:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. You are welcome to come anytime during that three hour time frame. The meal is free and we encourage you to bring your appetite!

While you eat, music will be provided by Jimm Wood. We will also host a Health and Home Expo featuring a wide array of information relevant to members.

Beginning at 6:30 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 co-op.

You may be asking yourself, why should I attend a cooperative annual meeting? Here are a few reasons why:

**MEET & GREET!** - Bradley W. Smith has been named President/CEO and he looks forward to talking with members at the annual meeting this year. Members of the board of directors as well as employees will be in attendance to engage in dialogue.

**MEET and EAT!** - The Annual Meeting provides a wonderful opportunity to reconnect with friends and neighbors and interact with co-op directors and employees. As a community event, all members and their families are welcome and encouraged to attend.

**LEARN!** - 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.

This year we are hosting a Health and Home Expo that will provide members with valuable information on interesting topics.

**VOTE!** - Every year, three of our nine board members are up for reelection. This year, the three board members up for reelection will be reelected by voice vote during the business meeting. The board of directors are fellow co-op members, just like you, who have volunteered their time and talents to serve on the co-op board. The board creates policies that directly impact you and all co-op members.

We hope you will consider joining us for the 2025 Eastern Illini annual meeting on June 5th. Take a moment to go online and register today to attend!



## Health and Home EXPO

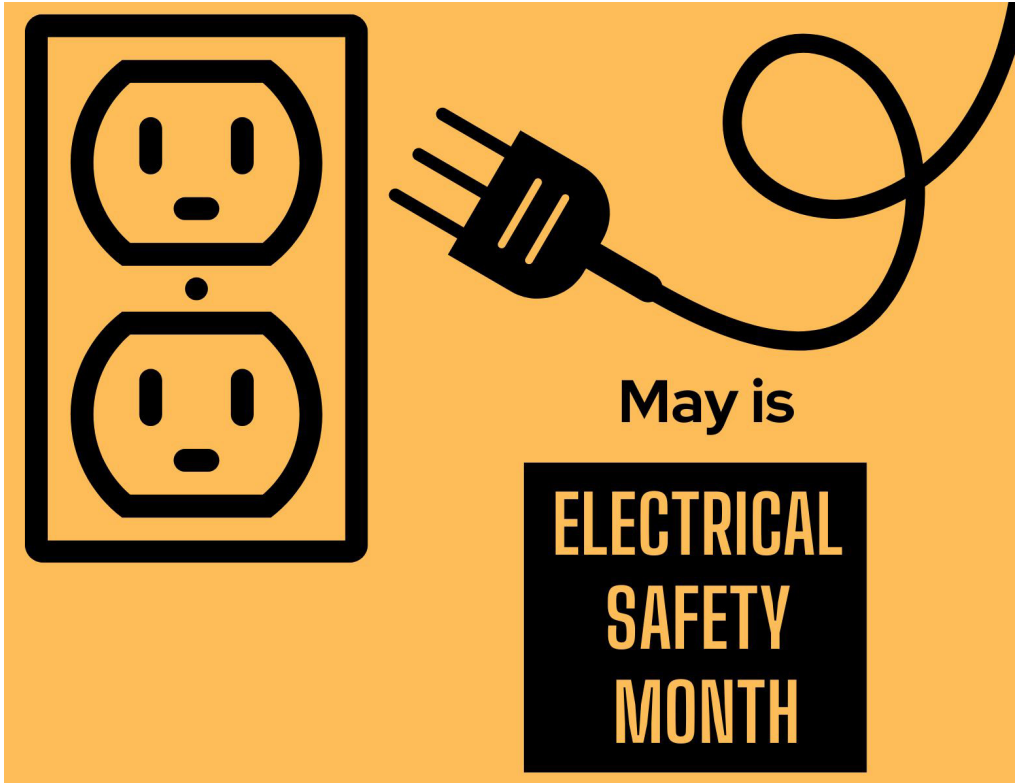


PROVIDING MEMBERS WITH BENEFICIAL INFORMATION  
ON WAYS TO STAY SAFE & IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH & HOME

- **Briggs & Stratton Generators**  
**Dippel Electric**
- **Internet Services**  
**Nextlink**
- **Master Gardeners**  
**University of Illinois Extension**
- **Meet the new President/CEO**  
**Bradley W. Smith**
- **Nutrition & Fitness**  
**Gibson Area Hospital**

# AVOID POTENTIAL SAFETY HAZARDS AT WORK, HOME AND PLAY

## Stop! Look! Live! Stay safe



know whether something 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 have been told by a lineworker that it is safe to do so.

### 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.

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

We are so used to using electricity in our daily lives that we can forget the dangers that come with it. 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.

Forty six percent of all electrical fatalities are caused by contact with overhead power lines. It is always important to be cautious and assume that all lines are live and dangerous.

### OUTDOORS:

#### **Stay away from power lines** -

Keep yourself, your children, 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 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:**

People are injured or killed by accidental contact with electrical equipment every year. This contact can be avoided if we stop to think about our safety. If you don't

# 2025 candidates for the EIEC board of directors

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 EIEC office in Paxton. Directors also attend special board meetings, committee meetings, the annual meeting, and 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. A director represents all members of Eastern Illini, not a geographic region or directorate district.

The Credentials Committee met on Tuesday, April 8, to review the qualifications of all candidates who filed nomination petitions. Members of the Credentials Committee are:

- Sam Brandenburg, Tuscola, District 8
- Marie Monk, Ashkum, District 1
- Tyler Babb, Penfield, District 6
- Michele Coe, Loda, District 3

They 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 1, 7, and 8 will be elected at the annual meeting on June 5, 2025. Directors strive to uphold the mission of EIEC which is to provide members with safe and reliable energy solutions and exceptional service.

## 2025 Director Election Candidates



**Directorate District 1**  
**Tyler Finegan**

Ashkum, IL

Tyler R. Finegan and his wife, Britni, reside in rural Ashkum and are the parents of Anderson, Elliott, and Hendrix.

Finegan is a sixth generation corn and soybean farmer in Iroquois County. Finegan is a 2004 graduate of Clifton Central High School. He continued his education earning degrees from Kankakee Community College and Western Illinois University in Macomb.

Finegan has been serving on the Eastern Illini board of directors since 2019, and currently represents Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative on the board of directors of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives.



**Directorate District 7**  
**Steve Gordon**

Rantoul, IL

Steve Gordon has been an Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative member since 1982 and was elected to the board in 2016. Gordon has farmed for 54 years.

He has membership in the Illinois Corn Growers Association, Knights of Columbus and Elks Lodge. He supports St. Malachy Catholic School and The High School of St. Thomas More. He graduated from St. Malachy Catholic School and Rantoul High School and continued his education at Parkland College.

He and his wife, Becky, are the parents of Kacie (Dallas) Osterbur, and Devon (Chet) Little and grandparents to Emma and Kinsley Osterbur and Brynleigh Little.



**Directorate District 8**  
**Chad Larimore**

Bement, IL

Chad Larimore has been an EIEC member since 2009 and was elected to the board in 2016. He currently also serves on the PPI board of directors. He believes his family farming background aligns well with EIEC's values as does his engineering and business background.

While raising a young family, Larimore looks towards the future, by keeping an open mind about new technologies while still maintaining a financial responsibility to the membership. His goal is to keep the lights on for EIEC members in a safe and reliable manner. Larimore and his wife, Jessica, live in rural Bement with their son, Drew.

**THURSDAY  
JUNE 5**



## **2025 ANNUAL MEETING**

**CHICKEN DINNER:**  
3:30 P.M. – 6:30 P.M.



**Musical Entertainment  
by Jimm Wood**

**BUSINESS MEETING:**  
6:30 P.M.



**Health and Home Expo**

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



**Bounce Houses  
and Ice Cream**

### **GIBSON CITY BIBLE CHURCH**

309 N. State, Rte. 47  
Gibson City, IL



### **RSVP :**

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