

# PowerLines

August 2025

## Dog Days of Summer

As I write my first Message from the President in my new role as President/CEO of Eastern Illini, we are in the midst of the “dog days of summer”, often the hottest, most humid period of the year. According to the Old Farmer’s Almanac, the dog days are from early July to mid-August. With that said, the delivery of reliable electricity to power your air conditioning unit becomes especially important.

One of Eastern Illini’s corporate goals for 2025 is an Average Service Availability Index (ASAI) score of 99.95. ASAI is a reliability index used in the industry to measure how often service is available to members. We set the bar extremely high when it comes to reliability because it determines member satisfaction and operational efficiency, and it is an indicator of a dependable and consistent power supply.

I want to share with you what happens behind the scenes when it comes to reliability. Our mission is to provide members with safe, reliable energy solutions and exceptional service and to live up to that mission, we invest heavily in maintaining and upgrading our infrastructure to ensure reliability and resilience. This includes everything from power lines and substations to advanced technologies that track electricity flow, pinpoint outages, detect voltage anomalies, and enable two-way communication between us and members.

Eastern Illini has over 91,000 electric poles in our 10-county service area. We have an effective pole inspection program that places emphasis on cost-effectively

extending the life of existing poles while maintaining appropriate levels of safety and reliability. Annually, we evaluate 13,000 poles as part of our overall preventative maintenance program.

Forestry management and tree trimming are also crucial to maintaining a safe and reliable power supply. We strive to maintain vegetation around our power lines, and we have the responsibility to

clear trees that pose a hazard to the lines. In 2023, we upgraded all of our meters, which improved our ability to know about outages in real-time.

Another component of reliability is the delivery of power through Ameren’s transmission facilities to Eastern Illini. We work closely with Ameren in conjunction with Prairie Power Inc. to collaborate on infrastructure projects to enhance service and reliability in our territory.

Mother nature’s delivery of snow, ice, and wind along with vehicular accidents involving power poles are the uncontrollable factors when it comes to reliability. So far in 2025, the storms and accidents have been such that we are on track to meet our goal of members being without power less than 4.8 hours per year. Providing safe and reliable power you can depend on will continue to be a top priority at Eastern Illini.

Cooperatively,



MESSAGE FROM  
THE PRESIDENT

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- Back to school: Keeping children safe
- Reliability & extreme temperatures
- Capital Credit Allocation on your bill
- Local students represent EIEC in D.C.
- It’s our way of life

### KEEP ELECTRICAL ITEMS AWAY FROM WATER:

Whether you’re hanging lights on your patio, using your grill, swimming in your pool or enjoying your hot tub, it’s important to keep all electrical items away from water. In fact, you want to make sure you’re keeping them at least 6 feet away. Remember to practice electrical safety this summer.



- View your bill
- Make a payment
- Compare usage by month
- Review known issues
- Report an outage
- Update account information

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or through an application on  
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# Back to school: Keeping children safe

It is hard to believe that summer is winding down and the time to send the kids back to school is once again right around the corner. August is National Back to School Month, and this means that it is time to buy new clothes, backpacks, and school supplies.

According to a survey from AAA, more than half of people in Illinois drive through a school zone or pass a bus stop on their normal commute. More than thirty-nine percent of people admitted to speeding in an active school zone, and 30% admitted to using their hand-held cell phone while driving in an active school zone.

Car accidents in school zones pose a significant threat to the safety of children. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), an average of 111 children are killed every year while walking to or from school, and more than 25,000 are injured in school zone accidents.

According to the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), there were 1,700 school zone-related crashes in 2022, resulting in 12 fatalities and numerous injuries. According to the National Safety Council, teenagers are at higher risk for accidents during the hours before and after school. Whether you are a parent dropping off, a teacher commuting to work, or a motorist passing by, it is crucial to remain vigilant in school zone areas.

As the first day of school is fast approaching, it is an appropriate time to think about safety. Back to school safety tips are something that every parent should discuss with their kids.

### TEACH OR REPEAT STRANGER DANGER

If you have not already had the chance to instruct your children about strangers and the dangers that accompany them, now is the time. Children should not go off to school without understanding the

need to stay away from strangers and not to be fooled. Discussing the types of things that are okay and the types of things that should be avoided is vital. Talk about the rules of who will pick them up from school.

Emphasize the following with your kids and grandkids: Never approach a stopped car. If someone asks you for directions or tries to talk to you, keep your distance. Have a pick-up password. There may be times when your student needs to be picked up from school and you ask a friend or relative to help you out. Make it easy for your student to assess who is and is not OK to leave with by deciding on a codeword.

### STAY ALERT

In a world of Smartphones, handheld gaming systems, and earbuds, it is easy to tune out on the way to school. Be aware of your surroundings. Keep your eyes and ears open and available to what is happening around you and have your hands free to be able to respond quickly.

Never pass a school bus when red lights are flashing or the stop sign is extended. Red flashing lights and an extended stop sign mean a school bus is stopped to let students on or off. Drivers behind or in front of a school bus must stop even if the road is divided (unless there is a physical barrier separating the lanes). Passing a school bus with red flashing lights in Illinois is illegal.

### SCHOOL BUS SAFETY

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, children are most at risk when getting on and off the school bus. Often, due to the size of a bus, the driver cannot see directly in front of or behind the bus. Kids should never walk behind or in front of a bus without first making eye contact with the driver.

### HAVE AN EMERGENCY PLAN IN PLACE

Children always feel safer when they know what to do in the event of different situations. For example, what would they do if the school had an emergency and



they needed to get someplace safe outside the school? It is imperative that parents and children have a plan. Have a primary place to meet and a backup in case of an emergency.

### MAKE A SAFETY CARD

Your child should have a laminated card on them that gives their name, address, phone number, emergency contacts and medical conditions at a minimum. This information can be extremely important should they become lost or sick away from home or school.

### TEEN DRIVERS

Learning to drive is a rite of passage for most teens, but one that comes with increased responsibility. Help your teen establish safe routes to and from school, and have your teen practice driving the route with a licensed adult.

Prohibit smartphone use while driving. Understand Illinois laws for teen driving such as passenger restrictions. Encourage mindful driving, which includes seatbelts, driving defensively, and leaving early to avoid rushing and aggressive driving.

Back to school means increased traffic. Drivers should prioritize safety by slowing down in school zones, avoiding distractions, and being extra cautious around school buses and crosswalks.

# WAYS TO LOWER ELECTRIC USE AT HOME DURING EXTREME HEAT

## Reliability and extreme summer temperatures

When outdoor temperatures soar, our electricity use increases. That's because our air conditioners are running longer and more often to counteract sweltering outdoor temperatures. Factor in that we all tend to use electricity at the same times—in the morning and early evenings—and that equals a lot of strain on the electric grid.

At Eastern Illini, we work closely with PPI, our local generation and transmission (G&T) cooperative in resource and infrastructure planning to ensure you have the power you need whenever you flip a switch, but the electric grid is much larger than your local co-op and G&T.

In summer months, when even more electricity is being used simultaneously across the country, it is possible for electricity demand to exceed supply,

especially if a prolonged heat wave occurs. If this happens, which is rare, the grid operator for our region may look for ways to reduce their energy use and in extreme situations, initiate rolling power outages to relieve pressure on the grid.

We work proactively with PPI to create a resilient portion of the grid and ensure electric reliability in extreme weather, including regular system maintenance, grid modernization efforts and disaster response planning; but it takes everyone to keep the grid reliable.

To help keep the air conditioner running for you, your family and neighbors, here are a few things you can do to reduce your energy use:

Select the highest comfortable thermostat setting and turn it up several degrees whenever possible. Your cooling system must run longer to make up the difference

between the thermostat temperature and the outdoor temperature. Seal air leaks around windows and exterior doors with caulk and weatherstripping.

Run major appliances like dishwashers, ovens and dryers when the demand for electricity is lower. Program your dishwasher to run overnight. Use ceiling fans to make yourself feel a few degrees cooler. Close blinds, curtains and shades during the hottest part of the day to block unwanted heat gain from sunlight. It also helps to use smaller appliances, such as slow cookers, air fryers and toaster ovens for meal preparation.

Understanding the impact on energy demand is important for maintaining a reliable power supply during extreme weather conditions. By adopting energy conservation practices you can save money on your electric bills, and also contribute to the resilience of the grid.

## 5 WAYS to Reduce Use During Extreme Heat

During periods of extreme heat, the demand for electricity can skyrocket, placing additional strain on the grid. By working together to lower our electricity use, we can reduce pressure on the grid.

Here are five effective ways to lower use at home.

1. **Raise your thermostat setting a few degrees higher** than usual. Every degree can reduce cooling energy consumption.
2. **Cook with smaller appliances** to save energy and reduce heat gain in the kitchen.
3. **Keep blinds, curtains and shades closed** during the hottest part of the day to block direct sunlight.
4. **Use fans** to circulate air, which can make you feel cooler without needing to lower the thermostat.
5. Shift activities that require a lot of energy consumption to **off-peak hours** when demand is lower.







# UNDERSTANDING YOUR CAPITAL CREDIT ALLOCATION FROM EASTERN ILLINI ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE: A BENEFIT OF CO-OP MEMBERSHIP



Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative keeps track of how much you pay for the electricity you use all year.



Eastern Illini calculates if the overall revenue collected for the year is more than the costs of operation. If there is more revenue than expenses, it's called margin.



EIEC allocates margins to each member as capital credits based upon the amount each member paid for electricity that year. The allocation is added to your capital credit account and it's always yours, even if you move.



Capital credits stay in your account to "go to work" funding the operations of the co-op. We use those dollars to offset other types of financing like taking out loans.\*



Over time, and based on the financial condition of the co-op, the board may authorize the retirement of capital credits, so it is important to keep us up-to-date on your address if you move.



# YOUTH TOUR OPENS MINDS AND BUILDS LEADERS

## Local students represent EIEC in D.C.



Every June, a select group of high school students from across Illinois leave their rural communities to spend a week taking in the historic sights and bustling energy of the nation's capital.

This year, 48 students sponsored by 25 Illinois electric and telephone cooperatives took part in the 2025 Youth Tour to visit Washington, D.C., held June 16 to 23, for an immersive weeklong experience designed to educate and inspire the next generation of cooperative and civic leaders. Eastern Illini sponsored two students within our service territory. These students were Ella Rogers and Garrett Koester. They joined more than 2,000 students from across the country representing 44 states for the annual event.

Central to the Youth Tour experience is the formation of a mock student-run cooperative called Chip 'n' Pop Co-op. Students began their journey at the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC) headquartered in Springfield, where the students selected a co-op board. The board later interviewed and selected a manager.

Throughout the week, the co-op handled snack sales, decision-making and budgeting — giving participants a hands-on look at how cooperatives operate. Being part of a co-op helps

students understand what makes a co-op different. It's all about working together and making decisions that serve everyone — not just one person or company.

Students took part in the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's Youth Day. They joined hundreds of other teens from across the country to hear from national leaders and learn how to use their voices back home.

Over the course of the week, students visited historic landmarks including Gettysburg, Arlington National Cemetery and, for the first time in many years, had the opportunity to tour the White House, where the students caught a glimpse of President Donald Trump. They also toured the U.S. Capitol, strolled the National Mall, stood at the steps of the Supreme Court and explored the Smithsonian museums.

"I started out the trip just wanting to see the sites," Koester said. "But the true highlight of the trip was making new friends. This sounds cheesy but I basically got a second family out there."

The week concluded with a farewell dinner and dance, and by the time students returned home on June 23, many said they felt changed by the experience.

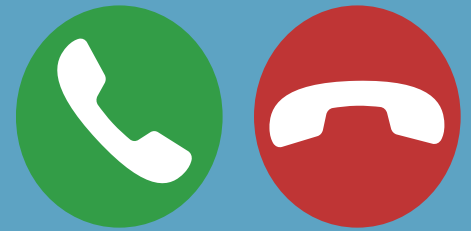
"I would like to say thank you for the wonderful opportunity that you gave me," Rogers said to EIEC. "I met tons of new people, saw places I would rarely ever see and, best of all, I got to make new friends on the way."

High school students who live within the service area of EIEC are eligible to participate in the annual program. Sophomores and juniors in high school can apply beginning in November for the next trip being held June 15 – 22, 2026.

When Eastern Illini contacts members using automation, you will see a toll-free number come up on your caller ID. The number is:

## 855-939-3557

We encourage you to add this number to your contacts, so you'll know it's us calling about planned outages, prepaid notifications, billing, and other business related events.

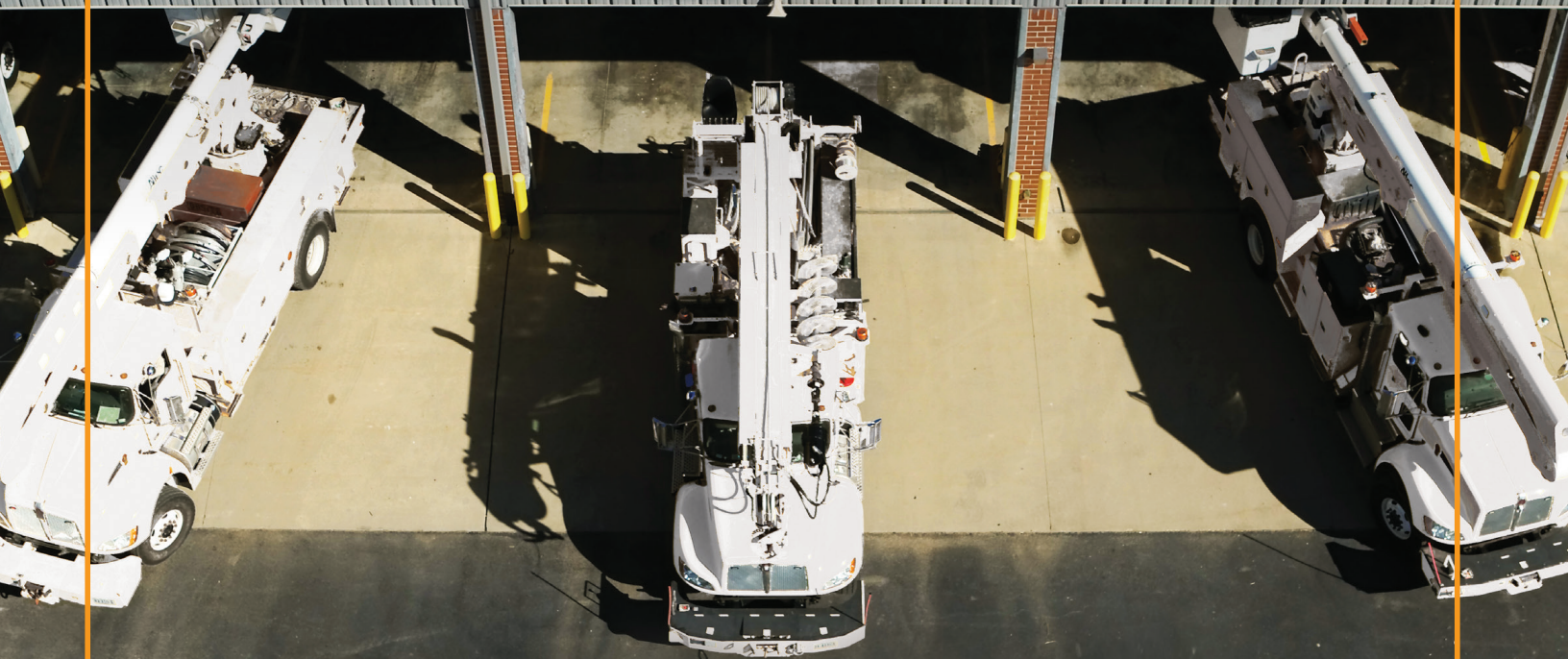


### EASTERN ILLINI IS CALLING YOU!





# IT'S OUR WAY OF LIFE



Being there, every minute, of every day. As your hometown electric cooperative, it's not just our way of doing business, it's our way of life. And that means value that goes far beyond the energy we provide, value you can't really put a price on.

**EASTERN ILLINI ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

**Providing our members with safe, reliable energy solutions and exceptional service.**