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COOPERATIVES BUILD A BETTER WORLD

October is National Co-op Month

Many of us look forward to October because high school and college football games are in full swing. For others, October is a time to enjoy the crisp, cool weather and vibrant fall foliage. At Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative, October means one thing: National Co-op Month.

Regular readers of this column could be forgiven for thinking every month is Co-op Month. After all, I do like to emphasize the cooperative difference every chance I get. And October gives us a special opportunity to recognize the beneficial impact of the more than 40,000 cooperatives with more than 350 million members in the U.S. There are nearly nine hundred electric cooperatives in the U.S., and they serve forty-two million people in forty-eight states. 13.6 percent of the nation's electric customers are served by electric co-ops.

The theme of this year's Co-op Month is "Cooperatives Build a Better World." It is an appropriate theme because, just like EIEC, our fellow cooperatives were born out of their local areas and founded by members who decided to serve a need in

their community. Cooperatives are not guided by profits or run by leadership from far-off places. EIEC exists because no other entity was willing to provide electric service to the "last-mile" areas of rural, east central Illinois. We serve 13,000 meters in our ten-county service area. We employ 59 people and operate and maintain 4,500 miles of energized line and 91,000 poles.

Each day, Eastern Illini, works to do what is right for each member and for the overall membership. We strive to demonstrate the COOPERATIVE DIFFERENCE.

Here are the core principles we follow:

- **Open and Voluntary Membership**
- **Democratic Member Control**
- **Members' Economic Participation**
- **Autonomy and Independence**
- **Education, Training, & Information**
- **Cooperation Among Cooperatives**
- **Concern for Community**

At the end of the day our mission is to bring safe, reliable energy solutions and exceptional service to you and all members of the cooperative. Our employees work hard to achieve that goal and to ensure our interactions with you are positive ones.

At Eastern Illini, we prioritize member satisfaction. This month we ask you to take a moment and complete the member satisfaction survey. It can be completed online at: www.eiec.coop or fill it out on the back page and return it to us with your bill. You can also mail it to us at EIEC P.O. Box 94, Paxton, IL 60957. If you find yourself in Paxton, feel free to drop it off at our office or in our dropbox in the Paxton office parking lot.

Your input is valuable. It helps us understand what is important to you and where there are areas for improvement. Your input drives enhancements in service quality and efficiency.

Thank you for the trust you place in us. We take our responsibility to serve you seriously. We are committed to safely delivering the reliable electricity you depend on every day.

We never forget who we serve, and we will always put you first.



Bradley W. Smith

BRADLEY W. SMITH
President/CEO

ARE HOME ELECTRONICS AND APPLIANCES DRAINING YOUR ENERGY?

If you collect your spare change in a jar, all those coins add up over time, usually to a larger amount than you expect.

Small amounts of consumed energy throughout your home add up as well, so plug "energy vampires" into a smart power strip that detects dormant devices or unplug items when not in use, especially those with illuminated controls.

TOP NINE ENERGY VAMPIRES



Safe **LEARN MORE:**
Electricity.org®

THE HIDDEN WASTE OF STANDBY ENERGY

*Energy Vampires are lurking in
your home at this very moment!*

Vampire energy — also referred to as phantom power, standby power or idle load electricity — involves the electricity that devices consume while not actively in use. Most modern electronics have a standby or “off-but-ready” mode that stays connected to a power source so you can power the device on at a moment’s notice. Common examples include TVs, desktop computers, device chargers and kitchen appliances. Although on their own, each device only uses a modest amount of power, the collective impact of all your home’s devices can constitute a substantial portion of your electricity use.

On average, Americans have more than 17 energy vampires sucking up electricity in their homes right now. Slaying these energy vampires doesn’t include a wooden stake or garlic. It is as simple as unplugging things such as phone chargers, coffeemakers, and toasters when they are not being used. It is just as important to unplug appliances and electronics while you are away for extended periods of time like vacation. An easy option for combatting larger energy vampires such as televisions and computers is to use surge protector power strips which can be powered off and on with a quick flip.

With more electronics readily available eliminating energy vampires in your home is more important than ever.

If you think devices in low power mode or standby aren’t using up electricity — think again. Even when you are not using certain common household electronics (including your computer, cable box, and video game system), they consume power when plugged into outlets.

Reducing the amount of vampire energy in your home isn’t difficult. A few adjustments can help you save money on your electricity bill.



- Unplug electronics when you’re not using them. Identify appliances or electronics in your home that you only rely on for a short time and unplug them after you use them.

- Invest in energy-efficient appliances that use less energy. ENERGY STAR is a government-backed program that identifies which products meet its strict energy efficiency standards.

- Turn your devices off. Electronics in standby mode are still draining power.

- Use a power strip to plug in multiple electronic devices, and the power can be cut off from these devices with a simple flip of a switch. Similar to power strips, smart strips offer energy efficiency to your home but are set apart from power strips because of the ways they conserve energy.

There are three types of smart power strips:

- Timer-equipped power strips are controlled by programmable timers, so all electronics plugged into the strip can be shut off at a designated time.

- Occupancy sensing power strips detect active use of a device and shut down after a specific period of time if unused.

- Current sensing power strips have the ability to cut or add power to a device as it senses when a device is powered off or on.



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



SIGN UP TODAY!

ENROLL IN PAPERLESS BILLING TODAY!

Why wait for your electric bill to arrive in the mail when you can have it delivered directly to your inbox?

With Paperless Billing, you’ll receive an email notification as soon as your monthly bill is available. You can securely view your bill, make a payment, and access your account anytime through SmartHub. It’s fast, convenient, secure - and free.

CONTACT US

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2027

EMPOWERING EDUCATION GRANTS

EASTERN ILLINI ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

ATTENTION TEACHERS!



\$500 per
teacher



SALT FORK NORTH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

APPLY BY: DECEMBER 4, 2026

Apply at: www.eiec.coop

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**. Applications may be completed online at **www.eiec.coop**.

Up to **40 grants** will be awarded. Grant winners will be notified in March 2027. Previous winners may apply again every three years.

CHARGE INTO FIRE SAFETY

*National Fire Prevention Week
October 4 - 10, 2026*

Many devices used in our daily lives - phones, tablets, laptops, tools, toys, e-bikes, and scooters—run on rechargeable lithium-ion batteries, which store a lot of energy in a small space. If they are damaged or charged the wrong way, they can overheat, start a fire, or even explode.

Fires happen due to manufacturing defects, physical damage, using the wrong charger, or leaving devices plugged in too long.

Improper charging and storage have driven up the number of fires caused by lithium-ion batteries. Everyday charging habits can help prevent battery fires.

Use the cord and charger that came with your device or ones approved by the manufacturer. Using the wrong charger can damage the battery and increase the risk of fire.

Charge devices on a table, desk, or other hard, flat surface. Do not charge them on beds, couches, or under pillows. Devices and chargers produce heat during normal charging. Soft surfaces can trap heat which can cause the battery to overheat.

Stop using your device if it feels very hot, starts to swell, is smoking, or has a strange smell. These are warning signs that the battery may be damaged or failing.

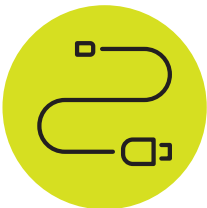
Unplug your device when it is fully charged. Do not leave it plugged in longer than needed.

Charge larger items like e-bikes, scooters, and power tools outside and away from exits. These batteries are larger and store more energy.

When on a plane, keep your device where you can see it while charging. Do not charge devices in overhead compartments.

Charge into FIRE SAFETY

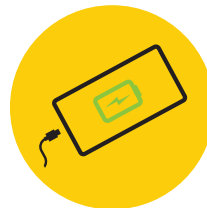
Safe charging means making smart choices every time you plug in.
Everyday charging habits can help prevent lithium-ion battery fires.



CHEAP CHARGER? DON'T CHANCE IT.

Use the cord and charger that came with your device or one approved by the manufacturer.

Why it matters: Using the wrong charger can damage the battery and increase the chance of fire. Cheap or off-brand chargers may not meet important safety standards.



FULLY CHARGED? TIME TO UNPLUG.

Unplug your device when it is fully charged.

Why it matters: Leaving a device plugged in can increase heat and stress on the battery.



FOR TOOLS AND RIDES, CHARGE OUTSIDE.

Charge large items like e-bikes, scooters, and power tools outside when possible. Do not block exits when charging.

Why it matters: These batteries are larger and store more energy. Fires can grow quickly if the battery fails.



OUT OF SIGHT? NOT IN FLIGHT.

When on a plane, keep devices where you can see them while charging. Do not charge e-cigarettes or vapes on the plane. Tell a flight attendant if you notice a problem with your device, such as if it feels very hot, starts to swell, is smoking, or has a strange smell.

Why it matters: If a battery overheats or fails, it is important for the flight crew to be able to respond quickly.



SOFT SURFACE? HARD PASS.

Charge on a hard, flat surface like a table, desk, or bare floor.

Why it matters: Devices and chargers create heat during normal charging. Soft surfaces like beds, pillows, and couches can trap heat and block airflow, which can cause a battery to overheat.



FEELS HOT? STOP USING IT.

Stop using your device if it feels very hot, starts to swell, smells strange, leaks, smokes, or makes popping or hissing sounds.

Why it matters: A damaged battery can overheat and start a fire.

2026 MEMBER SATISFACTION SURVEY

COMPLETE AND RETURN FOR A CHANCE TO WIN ONE OF 10 \$25 BILL CREDITS

You can complete the survey online at: www.eiec.coop
or mail it to us with your electric bill payment.

We'd love your feedback. We created this survey to find out what's important to you. Take a moment to complete the survey and let us know what you think. We appreciate your input.

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	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ability to resolve issues or problems	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Conducting business in a professional manner	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Friendly and courteous employees	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Knowledgeable and competent employees	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Providing valuable programs and services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Community involvement and support	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Delivering good value for the money	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Providing energy efficiency information	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Supporting renewable energy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Charging reasonable rates	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Having a minimum of outages	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Restoring power quickly after an outage	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

For the following questions, rate your answers 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?

VERY UNLIKELY ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ VERY LIKELY

How do you view your relationship with Eastern Illini? MEMBER ☐ CUSTOMER ☐

FIRST AND LAST NAME: _____

YOUR ACCOUNT # _____

(SO WE CAN CONTACT YOU IF YOU ARE ONE OF THE 10 WINNERS OF THE \$25 BILL CREDIT.)