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SAFETY ABOVE ALL ELSE

EIEC strives for a culture of safety

Safety is at the top of our priority list. Whether you are at home, on the road, or collaborating with us in the community, we are committed to providing reliable energy while focusing on safety for everyone. This is not empty talk.

Over time, EIEC has created a culture of safety by putting our employees' safety and that of the community above all else. This requires ongoing focus, dedication, and vigilance. We establish and follow safety guidelines based on leading national safety practices for the utility industry. Our pursuit of a culture of safety involves thoroughly educating employees regarding electricity and staying safe. We focus on training, inspection, environment awareness, equipment and testing. We require our lineworkers to wear specialized equipment when working next to or with power lines. There are specific protocols that our lineworkers follow when dealing with energized power lines.

Our safety committee, composed of cooperative employees representing all departments at EIEC, meet regularly to discuss safety-related topics and set initiatives for workplace safety.

We monitor and track near-misses of accidents to understand them, share "lessons learned" and find ways to improve in the future. Accidents can still happen, which is why our lineworkers complete safety training, including pole-top rescue. Pole-top training simulates an electrical contact injury and the lineworker becoming unconscious at the top of a pole. Each lineworker climbs the pole using spikes attached to their boots and a safety harness secured to the pole. Once they reach the dummy, they tie a rope around it and lower it safely to the ground.

Each lineworker completes this training annually. Their equipment is also inspected to make sure it is always in working order.

We encourage all our crews to speak up and hold each other accountable for safety. By cultivating a culture of openness and transparency, we promote problem-solving regarding safety rather than defaulting to a blame game. We review information gleaned from accident reports to discern patterns and use safety metrics to make changes in those areas where there is room for improvement.

At Eastern Illini we promote a culture of safety by providing a foundational framework of principles to follow:

Commitment: The board of directors and senior leadership are committed to safety. We invest in training, compliance, public education programs and the enforcement of safe work practices.

Communication: Safety messages are clear, evidence-based, and two-way. This includes openly sharing safety procedures, hazard updates, and near-miss reports.

Co-operation: Safety is a shared responsibility at EIEC. The board, leadership and employees work together and consult on safety decisions.

Competence: We ensure all employees have the right knowledge, correct skills, and ongoing instruction to perform their jobs safely.

Getting all our employees home safely at the end of the day is our number one priority, and that is why we put safety above all else.

Here's to a safe and enjoyable September.



Bradley W. Smith

BRADLEY W. SMITH
President/CEO

ELECTRIC BIKE & ELECTRIC SCOOTER SAFETY

Learn how to charge your lithium-ion powered devices safely

Electric bikes and scooters, powered by **lithium-ion batteries**, enhance our lives, but with such convenience comes responsibility. In many cities, lithium-ion batteries have become one of the **leading causes of fires and fire deaths**. Learn how to charge your devices safely.

Where to Buy Devices and Equipment



Purchase from a **trusted retailer** who stands behind their products.



Purchase devices that have a **manufacturer's warranty**.



Purchase devices that have been tested and listed by a **Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratory** and have one or more of these symbols.

What to do Once You Get Your New Device



Always **review the device's manual** before using.



Always use **manufacturer provided gear**.



Always purchase additional batteries from **reputable retailers**. Uncertified batteries can be a fire hazard.

Where to Charge and Where to Store



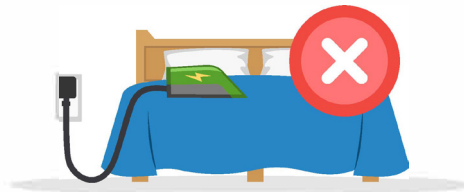
Always charge and plug **directly into a wall outlet**.



Charge in a **flat, dry area** away from children and sunlight.



Never charge near doors or entryways – if a fire occurs, it can block your exit.



Never leave a charging battery unattended. Unplug as soon as it is done charging, and never charge overnight.

Signs of a Problem



If you notice an **odd odor**, **discoloration**, or **hear something unusual** from your device, it could be a sign of danger. Move the device from anything flammable and call 911.

Take CHARGE of Battery Safety

Choose certified products
Handle lithium-ion devices with care
Always stay alert for warning signs
Recycle devices and batteries properly
Get out quickly if there's a fire
Educate others on safe practices

E-BIKE LEGISLATION COMING IN 2027

Micromobility safety

E-bikes and e-scooters have taken the world by storm. The use of these compact, convenient, eco-friendly modes of transportation have quadrupled in the U.S. over the past five years. This fun and inexpensive way to get around is called the micromobility boom. E-bikes represent 63% of all U.S. bicycle sales growth. Millennial and Gen Z users account for nearly 70% of e-scooter trips with over 60% of riders choosing them for leisure rather than daily commutes.

E-bikes have become one of the most desired trends of mobility among youth. Independence is one of the greatest motivating factors for teens wanting an e-bike. They no longer need their parents to get them where they need to go. Along with freedom and independence, e-bikes have great performance, are technologically advanced, and offer the chance for adventure and access to outdoor activities.

There are growing concerns in many communities about the safety of e-bikes. These concerns are often centered around young people, who are driving e-bikes before they become licensed drivers. Lack of familiarity with the rules of the road, along with youthful enthusiasm, has sometimes led to unsafe behavior like speeding, riding on sidewalks, ignoring stop signs and traffic lights and even stunt riding on roads and highways. Unruly behavior leads to social media posts, complaints to local officials and calls for more regulation of e-bikes or even outright bans on the use of e-bikes.

E-bike safety remains a pressing issue. E-bike and e-scooter related injuries have risen by 200% in the last five years, with head trauma and fractures being the most common. Nearly 40% of accidents involve first-time riders and 50% of all e-bike injuries involve a collision with a motor vehicle.



In Illinois, Senate Bill (SB) 3484, takes effect January 1, 2027. It establishes a statewide framework for the regulation of e-bikes and electric micromobility devices.

Under the law, low-speed Class 1 (pedal assist with no throttle) or Class 2 (pedal assist and a throttle) users must be at least 15 years old to ride an e-bike of any type. Riders of e-bikes that can exceed 28 mph will be required to have a driver's license, title, registration and insurance.

High-speed e-bikes will also be prohibited on sidewalks, bike paths, and bike lanes. Any e-bike with a motor greater than 750 watts will be regulated as a motor-driven cycle. All electric micromobility devices must be operated in a safe manner consistent with roadway conditions and applicable traffic laws.

As technology advances, e-bikes are poised to become smarter and safer. AI-powered navigation, improved battery efficiency, and integration with public transit systems are just a few developments on the horizon. With communities increasingly prioritizing micromobility, e-bikes will likely play an important role in the future not only for teens but also for adult transportation—but only if challenges like safety and sustainability are addressed.

Ready to hop on the e-bike trend? Whatever role you play - motorist, e-bike owner, parent, or policymaker, statistics reveal the e-bike transformative shift in how we move is here to stay.



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



SIGN UP TODAY!

TIPS TO STAY CHARGED DURING AN OUTAGE

When the power is out, help your phone battery last longer by using the airplane mode when you do not need service, turning off Bluetooth, Wi-Fi and GPS, dimming your screen, or turning your phone off until needed. If severe weather is forecasted, fully charge your phone. Keep a charger in your vehicle, but only charge devices while the engine is running.

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SAFETY FIRST, AVOID THE WORST

Stay safe this harvest season

Fall harvest time can be one of the busiest and most dangerous seasons of the year for the agriculture industry. Agriculture is the leading industry in Illinois, and farmers across the state will be moving equipment along roadways during the harvest season, which typically begins in early September and can last into November. Drivers should expect to see farm vehicles on the road during this time.

As farmers are traveling between fields, we are reminding motorists and farmers alike to share the road to help reduce crashes involving tractors, implements, and other farm equipment.

FOR MOTORISTS

Slow down as soon as you see a farm vehicle. Most farm equipment only travels 15 to 20 miles per hour, so it's crucial to slow down before it's too late. Adjust to a greater following distance to increase sight lines when following behind large, wide, slow-moving vehicles.

Pass with extreme caution and take the standard precautions: Wait for a safe passing zone, watch for oncoming traffic and signal and return to the lane once the vehicle is in your rearview mirror. If the vehicle is extra-wide, wait to pass until the driver pulls over and signals that it's safe. Honk your horn beforehand in case the driver can't see you. Remember, it is illegal to pass at intersections and in no-passing zones. Improper passing can be deadly.

Yield. Give a wide farm vehicle the right-of-way when it's traveling the opposite direction. Farm vehicles can't always pull over to the road's shoulder safely. If possible, pull onto the shoulder or into a turn-out to allow the farm vehicle to pass.

Be patient. A driver may appear to be pulling to the right to let you pass when

Let's all do our part to make rural roads safe during harvest season.

DRIVE SAFELY AROUND AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT

- Slow down
- Stay off your phone
- Pay attention and be alert
- Remain patient so we all get home safe



they are actually making a wide left-hand turn. Before driving past, look for driveways, roads or fields where the vehicle might be entering. Also check for hand gestures or lights signaling the driver's intention to turn. Nearly half of all incidents between motorists and farm implements involve either a left-hand turn or a rear-end collision.

Take a second look. Before you pull into an intersection or make a move to pass, be sure your path is clear in all directions

Find the lights on farm vehicles. They're required to have amber and red rear lights. The amber lights should be visible to the front and rear. They should flash as a warning to other motorists.

FOR FARMERS

Take time to wipe off reflectors, flashing lights, and any other warning devices before entering the roadway. Equipment covered with dust/mud/debris can make warning devices difficult to see.

Understand motorist **sight lines are reduced** around large pieces of equipment and look for opportunities to move as far right as possible. This can be challenging

with narrow, one lane roads and bridges. Signal way in advance to give the motorist plenty of time to prepare.

Look up and live! The height and width of farm equipment requires farmers to be aware of powerlines and poles on their routes to and from fields. It is important to maintain a minimum clearance of 10 to 20 feet in all directions. If equipment makes contact with an energized line, stay put. Do not exit. Call 911 and wait for help.

Pay attention for traffic backing up while traveling between fields and look for opportunities to avoid a long line of traffic. When possible, move off the roadway to allow extensive back-ups time to clear.

In general, farm vehicle operators must follow the same rules of the road as the driver of a car when they are on the road. Remember, motorists are often in a hurry and distracted, so use caution.

During this time of year, be aware that farm equipment is coming in and out of fields as harvest kicks into high gear. We want everyone to remember that someone's loved one is behind the wheel.

CYBER SAFETY CHECKLIST

Keep hackers out of your home

Cyber threats are evolving at breakneck speed as adversaries become more sophisticated and the number of connected devices worldwide continues to rise. New research reveals that more than 30,000 vulnerabilities were disclosed last year, a 17 percent increase from previous figures, reflecting the steady rise in cyber risks. With remote work and cloud adoption increasing, endpoints and data flows become attractive attack targets.

Electric co-ops, including Eastern Illini, protect the private information of members and ensure hackers don't tamper with the reliability of the electric grid. Members also have a lot at stake. Think about losing all the photos on your smartphone or having bank card information stolen from your computer causing your debit card to be compromised and shut down.

Cyber criminals all over the world are on the prowl through the Internet, and they are getting better and more conniving at what they do.

The bad guys tend to be a step ahead, so that means you need to keep security as an important priority. There are basic steps you can take to provide good layers of protection.

Create a strong password

Focus on keeping your critical account passwords secure, including banking passwords, credit cards, other financial accounts, computer sign-ons and the passwords for online merchants like Amazon and Walmart.

Passwords should be at least 16 characters in length. The length is the most important aspect of security related to password creation. Also mix upper and lower-case letters, numbers and special characters like % or &.



Remember to change the password at least every 6 months and never reuse passwords. Consider getting password manager software. There are several to choose from including 1Password, NordPass, and RoboForm.

Keep software updated

Updates don't just add flashy features to your apps; they often add security patches to protect against new security threats. Updates usually come automatically from the software company. But take a level of caution on updates as well.

Don't click on a link or attached file unless you know where it will take you

More than 90% of cyber incidents begin with a phishing email. Attackers exploit human error by sending deceptive emails that trick victims into clicking malicious links, downloading infected attachments, or revealing sensitive login credentials. Take a moment and move your cursor over a link to reveal the full address before clicking it. You will see a lot of confusing symbols, but you should also be able to recognize the name of the legitimate source. If you don't, find another way to verify the link.

Install and use virus protection

Buy your anti-virus software from one of the recognized major companies, and make it a subscription-type service that regularly sends automatic updates.

Use trusted flash drives

Those little thumb drives or jump drives you insert into your USB port may be handy ways to share lots of photos or other large documents. Only use flash drives that originate with you or one's you trust.

Secure all your Internet devices

Hackers have started invading wireless printers and baby monitors that work through the Internet. These devices tend to have extremely weak, preset passwords that you probably don't even notice. Set good passwords, keep the devices updated and make sure any wireless routers in your home are secure as well. Any Internet-connected device is vulnerable: smart TVs, cameras, thermostats, and video games.

Protecting yourself and your family online is more important now than ever in an increasingly digital world. Take steps to make sure you and your loved ones are safe from hackers.

FREE



**EASTERN ILLINI
MEMBER APPRECIATION EVENT
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2026
3 P.M. - 6 P.M.**

★ **HARDY'S REINDEER RANCH**

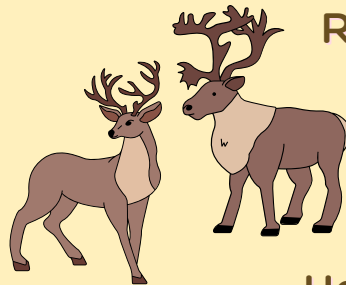
★ 1356 County Rd. 2900 N. - Rantoul, IL

★ We want to say thanks to our co-op members
with a free, fun event for the entire family!

Hot Dogs
& Smores



Reindeer Tours



Corn Maze



Hay Rides



RSVP:
www.eiec.coop or call us at 800-824-5102