

PowerLines

April 2021

Potpourri for Spring

In lieu of a specific theme for this month's column, we have various informational items to share.

Hopefully, the increasing availability of vaccines will continue to limit the spread and impacts of COVID-19. We re-opened our lobby in mid-February when the state moved to Phase 4 reopening status. There seems to be improving chances to a return to almost pre-COVID-19 normal lifestyles later this year.

Line workers are nationally recognized on April 12 for their work (see our tribute later in the newsletter). Also, April 21 is Administrative Professionals Day. During an all-employee meeting in mid-April, we will recognize our employees for their dedication and work ethic. In the past year, our employees have performed at very high levels in uncertain and unusual circumstances to continue providing the services you expect and deserve.

Our new rates are effective with these April bills (March usage). Please contact us with any questions.

Please be aware and practice proper safety measures as fieldwork and planting begin. Many members and workers put in long hours during this season. Always think and keep safety first!

Although under different meeting conditions than typical due to COVID-19, the start of the Illinois legislative session has included the filing of over 6,800 proposed legislative bills. More than a

handful of these various bills relate to energy, environmental, and renewable policy. Topics include more stringent renewable portfolio standards (the percent of electricity generated by renewable energy sources), eliminating carbon (fossil fuel) generation sources at a point in the future, and enhanced ability for individual owned self-generation.

Our statewide organization monitors this activity and represents cooperative interests. We will keep you advised as to what happens as the session proceeds.

Due to COVID-19, we have modified plans for our annual meeting this year. We will be hosting three **Member Appreciation Days** in different locations throughout the service territory, all in conjunction with the official Annual Meeting. You will be able to drive through anytime

between 3:30 and 6:30 p.m. and pick up free to-go meals. The first will be on June 7th at the EIEC headquarters in Paxton. On June 9th, the event will take place at the Sidney Community Center and the third will be held on June 10th at the Iroquois County Fairgrounds.

The Annual Meeting/Business Meeting will take place at 6:30 p.m. on June 10th immediately following the Member Appreciation event.

Sincerely,

Bob Hunzinger

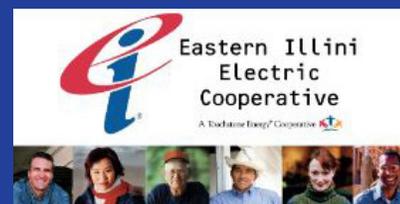


**MESSAGE FROM
THE PRESIDENT**

In this issue:

- Member Appreciation Days and Annual Meeting
- Be alert for scammers
- Life of a lineman
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- National Lineworker Appreciation

How do you want to save today?



Local Deals
Pharmacy Discounts
Cash Back Online
Hotel Savings

Visit www.connections.coop to register and start saving today.

SAVE THE DATE

Member Appreciation Days, in conjunction with the official Annual Meeting, will be held June 7 - 10th. Drive through anytime between 3:30 and 6:30 p.m. and pick up free to-go meals at these locations:

- 06/07: EIEC Headquarters, Paxton
- 06/09: Sidney Community Center
- 06/10: Iroquois Co. Fairgrounds
- 06/10: Annual Business Meeting

Your Touchstone Energy[®] Cooperative

June 7 - 10, 2021

Member Appreciation Days & Annual Meeting

MEMBER APPRECIATION DAYS

*Mark
YOUR
Calendar*

MEMBER APPRECIATION DAYS

in conjunction with the

Eastern Illini Annual Meeting

| DATE | TIME | LOCATION |
|---------------|--|-----------------------------|
| June 7, 2021 | 3:30 - 6:30 p.m. | EIEC Headquarters, Paxton |
| June 9, 2021 | 3:30 - 6:30 p.m. | Sidney Community Center |
| June 10, 2021 | 3:30 - 6:30 p.m. | Iroquois County Fairgrounds |
| June 10, 2021 | 6:30 Annual Meeting/ Business Meeting | 4-H Bldg. Iroquois Co. Fair |

- Drive through event
- Vote on a bylaw amendment and possible director election
- Pick up FREE to-go meals
- Pre-register at www.eiec.coop or by calling 800-824-5102



Eastern Illini
Electric
Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

**CONTACT US TO
RESERVE YOUR SPOT:**

800.824.5102

www.eiec.coop

MEAL RESERVATIONS DUE BY MAY 28, 2021

SCAM: YOUR ELECTRIC WILL BE CUT OFF IN 30 MINUTES!

Be alert for scammers

In today's world, scams are inevitable. Scammers call your cell phone, they pretend to be people they are not, and they threaten with legal action involving the IRS. They use intimidation to obtain social security numbers and personal information. They sometimes know account numbers and sound legitimate.

Scammers are targeting Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative members and many other energy consumers across the country. They often call threatening to shut off power unless payment is made immediately. Or they may call saying you overpaid and ask for credit card or bank info to provide a credit.

Never give out personal information to anyone who calls claiming to be from Eastern Illini!

Many of these scam attempts play out like this: the caller poses as a representative of Eastern Illini. They may say you are behind on the bill and a truck is on the way to disconnect your service unless you pay your bill right now – over the phone. Some ask their targets to purchase prepaid cards and call back with the prepaid card number to pay the bill.

Don't fall for these scams! Any possible disconnection would be preceded by written notice from us. We will never call demanding immediate payment over the phone. If you get such a call, or have questions about your bill, call us at 800.824.5102 and we can discuss the details of your account.

Attempts have also been made in person, at the door, or via email. Never agree to meet a caller at a local store or bank to make a payment. Eastern Illini doesn't condone those business practices. Your safety could be at risk.

If Eastern Illini needs to replace or service equipment in your home or business, we will contact you in advance. We are in the midst of a meter inspection project. Our employees will leave a hang tag to let you know they have been in your area. They will never come to the door and demand payment from you. Never respond to an email that claims to be from Eastern Illini that provides a link for payment or asks for personal information. Scammers can make Eastern Illini's name appear on a member's caller ID.

If you suspect someone is trying to scam you, please hang up, delete the email, or

shut the door. DO NOT provide personal, financial, or account information to unauthorized callers.

Call us at 800.824.5102, chat with us at www.eiec.coop or email us at info@eiec.coop. Never call the phone number the scammer provides. If you ever feel that you are in physical danger, call 911.

Eastern Illini members who suspect that they have been victims of fraud and lost money as a result of a scam, should also contact local law enforcement authorities.

The Federal Trade Commission's website (www.ftc.gov) is also a good source of information about how to protect personal information. You may report fraud at ReportFraud.ftc.gov. Launched in late 2020, this website makes telling the FTC about scams much easier. Always be alert for scammers and stay safe.



AVOID PHONE SCAMS!

IF THE CALLER DEMANDS MONEY OR IT SOUNDS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE IT'S A SCAM

- Threats to cut power if no immediate payment.
- Demand for credit card payment over the phone.
- States you'll be shut off even though you paid.
- Offers a FREE month of electricity.
- Says you paid too much and wants to give you a rebate.

If a call seems suspicious, don't give out confidential or personal information.

You can always call us at **1-800-824-5102**

Better safe than sorry.

WHEN THE LIGHTS GO OUT, SO DO THEY

Life of a lineman

April 12, 2021 is National Lineworker Appreciation Day and we want to honor America's unsung heroes, electrical linemen. They install power lines, restore electricity, and keep power flowing in all kinds of weather and sometimes extreme circumstances.

When a vehicle hits a power pole, not only are the police and fire departments called, but often a lineman will be dispatched to take care of downed lines and disconnect power to make the accident scene safe.

There are some notable characteristics that set linemen apart from other professionals.

NOT AFRAID OF HEIGHTS

The lowest clearance for electrical power lines in residential areas is 10 feet; however, transmission towers range in height from about 50 feet to around 180 feet. Neither case is exactly a step onto your front porch. To be a successful electrical lineman, you need to be comfortable working high up sometimes for hours at a time.

HANDS-ON LEARNER

As with many skilled trades, there's only so much textbook learning that can be done in preparation before actually doing the work. Working with high-voltage electrical power lines is no exception. It takes time, repetition, and hands-on-learning, and experienced mentors be successful on the job.

ELECTRICAL LINEWORKERS

Lineworkers install and maintain overhead and underground electrical systems. We rely on their expertise to power our world.

They must commit to safety above all else for the benefit of those they serve (you!), fellow crew members and themselves.

MENTALLY AND PHYSICALLY STRONG

Being a lineman requires a robust mental capacity and a knack for learning new skills. On top of superior mental fitness, electrical linemen need to be in good physical shape. Line work requires quite a bit of climbing of poles in order to service them. Athleticism is a valuable asset for electrical linemen, as it can make some of the rigorous physical aspects of line work easier.

PASSIONATE ABOUT SAFETY

Not only do linemen work at great heights, but they also are often doing repairs in confined spaces. Safety is of the utmost importance. Linemen follow rigorous rules, precise protocol, and pledge to remain safe at all times for the benefit of members, co-workers, and themselves.

ADRENALINE-SEEKING

It takes an adventurous and outgoing personality to be a lineman. Linemen are called out in natural disasters, severe weather, and in times of crisis. Linemen must possess self-confidence, determination, and a passion for excellence.

Everything that comes with being a lineman makes it more than a career; it's a lifestyle. Linemen put their mark on the world one electric pole at a time, so it requires a certain amount of pride to ensure each project lives up to their personal expectations of excellence. We appreciate when the lights go out, so do they.

WHAT THEY WEAR

Protective clothing is required to shield lineworkers since they work around high voltages. Gear can vary depending on pole structure (wood or steel) and weighs up to 45 pounds.



KEEP OUR CREWS SAFE

Slow down and move over

Eastern Illini linemen crews and servicemen work outside all year; however, the number of projects increase and are set in motion when the weather improves: right-of-way tree trimming, pole inspections and replacements, power line placement, line laying and general maintenance and repair.

One of our top priorities at Eastern Illini is to bring you, the member, reliable power. These projects help ensure we can reliably deliver power to your home or business. However, another top priority we have is safety: both for you and our employees.

As you are traveling to your destination, you may see a bright orange rectangle that says **Utility Work Ahead**. As soon as you see the sign, please pay attention and start slowing down. These signs are there not only for the workers protection, but for yours as well.

Eastern Illini crews are focused on doing the work at hand. If they have to worry

about unsafe drivers near their trucks and equipment, it slows down their mean time to repair and can be distracting.

Electric cooperative crews are especially at risk. The temporary nature of power line repairs can surprise motorists. A roadside construction project might close a lane for days or weeks, allowing time for people familiar with the area to anticipate the changed traffic pattern. Electric cooperative crews work; however, can start and finish in a few hours, possibly raising risks with drivers who might think they know the road ahead.

When you see our crews alongside the road with warning signs posted and orange cones around their trucks and equipment, please slow down and, when possible, move over.

We understand you have places to be, but simply taking the time to slow down and move over will ensure both you and our crews can remain safe and go home to their families unharmed.



“Protecting line crews is a top priority for Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative, and it’s a safety measure everyone can help with,” says Doug Vaughn, Operations and Safety Coordinator.

“Our crews already perform dangerous work to keep the lights on every day,” says Vaughn. “They deserve a work environment that’s as safe as possible. We encourage everyone to be aware of any crews working along our roadways and to drive through those zones safely.”

If you see roadside crews, please slow down and move over when possible.



Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative

THANK YOU

We appreciate your dedication and hard work in delivering electricity safely and keeping the power flowing.

- Mike Batte
- Kevin Dettmering
- Matt Huddleston
- Sean Miller
- Junior Price
- Jeff Blackford
- Jay Eshleman
- Jason Kocher
- Todd Moore
- Graham Schmid
- Mike Bristle
- Don Gerdes
- Tim Kulow
- Ken Mutchmore
- Drew Schrodt
- Jonah Carney
- Travis Glazik
- Scott Lane
- Jeremiah Nichols
- Brad Smith
- Jaxson Coplea
- Bill Hoffschneider
- Scott McTaggart
- Zach Owens
- Doug Vaughn
- Nick Curry
- Alex Hubert
- Cliff Miller
- Luke Perzee
- Brad Weisenbarn

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