



Egyptian Electric News

1005 W. Broadway • PO Box 38 • Steeleville, IL 62288 • 800-606-1505 • www.eeca.coop

OCTOBER 2017

Our history, our future

By Adam Schwartz

One of my favorite quotes has always been, "Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it." Yet sometimes remembering our history with the goal of repeating it can actually be a good thing. As the nation's 30,000 cooperatives celebrate National Co-op Month this October, it is a great time to take a look back – and a look forward.

Take the history of your electric co-op. Egyptian Electric Cooperative was founded when neighbors worked together to bring electricity to our rural community. Big investor-owned power companies thought they couldn't generate enough profit so they bypassed rural areas. Back then, there were frequent meetings among neighbors to discuss the formation of the cooperative. Once established, annual meetings were the "must attend" event of the year. The co-op – on behalf of the member-owners – committed to provide the community with electricity. Fast forward to today – and tomorrow. Egyptian Electric Cooperative currently serves over 14,900 members. We have returned \$8,819,752 to our members since just 1990.

We understand the spirit that helped create this co-op must be continually nurtured. While times and technology will continue to change, our commitment to you will not. Although we started out to provide electricity, our impact (with your support) has grown, and will continue to grow. As we continue to look toward the future, and even at our new headquarters location, you can be confident that we will commit to explore new ways to help our members and our community. Our programs and initiatives such as new payment kiosk locations, AMR meter technology, new outage mapping system, and updated website, energy audit program, SmartHub, interconnection and net metering policies, and many more programs, are ways we offer a

Offices Closing: The existing Murphysboro and Steeleville offices located at 10169 Old Highway 13 in Murphysboro and 1005 W. Broadway in Steeleville will officially close for business indefinitely on Thursday, October 19 at 4 p.m. Egyptian Electric will be closed for employee training Friday, October 20, and the new headquarters facility located at 1732 Finney Road in Murphysboro will open and begin to service to our membership for regular business on Monday, October 23 at 8 a.m.



variation of services to our members.

Over the years, as we've listened to you and your fellow co-op member-owners, we know that we have to keep pace as technology and consumer tastes evolve. As always, we welcome your participation as we plan for the future. **49-19-2016**

Adam Schwartz is the founder of The Cooperative Way, a consulting firm that helps co-ops succeed. He is an author, speaker and member-owner of the CDS Consulting Co-op.

MEMBER PRIZES

Every month we will have three map location numbers hidden throughout our Egyptian Electric News section. If you find your location number, that corresponds to the one on your bill, call our office and identify yourself and the page that it is on and you will win a \$10 credit on your next electric bill.



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Steeleville, IL 62288

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Murphysboro, IL 62966

800-606-1505
Office hours 8 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. M-F
www.eeca.coop

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- Mail to: PO Box 38, Steeleville, IL 62288
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- By phone, using credit card or checking account
- Kiosks located at 2301 N Reed Station Parkway in Carbondale and 1306 N Market Street in Sparta

Classroom Grants *A Commitment to Our Schools*

Egyptian Electric Cooperative is again offering Touchstone Energy Classroom Empowerment Grants for our local schools located within our Cooperative's territorial footprint. We are aware that adequate funding for many school systems has been a challenge. Commitment to Community is one of our Touchstone Energy core principles, and we are committed to the communities we serve and want to continue to provide assistance to them.

Eight \$500 Classroom Empowerment Grants will be offered and awarded to public and K-12 schools to help them with projects that will improve educational opportunities for students. An impartial panel of judges will evaluate the applications based on the projects that best serve the purpose of improving the learning environment and/or increasing educational resources for the school.

How do Teachers or School Administrators apply?

1 Review the official rules and complete the Grant Application Form found on Page 11 of this magazine, also found on our website, www.eeca.coop.

2 Attach a double-spaced typewritten request, under three pages, with the following information:

- A description of the project and what it will accomplish.
- The estimated cost of the project.
- An explanation of why funds or



additional funds are necessary for the completion of the project.

- Whether other funding options have been pursued and if so, the status of those requests.
- When the project should be completed.
- The number of students impacted by the project.
- If the project's goals are measurable and how they would be measured if the project is successful.
- How does the project tie to our Touchstone Energy core values of: integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community.

3 Have the completed Grant Application Form and attached type-written request received at our office by 4 p.m. on Friday, November 3.

The grant awards will be announced by Friday, December 15, 2017. For questions regarding the Classroom Empowerment Grants, please contact Brooke Guthman at 800-606-1505 or bguthman@eeca.coop. It's that simple and straightforward, so don't miss this opportunity! **08-33-0004**

*Grant applications are due by
4 p.m. on Friday, November 3.*



New kiosk opens in Sparta

In case you missed it, effective August 23, Egyptian Electric now offers two off-site payment kiosks for members. Members can now not only make payment during and after-hours at the Marketplace Shell in Carbondale, but also at the Wright Do-it Center located at 1306 N. Market Street in Sparta, next to the Wal-Mart and behind McDonald's downtown! Wright's is locally owned by EECA members! Their hours are Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturdays 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Our kiosks accept cash (but no change given), e-check, Visa, MasterCard, and Discover.

Wright Do-It Center

**1306 N Market Street
Sparta, IL**

7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mon-Fri
7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturdays

Marketplace Shell

**2301 N Reed Station Parkway
Carbondale, IL**

6 a.m. to Midnight
Open 7 days/week!



Effective Oct. 1, Egyptian Electric Cooperative will be offering two options for energy audits. The first option will be a "walkthrough" energy audit, or evaluation. The walkthrough is as it sounds; a walk around the outside and throughout the home looking at attic insulation levels, foundation and crawlspace insulation, doors, windows, water heaters and heating and cooling systems. As there will be no written report, the homeowner will need to be present and ready to take notes. The auditor will discuss any deficiencies in the home they discover and make verbal recommendations to the homeowner, bringing

to light the "low hanging fruit." The walkthrough evaluation typically takes no longer than an hour to two hours and costs \$50 (that will be added to the member's next bill).

The second option is a complete diagnostic audit. With a diagnostic energy audit, the auditor will inspect the same things as in a walk-through audit, but will also perform a blower door test, use an infrared camera when temperatures allow (it must be sufficiently cold or warm outside so there is a substantial temperature differential to show up on the camera) and when combustible furnaces or appliances are present, a Combustible Appliance Zone (CAZ) test to ensure the appliances do not back draft or have too high of carbon monoxide output. The auditor will take photos of issues identified and provide the homeowner with an audit report with documented and prioritized recommendations. The new cost of the diagnostic audit is \$150, reduced from \$400, to make it more affordable for our members and to encourage our membership to be proactive in reducing wasted energy consumption! With cooler temperatures to come, call our office now to learn more or to schedule an audit this season.

The dreaded vampire loads

By Tom Tate

Perhaps you are familiar with an undesirable aspect of the electronic and IOT (Internet of Things) revolution: vampire loads. Vampire loads come from devices that use electricity even when they appear to be off. The primary culprits are chargers, set-top television boxes, instant-on televisions and gaming systems. There are others, but these four represent the major offenders. Let's look at how these vampire loads occur and why they are approaching 10 percent of average household electric use according to the Environmental Protection Agency.

Chargers take the 120 VAC (volts alternating current) power at the outlet and reduce it down to the voltage required by the connected device, usually 5 to 12 VDC (volts direct current). Obviously, when your device is charging, the charger is using electricity, but you might be surprised to learn that chargers are still using small amounts of energy even when they're not connected to a device. Television set-top boxes also consume energy when they appear to be inactive. Anytime the set-top box's lights are on, it is using power. Like chargers, they use more when the television is on, but they are always working – even when the TV is off. This is especially true for those devices with a DVR function that records your favorite TV shows. The instant-on television is another culprit. The intention of the “instant-on” feature

is instant gratification for the viewer, meaning no waiting for the TV to turn on and warm up. Unfortunately, for that convenience, the TV must be on at nearly full power. So, in this mode, it can be a real energy drain. The typical gaming console can use as much energy as a regular refrigerator even when it's not being used. Make sure to check the console settings and disable automatic updates, which is where the energy drain comes from. Games on the console are frequently updated, which requires a lot of electricity. So how does the average family combat these dreaded vampire loads? Garlic garlands? Silver bullets?

Fortunately, none of the remedies of fable are necessary. You just need to change how you handle these energy-sucking electronics. Here are a few suggestions. Unplug chargers when not in use. Invest in smart power strips. **50-23-0019** These look like normal power strips but have a twist; one of the outlets is the “master” that receives power all the time. The others are off. When the device connected to the master outlet turns on, the rest of the outlets receive power too. Ingenious and perfect for entertainment set ups. Have the television in the master outlet and when you turn it on, the set-top box, speakers, streaming devices, etc. will



turn on too. They are also ideal for PCs and their peripherals. Turn off the instant-on function on your TV. Turn off set-top boxes that do not contain the DVR functionality or use a smart power strip. Disable automatic updates in gaming consoles and turn the console completely off when you finish using it. When replacing any device or appliance, look for an EnergyStar rated product.

Vampire loads are a real problem that will only continue to grow as the digital age advances. But you can fight the vampires with vigilance and application of the recommendations above. Check with Egyptian Electric Cooperative for additional suggestions and energy-saving advice.

Tom Tate writes on cooperative issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Cooler temps will be here soon! No matter what kind of heating system you have in your home, you can save money and increase your comfort by properly maintaining and upgrading your equipment. Contact a licensed professional to inspect your system *before* the winter chill arrives.

Source: U.S. Dept. of Energy