

Norris Electric *News*

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

71st Annual Meeting of Members

With new national and state leadership, global warming issues and increasing costs at the gas pump and grocery store, change was the word of the day during Norris Electric Cooperative's 71st annual meeting of members, held Saturday, Feb. 14, at Newton Community High School.

Norris Electric Board President Kent Hetzer said that although the country is seeing many changes, the co-op remains steadfast in its mission to serve members. He said, "We see the changing times but we still have the unchanging principles of electric cooperatives. The principles that were used when this cooperative was formed are as important today as they were 71 years ago."

Although Norris Electric Cooperative currently charges among the lowest electric rates in the state, climate change legislation and the expiration of its wholesale power agreement with Ameren Energy Marketing in 2012 leave questions about the co-op's future rates. According to Duane Noland, President/CEO of the Association of Illinois Electric



Norris employees registering members as they arrive for meeting

Cooperatives in Springfield, energy is a primary focus of the Obama administration. Noland said, "President Obama's goal is to transform our nation's energy infrastructure, cut fossil fuel consumption and increase alternative and renewable power resources." Two potential climate change options include a carbon tax, which would levy a tax for each metric ton of carbon dioxide emitted. The tax would be charged to entities such as coal-burning power plants, and passed

along to consumers. At this time it's more likely that Congress will institute a second option, a "cap and trade" program, whereby the government would grant or sell permits to entities that produce carbon. Plants that emit less than the "cap" could sell their excess allowable emissions to those entities that couldn't meet the cap. Fines would be levied on plants that exceeded allowable limits.

How would this affect the average consumer? In a scenario using the



Large crowd gathered for 71st Annual Meeting of Members



Dieterich Unit 30 School Musicians provided entertainment



Retired director Keith Sherwood receiving plaque from Board President Kent Hetzer

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Re-elected directors Gilbert Garbe, Effingham County; Larry Buser, Crawford County; Gordon McClure, Jasper County and Dan Scherer from Lawrence County (not present for meeting)

carbon dioxide emissions tax, a co-op member who used 1,000 kWh of electricity per month could see an increase of anywhere from approximately \$10.81 per month if the cost of emissions per CO2 metric ton were \$10, to as high as \$108 per month if the cost of CO2 emissions per metric ton were \$100.

Noland made it clear that increases resulting from the climate change legislation would have a direct affect on their bills, and the cooperative would have no control over them. Every member was asked to log on at www.ourenergy.coop and e-mail Congress and ask them to consider affordability when reviewing climate change options.

Increasing costs spurred Norris

Electric Cooperative to begin offering the Touchstone Energy Connections Card last year. The cards provide thousands of discounts at local and national vendors ranging from food to tires to hotels and cars and are good anywhere across the country that accepts the cards. The card includes a valuable pharmacy benefit. Hetzer said, "Presently our members are filling 385 prescriptions a month with a 33 percent savings over the standard price of the prescriptions, which has saved them a total of \$6,000 collectively. Only cooperative members can use the cards.

Cooperative Manager Keith McKinney discussed outage restoration for storms that occurred in the

past couple of years. During major storms Norris Electric participates in an emergency work plan through their state association that matches electric cooperatives that need personnel and resources to co-ops that have them. He said, "Helping other cooperatives in these hard times is just another part of being a cooperative and working in the cooperative spirit."

During the meeting Larry Buser of Palestine, Gilbert Garbe of Dietrich, Gordon McClure of Newton and Dan Scherer of Bridgeport were re-elected to the cooperative's board of directors.

Norris Electric Cooperative is a member of Touchstone Energy — an alliance of more than 680 local, consumer-owned electric utilities around the country. Norris Electric is committed to providing superior service based on four core principles: integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community. The co-op serves more than 18,854 members over 4,035 miles of line in parts of Clark, Crawford, Cumberland, Effingham, Jasper, Lawrence, Richland and Wabash counties. For more information visit www.norriselectric.com.

Vegetation Control Schedule

We will have crews performing routine tree trimming or spraying during April in the following areas:



These areas have been scheduled in advance, so our plans may change. You should call us if you have any questions relating to a specific area or our vegetation management policies and practices. You may also call if you wish to make other arrangements for your specific property or to question our vegetation control practices. Our Forestry Department can be reached at 1-877-783-8765 or 618-783-8765 during working hours. Our website is www.norriselectric.com.

Insurance Questionnaire

Insurance Questionnaire Not Endorsed

You may have recently received in the mail a questionnaire titled "Rural Co-operative Members Questionnaire" This questionnaire purporting to be a "survey" regarding medical insurance is being mailed in the area and appears to be from a company called Reserve National Insurance. Norris Electric Cooperative is in no way associated with this company and does not endorse this questionnaire.

First thing to do if power should go out

When a member's power goes out, one of the first things we ask them to do is to check their breakers or fuses to make sure they are OK. By doing this, it can be determined if the problem is on the member's side of the meter (and their responsibility to take care of it) or on Norris Electric's side (our responsibility). If the problem is on Norris Electric's side, call our office to report the outage, and we will come out and take care of it.

Thanks to our new AMR digital meters, there is a new and easier way to determine where the problem may be. If power should go out, just go out to the meter and see if the digital display is there. If there is a display, that indicates that the problem is probably on the member's side of the meter. Then check the breakers under the meter or the breakers or fuses in the house or building.

However, if there is NO display, the problem is Norris Electric's so we will come out and take care of it.



Check here for a display.
If there is a display,
check your breakers and fuses.



NO DISPLAY?
Call Norris Electric!

Co-op receives two awards at state conference

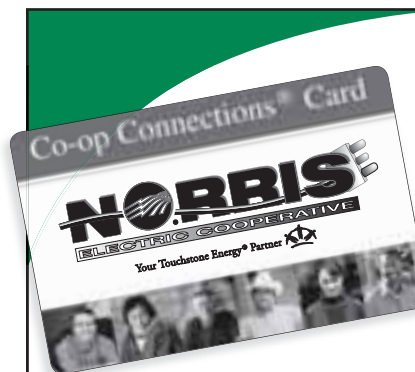
Norris Electric Cooperative in Newton received two safety honors recently during the Safety/Supervisory Technical Conference held in Springfield. The awards were given to cooperatives with outstanding "no lost time" and "accident/illness" safety records for 2008.

The conference is sponsored annually by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC). The theme of the conference was "Make Safety Your Brand." Norris Electric Engineering Technician Jim Meyer accepted the Best Accident/Illness Record and Best Lost Time Record awards on behalf of all the Norris Electric employees.

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Co-op Connections Card Saving Members \$\$\$

Norris Electric Cooperative members saved 33.4 percent on prescriptions in January 2009 using their Co-Op Connections cards. A total of 419 prescriptions were filled at 29 different pharmacies for a total savings of \$7,158.

A SPECIAL HOLIDAY FOR A SPECIAL PLANET

April 22 is known worldwide as Earth Day. Back in the late 1960s, Americans were beginning to become aware of the damage that pollution was causing to the planet's air and water. And after witnessing an oil spill, U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson called for a day that would focus the nation's attention on the environment.

The first Earth Day took place in 1970. Nearly 20 million Americans

participated, and the attention contributed to the passage of the Clean Air Act and the establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency.

Over the years, Earth Day has grown. Today,



many areas observe the day by holding events that spotlight ways people can make planet-friendly choices.

That's what we do all year long. For example, we promote proper home sealing as a way to lower energy bills while enhancing comfort. Through our power supplier, we have also been investing in renewable energies such as biomass and wind power.

For practical ideas on ways to improve the efficiency of your home while

reducing the demand for electricity, contact our Member Services Dept. On Earth Day and every day, we're here to provide free advice when you want it, and help when you need it.

YOUR ENERGY ADVISOR HAS A BRIGHT IDEA FOR YOU.



Let's Talk!

618-783-8765
WWW.NORRISELECTRIC.COM

101 Tips for Saving Energy

Looking for ways to reduce energy costs in your home? Norris Electric Cooperative, a Touchstone Energy Cooperative, has compiled a list of low cost/no cost energy-saving measures to help you better manage your home's energy costs. We are offering a free booklet full of ideas "101 Low-Cost/No-Cost Home Energy-Saving Measures" published by the National

Touchstone Energy Cooperatives.

The booklet covers energy use throughout the house, including water heating, laundry, kitchen items, lighting, and heating and air conditioning. Simply changing some habits such as turning off the lights when you leave a room or checking small details such as making sure windows are locked when your heating or air conditioning

system is running, there are literally 101 ways you can find to save energy in your home.

Call our office at 877-783-8765 to request your free copy of this booklet packed with ideas on energy savings. You can also download this booklet or see other energy savings ideas on our website at www.norriselectric.com and click on energy savings.

Norris Electric Cooperative • Route 130 South • Newton, Illinois 62448 • 618-783-8765

Office hours: 8 a.m. — 4:30 p.m