

# Norris Electric *News*

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

## How to Brighten the Bed of a Child with Cancer

by: Niki Shutt

**R**yan Kerr of Pennsylvania was diagnosed with a rare childhood cancer in 2002. His mother, Cindy, in an effort to bring a smile to his face, started making bright pillowcases to contribute color to his hospital room. Soon she started making them for all of the children with cancer at his hospital. In 2008, Cindy lost her son. In his memory, she carried her charity, ConKerr Cancer, to hospitals all over North America and South Africa. Now thousands of volunteers are donating pillowcases and money for fabric and supplies.

Here in Illinois, Judy White of Lawrence County and her friend, Tina Puzey, both members of Norris Electric Cooperative, saw information about ConKerr Cancer in a quilting newsletter. Judy noticed there was a chapter in Chicago, but no one in downstate Illinois was participating. So Judy and Tina took on the roles of regional coordinators for central and southern Illinois in January 2009.

In March, they brought 100 pillowcases to St. John's Children's Hospital in Springfield and plan on returning in June with more. The pillowcases were donated by local 4-H clubs, church groups, school sewing classes and individuals with a passion for helping. A neighbor crafted 100 cheery pillowcases himself.



*Sumner, Ill. residents Roger Bennett, Lyle Puzey, Tina Puzey, Judy White and Jay Dee White deliver pillowcases to Vanessa, a child life specialist at St. John's Hospital in Springfield, Ill.*

*Photo by George McDonald*

Many of the pillowcases have themes such as sports, farm animals, and the cartoon characters that make children laugh. Others are simply a fresh breath of color in the midst of a gray hospital room.

"It's a rewarding, worthwhile project, and it's easy to do. If you shop smart you can make a pillowcase for

about \$5," Judy says.

If you would like to bring brightness to a sick child's bed visit ConKerrCancer.org or e-mail Judy White at [jjw@kaizenet.com](mailto:jjw@kaizenet.com) or Tina Puzey at [lpuzey@shawneelink.net](mailto:lpuzey@shawneelink.net). Even if sewing is not your forté, any donation of money will be used to purchase jovial fabric to make pillowcases.

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# Spring Chore Safety

**A**fter spending long winter days indoors, most folks love to get outside in spring, even if it's just to do chores. However, outdoor chores can bring electrical hazards.

For example, ladders contacting power lines cause 9 percent of electrocution-related deaths each year, according to recent data from the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). Landscaping, gardening, and farming equipment cause another 7 percent. To avoid electrical hazards, make sure you and your family follow these simple tips:

## General

- Teach children to stay away from electric transformers and substations and explain what posted warning signs mean.
- Avoid damp conditions when using electricity. Keep all electrical devices and cords away from water.
- Place waterproof covers on all outdoor outlets.
- Install ground fault circuit inter-



rupters (GFCIs) in outlets where water may be present.

- Only use extension cords marked for outdoor use; match power needs of an electric tool or appliance to the cord's label information.
- Dial 8-1-1, the national "Call Before You Dig" phone number, at least 72 hours before engaging

in any type of excavation work. Local utilities will be notified to mark the approximate location of any underground lines on your property.

## Power Tools

- Inspect power tools and appliances for frayed cords, broken plugs, and cracked or broken housing, and repair or replace damaged items.
- Store power tools indoors.
- Unplug outdoor tools when not in use.
- Do not carry power tools by the cord.

## Ladders

- Use only a fiberglass or wooden ladder if you must work near overhead wires.
- Never touch a person or an object that has made contact with a power line.

Source: Electrical Safety Foundation International; CPSC

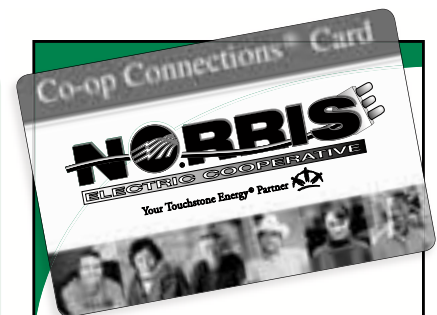
## Vegetation Control Schedule

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

**Richland County**  
**Cumberland County**  
**Effingham County**



These areas have been scheduled quite a bit 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 us 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](http://www.norriselectric.com).



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

**N**orris Electric Cooperative members saved 33 percent on prescriptions in February 2009 using their Co-Op Connections card. There were 348 prescriptions filled at 31 different pharmacies for a total savings of \$5,843.

# Let Nature Heat and Cool Your Home

If you're looking for a more affordable way to heat and cool your home, you might give nature a chance – with a little help from a geothermal system.

You see, just a few feet under your yard, the temperature stays very steady all year long – right around 55 degrees. Geothermal systems take advantage of that ground temperature by using underground pipes and an environmentally friendly liquid to transfer heat between your home and yard. It's an efficient, durable approach that eliminates the need for a separate furnace and air conditioner.

During the wintertime, the geothermal system circulates its liquid through your pipes, soaking up the warmer underground temperatures and transferring them to your home's ductwork through a heat exchanger and electric air handler.

When summer gets hot, the system reverses the processes and takes heat out of your home's air and transfers it into the ground, where it dissipates with no effect on plants or animals. As the cooler liquid returns to your house, the heat exchanger and air handler repeat the process, lowering your home's temperature. Best of all, you don't have to put up with noisy equipment in your yard.

While geothermal systems can keep you every bit as comfortable as more familiar heating and cooling methods, they're several times more efficient than equipment

like gas furnaces. In addition, they allow you to take advantage of the limitless resource of the ground's natural temperature. So even though it may cost more to install a geothermal system, they typically pay for themselves through energy savings in just five to 10 years, and keep saving you money for years after that!

Higher efficiency means you'll use less energy, which is good for the environment, too. Plus, because they do not produce heat through combustion, geothermal systems do not produce dangerous gases such as carbon monoxide. They provide safe, clean heating and cooling for your family. There are few moving parts, so geothermal systems are more reliable and last longer than furnaces. Some systems can even use excess heat from the compressor to warm your home's hot water tank. During the summer, they can generate enough heat to meet many homes' hot water needs, and can cut wintertime water heating costs by as much as half.

Wondering whether a geothermal system might be the best choice for your home, or thinking about building one into your next home? A great way to start is to talk with our Energy Advisor. That's just one more way we provide free advice when you want it, and help when you need it.



## Facts About Geothermal Systems

- Geothermal systems take advantage of steady year-round underground temperatures.
- They use underground pipes, an Earth-friendly liquid and a heat exchanger to move heat.
- In winter, they bring underground warmth into your home.
- In summer, they pull the heat out of your home to dissipate in the ground.
- They eliminate the need for a separate furnace and air conditioner.
- Typically pay for themselves through energy savings in just five to 10 years.
- They're safe, quiet and have few moving parts.
- They do not produce deadly gases like carbon monoxide.
- Some systems use excess compressor heat to warm your home's hot water tank.
- Our Energy Advisor can help you determine if a geothermal system is right for your home.

## 2008 Capital Credit Notices

Soon you will receive an extra mailing from Norris Electric. It's your "Notice of Capital Credit" and you may wonder "What is this?" Since Norris Electric is a not-for-profit cooperative and owned by its members, any revenue over and above the cost of doing business is considered

"margins" and the members are given credit for those margins. The amount of capital credits you earn in a given year is based upon the amount of capital you contribute through payment of your monthly bills. This notice is to inform you of your allocation each year. As printed on the notice, the amount

listed cannot be used toward payment of your electric bill. Your 2008 allocated capital credits are combined with your past years capital credits and will be refunded at a later date when the Board of Directors determines the finances of the cooperative make it feasible to retire capital credits.

# Know What to do in Vehicle Accidents Involving Power Lines

## Stay inside until help arrives or do the bunny hop

Instincts tell us to flee danger. Unfortunately, in vehicle accidents that bring down power lines, these natural inclinations can lead to tragic results.

If your car hits a power pole, or otherwise brings a power line down, Norris Electric Cooperative and Safe Electricity urge you to stay inside the vehicle until help arrives. Getting out of the vehicle, with few exceptions, is the wrong thing to do until the line has been de-energized.

"You are almost always better off to stay in the car, especially if the line is in contact with the vehicle," says General Manager Keith McKinney.

"If the power line is still energized and you step outside, your body becomes the path for that electricity and electrocution is the tragic result."

It is best to wait until Norris Electric arrives to make sure power to the line is cut off. The only exception would be if fire or other danger, like the smell of gasoline, is present. In that case, the proper action is to jump – not step – with both feet hitting the ground at the same time, as if doing a bunny hop. Jump clear, without touching the vehicle and ground at



the same time. Shuffle or hop to safety keeping both feet together as you leave the area.

Even if a power line has landed on the ground, there is still the potential for the area near your car to be energized. Stay inside the vehicle unless there is fire or imminent risk of fire.

The same rules apply to situations involving large farm and construction equipment that come in contact with overhead lines. Those working with large equipment should stay inside the cab or remain in the vehicle if equip-

ment extensions come in contact with power lines. Warn others who may be nearby to stay away and wait until the electric utility arrives to make sure power to the line is cut off.

While driving, if you encounter a down wire on the road, always assume it is an electrical wire and energized, and stay in your car. If you come upon, or witness an accident involving toppled power poles and lines, don't leave your vehicle to approach the accident scene.

Often our inclination is to step in and help those in danger and offer assistance to the injured. But in accidents involving power poles, call for help. Wait for trained assistance to arrive, or you could become an additional victim in need of rescue.

Accidents and fires involving electricity cause more than a thousand deaths and tens of thousands of injuries each year. The vast majority are preventable if people understand the dangers and steps they can take to be safe around electricity.

For more electrical safety information, visit [www.SafeElectricity.org](http://www.SafeElectricity.org) and [www.norriselectric.com](http://www.norriselectric.com)



## Memorial Day

Our office will be closed Monday,  
May 25 for Memorial Day.