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Does your improvement qualify for a Power Moves rebate?

Check out www.powermoves.com to learn more!

When you make energy efficiency upgrades, you save energy, save money and help keep the planet squeaky clean. By our count, that makes for a win-win-win-win situation. Not too shabby, right? Another big positive is that sometimes those upgrades qualify for Power Moves rebates and incentives from EnerStar and our power supplier, Wabash Valley Power Alliance.

It's always a great day at the co-op when we can hand over a rebate check to a member. Welsh Ag in Marshall was a recent recipient

when they updated to LED lighting in one of their barns. Pictured left to right: Terry Welsh of Welsh Ag and EnerStar's Tim Haddix.

It is important to point out that all Power Moves grants need prior approval. For more information regarding Power Moves grants for both homes and businesses served by EnerStar, visit www.powermoves.com. For additional information and advice from an energy advisor, contact EnerStar's Tim Haddix at 800-635-4145, ext. 117 or thaddix@enerstar.com.



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11597 Illinois Highway 1
Paris, IL 61944
800-635-4145
Monday through Friday
7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



Member info: Contribution in Aid of Construction (CIAC)

As a not-for-profit electric distribution cooperative, EnerStar is owned by the members it serves. We strive to keep rates affordable while maintaining safe and reliable electric services for our member-owners. As a not-for-profit electric cooperative, those who receive electric service from the cooperative become members of the cooperative.

When the cooperative receives requests for new build-ins or electric service upgrades, the conversation quickly turns toward the member cost of these upgrades known as a Contribution in Aid of Construction (CIAC). Below are some common questions related to CIAC.

What is a Contribution in Aid of Construction?

When a member requests an upgrade to an existing electrical service or connect to EnerStar's electrical distribution system where no connection currently exists, the cooperative must add equipment to its electric system. To complete the necessary work, those who request this change are required to contribute financially for the additional equipment needed to make this connection. This request is called a "Contribution in Aid to Construction" (CIAC). Part of the cooperative not-for-profit business model is that members contribute equitably to the capital of their cooperative.

Why is the request for a financial contribution fair?

Setting Contributions in Aid of Construction at levels that recover the costs of new construction is the fairest way to design cost recovery. Basically, those who request and benefit from the service, pay for the service.



Viewed another way, if CIAC does not fully recover costs, then the rest of the co-op membership eventually pay the difference through higher electric rates. Certainly asking other members to pay for a member new electrical extension would be considered unfair – something we can all agree on.

How is the contribution calculated?

When reviewing the cost of expanding the distribution system to accommodate a member's request, EnerStar makes every effort to minimize the financial burden on the member. In the end, EnerStar has the responsibility for building and maintaining the members' electrical distribution system, which is affordable, safe and reliable. The cooperative must also ensure the electrical system meets cooperative and electric industry standards. EnerStar only charges for the cost of the project. There is no margin (profit) made on construction.

Do I own the additions to EnerStar's system?

While EnerStar and its members own the electrical distribution system as a whole, no single member will ever privately own or control any portion of the EnerStar's distribution system even though individual members are requested to make a contribution to construction that benefits their own growing needs. In the end, EnerStar is responsible for maintaining the electrical distribution system so it continues to be safe, reliable and a treasured community asset.

How do I request a new or upgraded service?

To simplify the new construction process, please work with EnerStar through the following steps to request an upgrade or new service:

1. After your initial request, an EnerStar representative will contact you to help determine what is necessary to build the services

that will meet your additional needs. Most times this requires a visit to the service location.

2. EnerStar will give you a cost estimate of your contribution to construction and, after you agree with the estimate, EnerStar will issue you an invoice.

3. After EnerStar receives your payment for contribution to construction, EnerStar will begin procuring materials for the new facilities. Once material is received, your project will be placed in the construction queue. Please note the faster you pay your contribution

to construction, the quicker EnerStar will begin constructing your additions.

4. After the new additions to the electrical system are completed and you are connected to the system, EnerStar will maintain your new facilities as it does the entire system.

EnerStar lineworkers perform annual “pole top” rescue exercises

Safety training is a critical mission here at EnerStar Electric Cooperative. About a month ago, EnerStar’s line crews buckled up with their fall-restraint equipment belts, dug into utility poles and begin their annual pole top rescue exercises.

As an OSHA mandated safety training requirement, the course is designed to evaluate each lineworker on their ability to properly rescue an injured and/or stranded lineworker. Each lineworker must balance their skills with safety, climb a pole and rescue a 185-pound training mannequin. The lineworker must then secure the mannequin using ropes and pulleys and safely deliver it back to the ground.

In a perfect world, this is one skill that you hope a lineworker never needs to use. But if they do, the training is an opportunity for the lineworkers to prepare and hone their skills if the need should ever arise.

“During the exercises, no electricity is running through the lines,” said EnerStar’s CEO Brent Reyher. “But attention to detail remains key and the lineworkers are evaluated as if every aspect of the training were real with a focus on the safe and efficient

methods with which the rescue is accomplished.”

In addition to safety training for employees, EnerStar actively raises electric safety awareness in its five-county service territory by performing demonstrations at their Fourth Grade Safety Day, and offering free trainings with volunteer fire departments, emergency medical teams and sheriff’s departments. The cooperative also promotes safety-themed print and radio messages throughout the year.

“We work within our communities to show our members just

how easy it is for an accident to occur when working with electricity,” said Reyher. “Learning how to prevent these dangerous, and sometimes deadly mishaps helps to keep our lineworkers, as well members of the community, safe.”

“When keeping the lights on, EnerStar strives to place safety first,” Reyher added. “It can be as simple as our daily tailgate meetings or our monthly safety meetings that include more in-depth special training such as CPR and first aid. Our goal is to assure that our lineworkers are properly trained to handle nearly any situation.”



Journeyman Lineman Scott Newlin (left) and Apprentice Lineman Austin Swango (right) each take turns performing their annual pole top rescue exercise.



Providing more to our members and community

As a cooperative, EnerStar has a different “bottom line.” While our priority is always to provide reliable and safe energy, there is another equally important part of this equation. Your well-being and that of the larger community that we serve are of paramount concern. To us, you are not just a customer; you are a member-owner of our cooperative and without you, we would not exist.

In 1938, EnerStar Electric Cooperative (then known as Edgar Electric Cooperative) was founded to fulfill a vital need in our community that would not have otherwise been met. Concerned local leaders came together to build this co-op and bring electricity where there was none. At that time, members of the community understood we were different because they likely knew someone who helped to create our local electric cooperative. For most people, our founding and its circumstances have been long

forgotten. Over time, people in the community may have come to think of us as simply another energy provider. But we are not. We are a co-op that is constantly evolving to meet the needs of the communities we serve, and we can do this because of members like you.

Since our inception, we have sought feedback and engagement from you and that of the larger community to guide our long-term decisions. Our annual meeting, while the business meeting updates our members on the previous year’s activities, is also an opportunity for us to engage with you and obtain your feedback. We strive to find new ways to help you use energy more efficiently. We are always looking to explore more tools that will help you manage your energy use such as the SmartHub app. In short, we are always seeking to keep pace with the changing energy environment, evolving technology and shifting consumer expectations.

EnerStar members help guide important co-op decisions that improve and enrich the community. We value the perspective of our board members, who are members of the co-op and community – just like you. As a local business, we have a stake in the community. That’s why we support local charitable organizations that serve the communities we serve. When you support these efforts, you are supporting the community and making it a better place for everyone.

While the times may have changed, our mission and outlook have not. We view our role as a catalyst for good. Working together, we can accomplish great things for our community now and in the future.



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