



NEWSLETTER FOR CO-OP MEMBERS OF ENERSTAR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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We love our community

With Valentine's Day approaching, we can't think of a better time to express how much we love this community and serving you, the member-owners of the co-op.

We know when we helped to bring electricity to rural Illinois many years ago, the quality of life improved for all. Through the years, other issues needed to be tackled, and we have been at the forefront of helping to address some of those issues. We want to help meet the long-term needs of our community to ensure it continues to thrive – because just like you, we live here too.

While our top priority is to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to you, equally important is our mission to enrich the lives of the member-owners (that's you!) that we serve. This focus to benefit the larger community is central to the way we operate as a cooperative. EnerStar knows that electricity is a critical need for modern-day life, but it takes more than poles and power lines to make a community.

Over time, our co-op has evolved to meet the changing needs of our community, thereby improving the quality of life for everyone. And that can mean many different things. One example would be programs for our youth, such

as education scholarships or the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, where we take our community's brightest young people to Washington, D.C. for a week-long immersion to experience democracy in action. Yes, the COVID-19 pandemic has thrown a wrench in those plans this year, but let's hope for next year!

For many years, our community-focused programs and other giving projects have built playgrounds, fed hungry families, enabled those in need to keep the lights on and so much more – and we couldn't do any of this without you, our members.

We all benefit from these programs because of you and your neighbors. You empower EnerStar through your membership and through your participation in and support of these programs.

As a local business, we are proud to power your life and bring good things to our community. We hope you will continue to guide our efforts by sharing your perspective as we plan for the future. The energy landscape is undergoing dramatic change fueled by evolving technology and consumer desires for more options. While the larger environment in which we operate is constantly changing, one thing remains the same. By working together, we are certain that we can continue to do good things for our community.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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

Mother Nature's wrath can mean service disruptions

Although EnerStar Electric Cooperative works hard to maintain our equipment, monitor power delivery 24/7, and do all we can to keep the lights on, there are circumstances beyond our control that can interfere with power delivery. Winter weather is one example. Winter storms can impact the distribution of electricity due to ice, heavy winds, sleet and other extreme conditions.

In January 2021, several of the northern Illinois electric cooperatives experienced multi-day outages due to ice, snow and even freezing fog. Our EnerStar crews assisted them for several days just like we know should we need the same in return, we can count on them too. Cooperatives helping cooperatives is one of our seven cooperative principles ... we stick together!

But regardless of the reason for a power outage, know that when the lights go out, even during extreme weather, EnerStar is doing all we can to restore power safely and efficiently.

Along with causing outages, wintery conditions can cause hiccups with power delivery that include blinking lights, or ebbs and flows in the amount of power that comes into your home. Although blinking lights can be a symptom of other problems such as loose wiring connections or overloaded circuits, they can also be caused by extreme weather.

Ice/freezing rain

Ice accumulation on power lines makes them heavy. Half an inch of ice can add as much as 500 pounds to a power line. This added weight can impact power distribution and

even bring down a power line. Ice that forms on power lines also increases its surface area, which means gusts of wind have more to catch. The weight of ice on tree limbs can cause them to fall on power lines as well.

Wind

Wind can cause tree branches to brush power lines, which can result in blinking or flickering lights. Therefore, it's important for us to keep trees cleared around power lines and poles. In addition, heavy winds can cause lines to move and sway. If they gain enough momentum, they can gallop or jump. This can cause disruptions in service since the motion can cause lines to break or make contact with each other.

Melting ice

Melting ice can be heavy, putting extra strain on power lines and causing the lines to touch or rest on one another. Because of this, melting ice can cause outages even though the temperature is rising. Depending on conditions, melting ice can cause as many or more problems than the ice itself.

Tree branches

In any weather, tree-related issues cause the most power outages in many service areas. Branches, limbs or even tree trunks can fall into power lines and cause problems. Add wind, freezing rain or ice to the mix for an increased potential for problems.

Icy roads

Vehicles sliding on ice or collide with one another can strike a



**WHEN THE LIGHTS
GO OUT
SO DO THEY**

power pole or pad-mounted transformer, causing an outage or other problems.

Be sure to have a storm preparedness kit ready before a storm strikes to help get you and your family through a power outage. Items to gather include bottled water, non-perishable food, blankets, warm clothing, hand sanitizer, first aid kit/medicine, flashlight, radio, back-up phone chargers, extra batteries and toiletries.

To learn more about preparing for storms and electrical safety, go to SafeElectricity.org.

YOU HAVE THE POWER



WITH POWERSHIFT!

**SAVE MONEY,
HELP YOUR CO-OP!**

POWERSHIFT PUTS YOU IN CONTROL

When it comes to saving energy, we're all in this together—literally. That's because the time of day when our members use power changes how much that wholesale power costs the cooperative. It's basic supply and demand: When everybody's using electricity, it costs more and puts a bigger strain on the system. But with PowerShift, we have the power to work together and change the equation.

With a simple switch, members who participate in PowerShift help the co-op by shifting their energy use to non-peak times. And in return, these accounts earn bill credits for participating. And it's, easy to do!

SUBTLE, BUT SUPER

Over 250 EnerStar members are participating in PowerShift...helping the co-op save money while earning bill credits. They have installed control switches on their central air, fixed pool pumps, and their electric water heaters. Most people do not notice a difference. We are unsure at the time of publication if we will be able to install new switches. But if you are interested, give us a call and we will get you on the list!

SUPERHERO POWERS

However, we do have one PowerShift option available! To take it to the max and be a co-op superhero, you can join other members who have signed for PowerShift Whole-House. And for your participation, you will earn a \$150 bill credit! Sounds super doesn't it?

POWERSHIFT WHOLEHOUSE

EARN \$150 BILL CREDIT!

Call EnerStar at 800-635-4145 for more info!



Annual Meeting update

Many of our members look forward to the cooperative's annual meeting in March. But like the rest of you are experiencing, the COVID-19 pandemic and the everchanging restrictions are creating havoc with our annual meeting plans. Our plans at the time of this publication is to hold the annual meeting and director elections in June 2021. We anticipate a new venue and menu and look forward to new opportunities for the annual meeting. Watch future publications of this magazine and our social media channels for more information!

Understanding your home's electric service

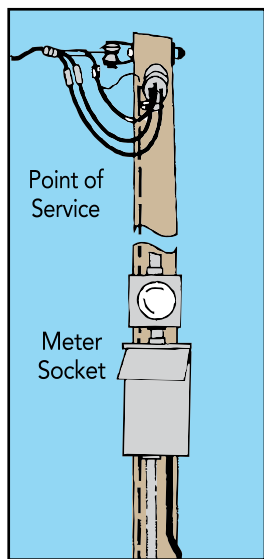
What is mine? What belongs to the co-op?

At EnerStar Electric Cooperative, we take reliable electric service seriously. If you happen to experience a power outage, you can count on us to restore your power as quickly and safely as possible. It is also important to understand that we can only fix what belongs to the cooperative; that is, everything before the service point. Members are responsible for everything beyond.

So your question at this point is probably, "What is the service point?" In general, for the typical residential account, the cooperative is responsible for everything before the meter and the member is responsible for everything after. To better understand the "service point," check out the illustrations provided.

Your meter is on a pole near your home

The cooperative is responsible for the meter and the connection at the top of the pole. The member is responsible for the meter socket, meter loop, breaker box, the conduit and wire running up the pole, including the weather-head, and the service wire from the pole to the house. The cooperative can provide meter loop

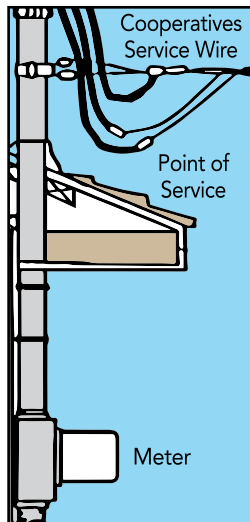


Meter on pole

specifications if requested. EnerStar or an electrician should build the meter loop.

Your meter is attached to your home

When a meter socket and meter loop are located on the house, the wire to the top of the meter loop is the cooperative's responsibility, but the meter socket is not. A mast needs



Meter attached to house

to be set before service can be connected. When power is buried to a meter, EnerStar is responsible for buried line up to the meter connections. The member is responsible for the meter socket and the wire to the breaker box. They are also responsible for the ground rod and the ground wire.

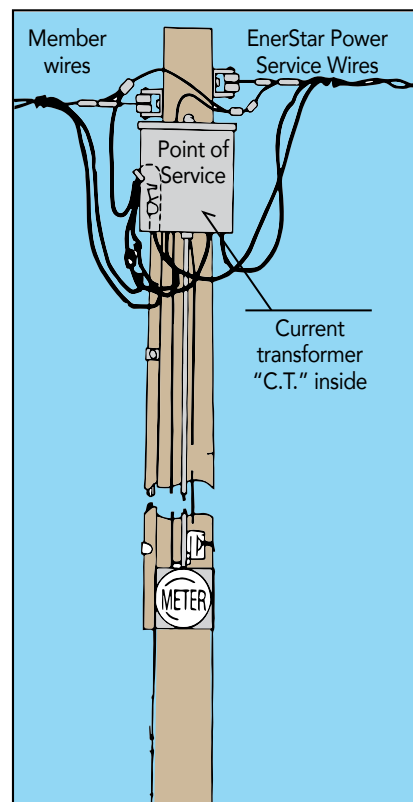
Your meter connects to a current transformer

With a current transformer (CT) rated meter, the electric current is measured by passing the service wire through the CT, which then sends a portion of this current to the meter. This type of installation was common years ago. It is beyond the meter and located on the member side.

Your meter connects from your home to a pad-mounted transformer

In this situation, the cooperative is responsible for the pad-mounted transformer and the underground line running to the meter. The member is responsible for the meter base. The meter base must be purchased from the cooperative.

These examples illustrate the most common residential services. In some cases, the set-up may look different. If you are unsure of what is your responsibility and what belongs to the cooperative, please contact Tim Haddix at 1-800-635-4145, extension 617 or thaddix@enerstar.com.



Pole top disconnect