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October is Co-op Month

Powered by Purpose

Each October, electric cooperatives across the country take time to celebrate National Co-op Month and reflect on the unique advantages of being part of a cooperative. It's also the perfect time

to thank you – the members who make it all possible. For us, it's not just a celebration. It's a chance to reaffirm the values that guide everything we do.

As EnerStar's CEO, I see purpose in action every single day. Unlike investor-owned utilities, our co-op doesn't exist to make profits for distant shareholders. We exist to serve our

member-owners, who are our neighbors, and the communities we share. That purpose is what sets us apart. It's why we were founded, and it's what continues to drive every decision we make.

At its core, being a cooperative means we are member-owned and locally controlled. That's not just a tag-line; it's the very heart of our business model. Members have a voice in how our co-op operates. You elect board members who live right here in our service area and understand the unique challenges and opportunities our communities face. Decisions aren't made in corporate boardrooms hundreds of

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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.



miles away; they're made here at home, by people who care about the same things you do.

This local accountability enables us to stay focused on what matters most: delivering reliable, affordable electricity and providing genuine value to the people we serve.

We achieve this by investing in essential infrastructure upgrades and technologies that strengthen our local grid and enhance electric service. We work hard to manage costs and keep rates as low as possible – because we know how much rising prices affect families and small businesses in our area. And when storms hit or outages occur, EnerStar's crews, along with all the employees who support them, are here and ready to respond quickly, because we live here, too.

But our commitment doesn't end at the power lines.

Co-ops were built to meet community needs, and that purpose extends well beyond delivering electricity. Whether we're supporting local schools, sponsoring youth programs, or partnering with volunteer organizations, we continually

seek ways to enhance the quality of life in the communities we serve. Community support isn't an afterthought – it's part of our mission.

We're also planning for the future. As electricity demand grows due to new technologies and economic development, electric co-ops are working to ensure that we continue to meet those needs with a balanced and reliable energy mix. We understand that our members value affordability and dependability, and we're committed to delivering both.

That's the power of the cooperative difference. That's what it means to be powered by purpose.

This National Co-op Month, I encourage you to take pride in your cooperative membership. You're not just a customer – you're an owner, a stakeholder, and a vital part of a larger effort to keep our community strong, connected, and energized.

Thank you for the trust you place in us. We're proud to be your local electric cooperative!



Seven Cooperative Principles



Open and Voluntary Membership

Co-op membership is open to anyone who can use the co-op's services.



Democratic Member Control

Members make decisions that shape the cooperative. Why? Because co-ops are created by the members, for the members.



Members' Economic Participation

Members contribute money to the co-op to make sure it runs smoothly now and in the future. At EnerStar, this happens through paying your energy bills.



Autonomy and Independence

Co-ops are independent and can operate on their own, which ultimately benefits the members.



Education, Training and Information

Co-ops continuously focus on education to ensure employees have the training and information they need to make the co-op successful.



Cooperation Among Cooperatives

Co-ops share with and learn from other cooperatives. We help each other out in times of need because we want other co-ops to thrive.



Concern for Community

All cooperatives work for the greater good of the local communities they serve. Co-ops give back to their communities to help them thrive and grow.

POWERING YOUR FUTURE

**17 SCHOLARSHIPS
\$3,000 EACH**

The electric cooperatives of Illinois are proud to offer scholarships to deserving students in our co-op family. Whether you're a high school senior planning to attend college or interested in a career as a lineworker, there's a scholarship opportunity for you.

Applications are now open for the 2026 Illinois Electric Cooperatives Memorial Scholarships. Apply by December 31, 2025, for most scholarships, or by April 30, 2026, for the lineworker scholarship. Scan the QR code or go to <https://bit.ly/IECScholarships> for more details.



**IEC MEMORIAL
SCHOLARSHIPS**



New to the Co-op Family

Matt Kelly

EnerStar is proud to welcome Matt Kelly as the newest member of our Forestry team! EnerStar, in coordination with Northwest Line JATC, has launched a new Forestry Apprenticeship program, with Matt being the first EnerStar employee to participate. We look forward to the positive impact this opportunity will have on our employees and members! Congrats Matt!



**Applications for the Youth
to Washington tour will
launch on November 1.
Watch our magazine,
social media channels
and website for more
information!**

Protect your home and wallet from energy vampires

Beware of energy vampires this Halloween

They are lurking around your house in unexpected places: the television, the computer, and the microwave. Many electronic devices that are plugged in continuously use energy even when they are not in use. These vampires are using up energy and sucking money from your wallet.

Many other household appliances constantly use energy, in addition to televisions, computers, and microwaves. These include cell phone chargers, printers, and game consoles.

Here are a few money-saving tips from EnerStar Electric Cooperative, and our partner, Safe Electricity, to help put a stop to energy vampires in your home:

- Unplug all electronics that are not in use. Or, plug electronics into a power strip and turn it off when the items are not in use.
- Avoid electronics with extra features that you do not need, as these might use more energy.
- Make sure to check the label of a product before purchasing. Most EnergyStar-endorsed products draw smaller than average amounts of electricity when turned off.

Power down with a power strip

A power strip can be used to plug in multiple electronic devices, and the power to these devices can be cut off with a simple flip of a switch.

Power strips can be efficiently used in a spare room where electronics are not frequently used or in an area with a large concentration of electronics, such as an office.

Like power strips, smart strips offer energy efficiency to your home but are distinguished from power strips due to their unique energy conservation capabilities.

According to EnergyStar.gov, there are three main types of smart power strips:

- Programmable timers control timer-equipped power strips, so all electronics plugged into the strip can be shut off at a designated time.

- Occupancy-sensing power strips detect active use of a device and shut down after a specific period if unused.
- Current-sensing power strips can cut or add power to a device as it senses when a device is powered off or on.

For more information on energy efficiency, visit SafeElectricity.org.

