



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Hi-Lites



Powering Progress

Innovations in Outage Management Technology

by Luke Johnson, General Manager

In recent years, technology has evolved at an astonishing pace, and we've been keen on leveraging these advancements to benefit our cooperative and its members. One area where technology has significantly impacted our operations is in outage management. With the implementation of sophisticated outage management systems (OMS), we can now detect outages faster and with greater precision.

By analyzing data from the meters, systems are improving the time in which affected areas can be identified, allowing us to deploy our resources more efficiently and restore power to you as quickly as possible. This means shorter downtime for you and a smoother restoration process overall.

Reflecting on recent events, I want to express my gratitude to the members of Marion County for your patience and understanding during the storm that hit us the last week of May. The widespread destruction caused by the EF-2 tornado in Marion County caused damage to critical infra-

structure like power lines, poles, and transformers, necessitating extensive repairs before electricity could be restored.

Moreover, safety concerns loomed large, with crews contending with hazardous conditions such as downed power lines, debris-strewn roads, and unstable structures. These safety hazards forced repair teams to proceed cautiously, slowing down their progress to ensure accident-free operations. Accessibility issues further exacerbated the situation, as debris or fallen trees rendered many roads impassable, hindering the movement of repair crews and equipment. Lastly, the complexity of repairs cannot be understated, with crews tasked with untangling power lines in downed trees, and replacing broken poles.

On May 26th, the storm left approximately 5,500 members without power. While facing such challenges is never straightforward, your cooperation and support proved invaluable during

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MISSION STATEMENT

To safely provide our member-owners with reliable electric service, superior customer service, and practical energy solutions, all at reasonable prices.

3906 Broadway
Mt. Vernon, IL 62864

618-244-5151
Toll-Free: 800-244-5151
Fax: 618-244-1496
Pay by phone:
844-968-1991

Mt. Vernon
Office Hours
Monday - Friday
7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Salem
Office Hours
Tuesday - Thursday
7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
(Closed 12 p.m. - 1 p.m.)

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this time. The morning after the storm, around 420 members were still without power, and by the following evening, only 170 outages persisted. Finally, on May 28th, all remaining outages were successfully restored.

I know that being without power and not knowing when it will be on is frustrating to say the least. We would love to be able to tell you approximately when it will be, but most of the time we are unable to fully determine the extent of the damage without looking at every possible outage individually. The best guess we have is how many days it could take and at that point is when we determine how much outside help we will need or if we are able to handle it ourselves. I had the privilege of talking to a few of our members and I really appreciate their understanding of the situation. We must first address the largest portion of members out and main feeders before we are able to take care of the individual outages. If you have lines in the back yard and poles broke off, it takes a long time and a lot of resources to restore your power. We do not intend to leave the power off to homes in these locations any longer than possible, but the time that it takes to fix those accounts is substantial. The Co-op lines are in excellent condition, but even new structures will fail in severe weather events.

We understand that enduring days without electricity can feel like an eternity. However, if this outage had occurred before our access to modern technology, it would have lasted twice as long. As we move forward, rest assured that we will continue to research and invest in new technologies and strategies to further enhance our outage management capabilities and provide you with the reliable service you deserve. Your trust in us drives our commitment to excellence, and we remain dedicated to serving you to the best of our abilities. Thank you for your ongoing support.



Co-op Voters - Are you registered?

Why vote?

Voting is the one of the most powerful ways to make your voice heard in our democracy, but according to census.gov, only 67% of the voting age population in the United States reported voting in 2020. Modern technology has improved access to information on candidates and made it easier to register to vote in many areas, and it is vital to be aware of how you can participate!

We want to make sure our government knows that rural America matters. Co-ops Vote isn't about divisive, partisan issues. It's about real people in real places facing real challenges. It's about our co-ops living out the principles of our movement: Concern for community and democratic control.

How can you register to vote in Illinois?

To register to vote in Illinois, visit the IL State Board of Elections website for more information on voter eligibility and the registration process.

You can begin the registration process through Illinois' Online Voter Registration System. The link is listed on page 3 for online voter registration.

Co-ops Vote is a non-partisan project of America's Electric Cooperatives designed to inform its members on the key issues facing electric co-ops and encourage them to vote and support their co-ops and the communities they serve when they go to the polls. We do not endorse or recommend any candidates for election.

Co-ops vote does not advise how members should vote. Our only concern is that you are registered and you have the opportunity to let your voice be heard come election time. When we come together at the polls, we can let the voices of rural America be heard. Working together is the cooperative way!





Register to Vote at TCEC

3906 Broadway St.
Mt. Vernon, IL

September 17th
8 AM - 4 PM

National Voter Registration Day **Tuesday, September 17th**

Not registered to vote? Join us on Tuesday, September 17th at the Mt. Vernon office between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. We will help you get registered to vote, have giveaways, and snacks!

Please bring two forms of identification with at least one showing your current residence address.

Voter Registration Locations

Illinois' residents may register online, in person at the office of the election authority, at Secretary of State driver's license facilities, with deputy registrars who are appointed in each jurisdiction, or via mail using the Illinois Voter Registration Application that can be found online at <http://www.elections.il.gov>. Locations for each county are listed below.

Jefferson County

Jefferson County Clerk
100 S. 10th St. #105, Mt. Vernon, IL

Secretary of State Facility
320 E. Main St., Mt. Vernon, IL

Marion County

Marion County Clerk
100 E Main St. #204, Salem, IL

Secretary of State Facility
1375 W Whittaker St., Salem, IL

Secretary of State Facility
418 S. Poplar, Centralia, IL

Washington County

Washington County Clerk
125 E. Elm St., Nashville, IL

Secretary of State Facility
480 N. Kaskaskia St., Nashville, IL

Two forms of identification with at least one showing your current residence address are needed when you register in-person.

IL State Board of Elections

<http://www.elections.il.gov>

Online Voter Registration

<https://ova.elections.il.gov>

HARVEST SAFETY TIPS FOR FARMWORKERS

- **Maintain a 10-foot clearance** around all utility equipment in all directions.
- **Use a spotter and deployed flags** to maintain safe distances from power lines and other equipment when doing field work.
- **If your equipment makes contact with an energized or downed power line, contact us immediately** by phone and remain inside the vehicle until the power line is de-energized. In case of smoke or fire, exit the cab by making a solid jump out of the cab, without touching it at the same time, and hop away to safety.
- **Consider equipment and cargo extensions of your vehicle.** Lumber, hay, tree limbs, irrigation pipe and even bulk materials can conduct electricity, so keep them out of contact with electrical equipment.

Source: Safe Electricity