




Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Hi-Lites

Save the Date!

**TCEC Annual Meeting of Members
Saturday, July 10th, 2021**



Marcia Scott
General Manager

Each year, we look forward to joining together and conducting the business of your cooperative. After postponements, and consideration of alternative ways to meet, your Annual Meeting was cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions in 2020.

The restrictions lasted much longer than any of us could have imagined. The pandemic left its mark on our community and those close to us. While even cooperative employees were not immune to the COVID-19 virus, operations continued without interruption. We are grateful that it did not impact our ability to follow through with our promise to you, to provide safe and reliable electricity.

One year later, I am glad to report that our local infection rates continue to decline and

COVID-19 vaccinations have become more accessible to our community, especially for those who are most vulnerable. We fully anticipate to be in what the State of Illinois considers the 'bridge phase' by July. This phase is less restrictive and will allow us to conduct our Annual Meeting.

As we emerge out of the pandemic and into a 'new normal', it is apparent that we have taken so many things for granted such as visiting neighbors and loved ones, attending functions, and fellowshiping with our cooperative members.

For this reason, it is with much excitement that I am able to report to you that we will be having our annual meeting this year! Our intent is to continue the business of your cooperative while being respectful of our circumstances on the heels of a pandemic.

To start, we will be conducting the business of 2020 and 2021 consecutively starting at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday,

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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:
855-385-9902

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.)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President

Greg Vieira - Salem

Vice-President

Donnie Laird - Waltonville

Secretary/Treasurer

Sam Phillips - Salem

Tom Beyers - Odin
Phil Carson - Oakdale
Doug Knolhoff - Hoyleton
Larry Manning - Belle Rive
Rick Russell - Richview
Kathy Withers - Mt. Vernon

Post-Remodel Open House
Wednesay, May 26th, 2021 - 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.
More details on Page 4

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July 10th, 2021 at the Mt. Vernon office. A tentative agenda can be found on the next page. Members that are registered before 10:00 a.m. will receive a \$10 bill credit applied to their August billing statement.

Gates will open at 8:30 a.m. and a live line safety demonstration will take place on stage at 9:00 a.m. There will be a children's photo booth area available for you to take pictures of your children in a real lineman's bucket! Children will also get a pretend hard hat and an electrical safety coloring book. While we have chosen to forego the bounce house area this year as a precaution, we do plan on having a drawing for four lucky kids to win a Tri-County Electric Cooperative branded toy bucket truck (pictured below).

Members will also have a chance to win one of the many bill credits that will be in the prize drawing at the end of the meeting. Even though it is a condensed version of our normal gathering, we still can't wait to get back into the swing of things. We are hoping for the same great weather we have enjoyed for the past couple of years at Annual Meeting.

Candidates running for the 2020 and 2021 elections will have their biographies published in the next issue of the Hi-Lites, along with the official annual meeting notice.

In the interest of hosting a socially distanced meeting, we will be removing the tables and spreading chairs further apart. Unfortunately, we will not be serving breakfast or lemon shakeups this year. Upon exiting, members will be given a boxed lunch prepared by Big Boy BBQ with BBQ sandwiches and chips. We look forward to seeing you once again at your Annual Meeting on Saturday, July 10th, 2021!



Tentative Annual Meeting Agenda

2020 and 2021 TCEC Business Meeting
3906 Broadway ST, Mt. Vernon, IL

8:30 a.m.

Gates Open / Registration
No breakfast served this year

Children's photo booth open until 10 a.m.

9:00 a.m.

Live Line Demonstration

10:00 a.m.

Business Meeting Begins
Verify Quorum and Call to Order
Invocation

Pledge of Allegiance

Notice of Meeting

Approval of 2019 Minutes

2020 C&E Committee Report

2020 Election of Directors

Treasurer's Report

President's Report

Manager's Report

Report of 2020 Election Results

2021 C&E Committee Report

2021 Election of Directors

Unfinished & New Business

Report of 2021 Election Results

Adjournment of Business Meeting

Prize drawings at the end of the meeting

Boxed lunches will be served to members as they exit the meeting.

No lemon shakeups this year. Sorry!



What Caused the Outage?

Do you ever wonder why the power goes out? Many times the answer is fairly obvious, just glance outside and the answer may lie in the skies above. When Mother Nature sends ice, lightning, and high winds our way, the reliability of the electric grid is always threatened. There are also many other factors that people may not think about that cause problems on days when you may least expect the power to go out.

Power Outages at Tri-County Electric Cooperative (TCEC) for 2021 Year-to-Date as of 4/8/2021:

Weather

As mentioned above, Mother Nature can be a tough opponent. Severe weather such as thunderstorms/lightning, wind/tornadoes and the accumulation of ice and snow can cause tree limbs to fall on power lines and poles, or wires to break resulting in outages.

Trees

Trees and falling limbs continue to be a major contributor to outages on the TCEC system. TCEC implements an aggressive forestry trim



program to help control these issues and we maintain trees/brush along all of our lines every four years. Vegetation still can grow very quickly and encroach on the power lines before the next scheduled cycle trim. Many issues are also caused by large

trees from outside of the power line right-of-way that can still reach and knock down lines when they fall.

Animals

Animals can cause power to fail when they come into contact with specific parts of the electrical system. Raccoons, snakes, birds and squirrels are the most common varmints that manage to find their way into/onto power lines and equipment. TCEC installs guards and barriers to try to protect equipment and keep animals away, but sometimes these critters are persistent enough to find a way to where they are

not supposed to be. This type of outage is usually small but can also be as serious as something inside a substation knocking out service to several hundred members.

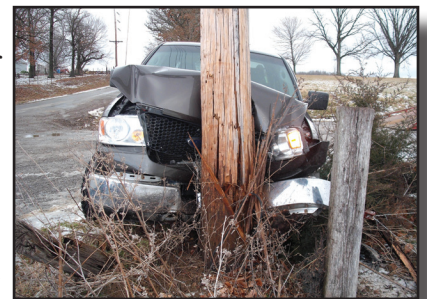


Equipment Failure

Over time, the elements take their toll on aging electrical infrastructure, contributing to equipment failure. Severe weather and lightning can also cause the inner workings of equipment to deteriorate and fail prematurely. Crews in the field perform routine checks and maintenance on our equipment, unfortunately many of these equipment failures are extremely hard to test for and predict.

Accidents

Public accidents including vehicles running off the road and farming or construction equipment can knock down energized power lines, causing extremely dangerous conditions, damage to the electrical system and potentially large-scale outages. Always remember, if you are part of or encounter one of these situations, **NEVER EVER, EVER** approach or touch a low or fallen power line – these lines could still be energized. Keep everyone away and call TCEC as quickly as possible so we can respond to the situation



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and make sure everyone remains safe. I know this may be hard to believe but in 2019, we experienced 68 different incidents/outages caused by equipment and vehicle accidents. In 2020, we experienced 58 incidents and first quarter of 2021, we have already had 13 incidents!! Please be careful out there!

Transmission Feeds

The single largest contributor for outage minutes to TCEC members continues to be problems on Ameren transmission lines. Although TCEC is a member of, and buys power from, Southern Illinois Power Cooperative at Lake of Egypt, this power is carried to all TCEC substations at some point through Ameren owned and operated high voltage transmission lines. When these lines go off - for whatever reason out of our control - they leave entire TCEC substations (many times multiple substations) and large numbers of TCEC members out of power. As stated, these outages affect large numbers of members and are often times very lengthy. On average for the last 5 years, Ameren transmission outages have accounted for 38% (over one third) of the outage minutes for TCEC members. **Year-to-date, 2021 has been horrible for these outages with 90% of our outage minutes caused by Ameren feeds to our substations being out!** We continually try to work with Ameren to find ways to reduce the frequency and duration of these outages.

Be Prepared

TCEC takes many proactive measures to provide reliable electric service and help prevent outages from occurring. But as you can see, many times outages cannot be prevented and are often times unpredictable and out of our control. If you cannot be without power for health or other reasons, **PLEASE** have a backup plan as outages are inevitably going to happen.

Regardless of the cause, rest assured that TCEC takes outages very seriously - crews are available 24/7 and will work around the clock when trouble arises to take care of issues and get power restored as safely and quickly as possible to all members.



You're Invited!

Join us on

Wednesday, May 26th, 2021

1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Location:

3906 W Broadway ST

Mt. Vernon, IL

Stop by, enjoy refreshments,

and take a tour of your

newly remodeled

electric cooperative office!

