



Hi-Lites

Hi-Lites is a monthly newsletter published for the members of Tri-County Electric Cooperative.

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Office Hours

7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
 Monday through Friday
 (Salem Office closed from
 noon-1:00 p.m. each day)

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Mission Statement

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



*by Marcia Scott
 General Manager*

The Power of Cooperatives

Every day, Tri-County Electric Cooperative is hard at work to make sure you have the electric power you need, when you need it. And behind the scenes we are working with a network of cooperatives to make that happen.

Tri-County Electric Cooperative is a part of Southern Illinois Power Cooperative (SIPC), our generation and transmission cooperative. Along with six other Illinois cooperatives, we receive all of our electricity from SIPC. This cooperative was created so that we have more control over power supply and pricing.

It takes significant capital to run an electric cooperative, so when we need to borrow funds, we turn to the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC). CFC is owned by electric cooperatives throughout the country, and is among the most respected lenders on Wall Street.

As you know, each month we generate an electric bill that we send to you either electroni-

cally or through regular mail. We use National Information Solutions Cooperative to ensure we can apply the latest technology, utilize SmartHub, send timely, accurate bills to you, and securely process your payments.

No business can operate without several different types of insurance, such as general liability, auto, and workmen's compensation. So once again, along with other electric cooperatives across the country, we are members of Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange. This allows us to maintain reliable coverage at an affordable price.

It also takes a whole lot of "stuff" to operate an electric cooperative, such as poles, wires, transformers and many other items that you may not see. This is why we partnered with other cooperatives to create a materials and supplies cooperative called United Utility Supply.

We are also a member of Touchstone Energy, a nationwide alliance of over 750 local, consumer-owned electric cooperatives. Our participation allows us access to a wealth of information. It also allows us to benchmark our performance so that we can learn from others as

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Taco Soup

Ingredients

- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 16 oz. can whole kernel corn with juice
- 1 1/2 cups water
- 1 16 oz. can Black Beans with juice
- 1 16 oz. can Pinto Beans with Jalapeno, with juice
- 1 16 oz. can Kidney Beans with juice
- 1 can Rotel® Diced Tomatoes and Green Chiles
- 2 cans stewed tomatoes
- 1 package Taco seasoning mix
- 1 package Hidden Valley® Original Ranch Dressing and Seasoning Mix (dry)
- Tortilla chips
- Cheese, grated

Stovetop Instructions

1. Cook ground meat with onion.
2. Drain well, then add other ingredients.
3. Cook over low heat for one hour.
4. Serve with crumbled tortilla chips and cheese on top.

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. Co-ops Vote does not endorse or recommend any candidates for election. To learn more visit www.vote.coop.

The Power of Cooperatives Continued

we constantly strive to serve you better.

All of these cooperatives offer us – and ultimately you – economies of scale that we couldn't otherwise achieve.

So, while you are a member/owner of Tri-County Electric Cooperative, you are actually connected to many other cooperatives. And being connected to this cooperative network ensures your needs are met in the most efficient way possible.

*In honor of Cooperative Month,
we invite you to join us on*

Wednesday, October 12th, 2016

11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

for

Member Appreciation Day

Join us at the Tri-County Electric Cooperative headquarters office at 3906 Broadway St., Mt. Vernon, IL. Allow us to treat you to a hot dog, chips, and a drink and thank you for being a Tri-County Electric Cooperative Member!

Each year, Tri-County Electric, along with cooperatives across America, celebrates National Cooperative Month and the cooperative business model. We know that behind all successful cooperatives is an informed and engaged membership. This is our opportunity to thank our members for being just that. We look forward to seeing you!



Use Caution When Trimming and Planting Trees

Whether you call it right-of-way maintenance, line clearance or tree trimming, the goal is the same: to ensure that power is delivered safely and reliably to the members of Tri-County Electric Cooperative. By keeping right-of-ways clear, we are working to reduce outages and improve recovery times after storms.

Like you, Tri-County Electric Cooperative is sensitive to the health and appearance of trees that shelter our yards and countrysides. That's why we strive to balance the need for clean, reliable right-of-ways with the health and aesthetics of trees planted near power lines.

Trimming methods can have a substantial effect on the long-term health and appearance of your trees. Improper cutting techniques can promote decay and "sucker growth"—a condition in which dozens of small limbs sprout from a single area and steal nutrients from larger, more robust limbs.

That's why our line-clearance crews follow methods prescribed by the National Arbor Society and use trimming techniques designed to keep our distribution system safe and reliable while protecting the health and appearance of

any trees that border the right-of-way.

Here's how you can pitch in:

Help us identify potential problems. If you notice trees or limbs that may interfere with our power lines, please call the cooperative at 618-244-5151.

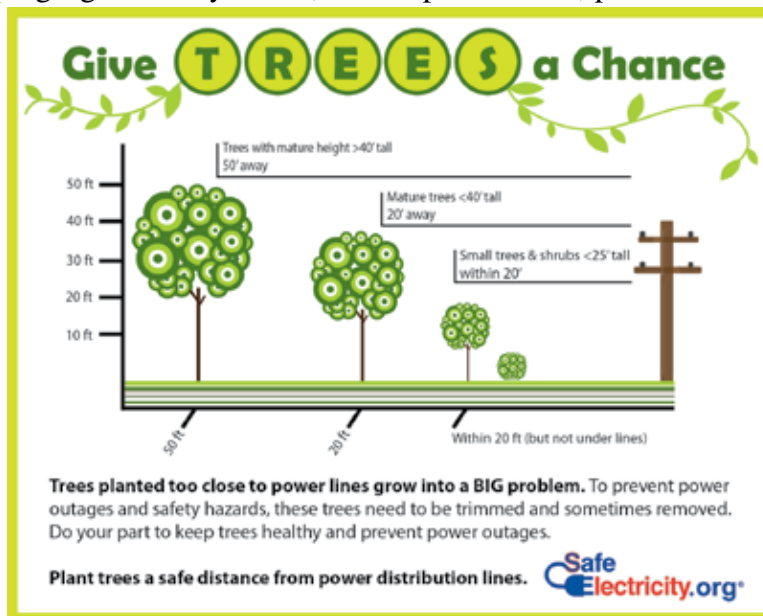
Survey your surroundings before you trim or cut down a tree. Contact Tri-County Electric before proceeding if you believe your work might cause any part of the tree to come in contact with a power line.

If your tree trimming causes any part of the tree to fall into a power line, stop at once! Stay

clear, keep others away from the area, and call Tri-County Electric Cooperative immediately so we can safely address the situation.

If you're planning to plant trees, avoid planting them under or near power lines. Shrubs, hedges and other plants should also be kept away from utility poles.

Always call 811 before digging. That's the number for the Illinois One-Call service, also known as JULIE. JULIE will provide free location and marking of underground utility lines, allowing you to dig safely. It's simple, it saves lives, and it's the law.



SAFETY FIRST

It is an honor and a privilege to report to you that Tri-County Electric Cooperative has reached an important milestone of **7 years** without a lost-time accident by a full-time employee!



Touchstone Energy[®]
Cooperatives

The power of human connections[®]

These are great items for holiday gifts, cooking and snacking!

In stock:

16 oz. Mammoth Pecan Halves \$8.75

16 oz. Medium Pecan Pieces \$8.75

Other nuts to be shipped the first of November include:

12 oz. English Walnuts

12 oz. Roasted & Salted Jumbo Cashews

4 oz. Pecan Log

8 oz. Pecan Caramel Clusters

12 oz. Chocolate Covered Pecans

Nuts are available, while supplies last, during regular business hours at both office locations of the cooperative:

Mt. Vernon Office

3906 West Broadway, Mt. Vernon

7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Salem Office

1631 East Main, Salem

7:30 a.m. to noon and 1:00 pm to 4:30 p.m.

Proceeds from this employee fundraiser are donated to charitable group(s).



Classroom Empowerment Grants

Tri-County Electric Cooperative is once again coordinating a grant program with Touchstone Energy for our local, private, and public kindergarten through 12th grade teachers and administrators. A total of eight grants of five hundred dollars each will be provided for innovative, unfunded projects or materials. Qualifying projects are those which improve the learning environment or increase educational resources for the school.

Kindergarten through 12th grade administrators or teachers must submit a grant application with information about the project, the school, and the applicant. Please note, it only takes a few minutes to apply.

An impartial panel of judges will determine which projects will be awarded the eight grants of five hundred dollars each.

Completed applications are due by November 4, 2016. They can be mailed, e-mailed, or faxed to Brad Austin at Tri-County Electric. Recipients will be announced mid-December.

If you have any questions about Touchstone Energy Classroom Empowerment Grants, contact Brad Austin at Tri-County Electric (800-244-5151). To download a grant application, visit our website at: www.tricountycoop.com and click on *Classroom Grants* under the *Education* tab.

These grants provide a boost for smaller projects that otherwise would not be funded. Part of Tri-County's commitment to our community is achieved through these grants that create opportunities for local students.