

# SIEC Newsletter January 2018



Southern Iowa  
Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Our mission is to serve our members and community by safely providing reliable and environmentally responsible power and other services efficiently and at a competitive price to benefit members and improve the quality of life in the areas that we serve.

Office: 22458 Highway 2, PO Box 70  
Bloomfield, IA 52537-0070

Phone: 641-664-2277 or 800-607-2027

Phone Payments: 800-927-5341

Report Outages: 800-607-2027

Call Before You Dig-Iowa One Call: 800-292-8989

Website: [www.siec.coop](http://www.siec.coop)

Office Hours: Mon.-Fri. 8:00am-4:30pm

Closed Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays

#### Management

Greg Proctor, CEO/General Manager

Jo Altheide, CFO/Economic Development

Ross Hunter, COO/Systems Analyst

#### Board of Directors

Darrell Downing, President

Travis Harris

Paul Wells, Vice President

Beth Sullivan

Joy Evans, Secretary

Earl Trachsel

Dave Yahnke, Treasurer

Ben Koellner

Fred Zeitler

#### What to Do in Case of Trouble

\*Check for blown fuses or tripped breakers.

\*Check with your neighbors. Ask if their electricity is off and whether they have reported the outage.

If not, call Southern Iowa Electric Cooperative, Inc. and report the problem 24 hours a day:

641-664-2277 or 800-607-2027.

#### Service Charges

ACH (Electronic Payment)	No Charge
Bill Collection	\$ 50
Disconnect	\$ 50
Posting	\$ 50
Returned Check	\$ 30
Reconnect	\$ 75
Trip Charge	\$ 50
Meter Tampering	\$150
Overtime Service Call	\$150

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

## ATTENTION

We are looking for help to name the new SIEC newsletter. Please submit ideas on our facebook page or call us at 800-607-2027.

**The chosen winner will receive a \$100 bill credit!**

### Appreciating electricity a penny at a time

Electricity is about the only thing you can buy and still get value for just a penny's worth. I'm old enough to remember when penny candy actually cost a penny. For a nickel, you could buy enough candy to rot your teeth out, as my mother used to say. But what does a penny buy these days? Not much. The government can't even make a penny for a penny anymore. According to the U.S. Mint, it now costs 1.5 cents to produce one. About the only thing of value you can still get for a penny is electricity. You might call it "penny electricity." No, I'm not kidding. Think about it. To make the math easier, let's say the average rate for a kilowatt-hour of electricity is 10 cents. That is 60 minutes of 1,000 watts of electricity for a dime, so a penny of electricity equates to 100 watts. It's enough to power a 9-watt LED lightbulb—the equivalent of a 60-watt incandescent bulb—for 11 hours, all for only a penny. Where else can you get that kind of value? How many eggs will a penny buy? How much milk, bread, coffee, medicine or gasoline? Gas has come down from its stratospheric levels of several years ago, but there is still no comparison to the value of electricity. For example, if a gallon of gas costs \$2.50 and your car gets 25 miles to the gallon, you can drive 176 yards—about two blocks—on a penny's worth of gas. I will take 11 hours of lighting for a penny over a two-block drive any day. The value is just as evident when powering things other than lighting. Take, for instance, your smartphone. Using the same 10 cents per kWh price, penny electricity allows you to fully charge your iPhone more than 18 times for a penny. You can charge it once every day of the year for about 20 cents total. Not impressed? Well, how about these other examples of what you can do with just a penny's worth of electricity: power a 1,000-watt microwave on high for 6 minutes; run a 200-watt desktop computer for 30 minutes; watch 2.5 hours of your favorite shows on a 40-watt, 32-inch, LED television or 1.3 hours on a 75-watt, 75-inch mega TV. The examples are endless. We are fortunate electricity is such an excellent value because we have a huge appetite for it. We tend to forget that. Electricity is not expensive. It's that we



use it for so many different things: lighting, heating, cooking, cooling, refrigeration, cleaning, washing, pumping, entertainment, communications—even transportation these days. Few corners of our lives are left untouched by electricity. Unfortunately, we don't always appreciate it. When our monthly electric bill comes, we open it and may complain about the cost. It's a knee-jerk reaction ingrained in us as consumers. We don't stop to think about the value we received for the money. Early in my career, I had the pleasure to interview an elderly woman who vividly remembered the day electricity came to her farm. Her name escapes me, but I do remember she proudly showed me the worn, dog-eared membership certificate the co-op issued to her husband. "You young people will never know what it was like to have electricity for the very first time," she said. "It was glorious. Nowadays, you take it for granted." Her farm was energized in 1940. She said the price of electricity at the time was slightly less than a penny a kilowatt-hour—true penny electricity. A lot has changed since then. Wages and the cost of living today are a far cry from 1940, when the average annual wage was less than \$150 a month and the average cost of a house was \$3,920. But one thing that hasn't changed is the value of electricity. In 77 years, its price has risen much slower than the rate of inflation. A penny in 1940 had as much buying power as 17 cents today, which means the residential price of electricity—which now averages 12 cents a kWh nationally and less than 10 cents in the Pacific Northwest—is actually a better deal today than it was in 1940. So to my way of thinking, the value of electricity is like the bygone days of penny candy, and it's OK to indulge yourself a little. But, unlike penny candy, penny electricity won't rot your teeth out.

## TREE TRIMMING NOTICE TO MEMBERS

Evidence for the need to control growth of vegetation along power line right-of-way is easy to see in many rural areas.

Overgrown right-of-way can cause problems during severe weather and can make it difficult to reach trouble spots to make repairs.

In a continuing effort to control brush growth, Southern Iowa Electric Cooperative has hired contractors to cut and trim trees in the Troy and Roscoe substation areas. The Contractors will be performing maintenance trimming and mowing, removing re-growth vegetation, and clearing areas that may have been missed in previous years. The work will be done as an attempt to improve system reliability, provide a safer work environment, establish a more accessible right-of-way to the Cooperative's facilities, and to maintain clearance of brush and tree limbs from the power lines. Generally, the contractors will be trimming up to 20 to 25 feet on each side of the pole centerline and removing any additional "danger" trees that may be a potential threat to the power lines. Yard trees will be reviewed separately and a determination will be made on the best course of action for those trees. The contractors will also be mowing and brush cutting underneath the power lines. In most cases, you should expect to see less vegetation cut and removed than in prior years, depending on the re-growth activity in your area. You should also expect delays on clean up work depending upon the weather conditions. For additional information please visit our website at [www.sie.coop](http://www.sie.coop) or give us a call at 800-607-2027. The Contractors working in your area will make an attempt to contact all landowners, either personally, or with the use of a "door hanger" in advance of cutting in your area. If no response is given after a good faith effort to contact you, the Contractors will proceed with their trimming activities as required. Please respond if you are contacted by a Contractor or your Cooperative as soon as possible. Contractors are scheduled to begin working in the very near future and throughout the 2018 calendar year. Any questions or concerns with Contractors in your area should be directed to the Cooperative.

## LIVE LINE ELECTRIC SAFETY DEMO AT DAVIS COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL



Steve Hancock with Corn Belt Energy presented a "Live Line" electric safety demonstration for Southern Iowa Electric Cooperative at the Davis County High School. Steve's demonstration always gets the student's attention as he draws an arc and flames on his 7200 volt demo lines!

Steve talked about low cost safety precautions we can make in our own home; such as GFCI (ground fault circuit interrupter) outlets and TR (tamper resistant) receptacles for protecting small children who tend to want to stick things in electrical outlets. Steve stressed the importance of staying in your vehicle if you ever come across a downed power line and do not attempt to drive over it. If you are in an accident and come into contact with a downed power line, do not ever attempt to get out of your vehicle. Stay where you are and call 911. Do not exit the vehicle until the utility company has cleared the line and given the okay that it is safe to get out of the vehicle. It is important for law enforcement officers, firemen and EMT workers, as well as all public servants to be aware of the danger when downed power lines are involved, especially when it is dark and you may not be able to see the downed line. There is no way to tell if the downed line is energized or not as you cannot see, smell or hear electricity. Steve does a great job presenting and the knowledge of what he teaches can save lives.

Corn Belt Energy's Live Line Demo was sponsored by Southern Iowa Electric Cooperative and Northeast Missouri Power Cooperative out of Palmyra, Missouri. If you have any questions about electric safety, please call SIEC at 641-664-2277 or visit our website at [www.sie.coop](http://www.sie.coop).

### Recipe of the Month Salted Caramel Apple Cider

Ingredients:

1/3 cup dark brown sugar

1 teaspoon vanilla

1/2 teaspoon sea salt

1/3 cup heavy whipping cream

4 cups apple cider



Combine brown sugar and heavy cream over medium-high heat in a medium heavy-bottomed sauce pot. Stir until sugar is dissolved in the cream and the mixture bubbles, about 3 minutes. Add the vanilla, salt, and apple cider, and stir to combine. Allow mixture to simmer for 10 minutes, or until heated through. Whipped cream, caramel syrup and cinnamon for garnish.