

THE *Southwestern*

A SOUTHWESTERN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MEMBER MAGAZINE

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Altamont Reservoir is bathed in color by a spring sunset.

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Social distancing.

On Account: We've hidden a member-account number in this issue (mailing label excluded). If the account number belongs to you, contact us within 30 days and we'll take \$25 off your electric bill. Good luck!

CO-OP REMINDERS

To help curb the spread of coronavirus, we've temporarily closed our offices. For updates, visit us at sweci.com.

May 11 Payment processing systems will be unavailable from midnight to 4 a.m., while we perform system maintenance. No payments will be processed during this time. We will resume processing payments at 4:01 a.m.

May 25 Closed in observance of Memorial Day.

May 28 Board candidate nomination deadline.

FROM THE EDITOR



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Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Visit us on the Web at www.sweci.com.

The Home Office

In March, many of us packed up essential supplies and said goodbye to the office buildings wherein we usually spend our workdays. We set up shop, by way of hex-key desk and laptop, in some hopefully quiet corner of the house. We added a phone charger, task lighting, supplemental monitor, printer, external hard drive, a tablet and maybe a paper shredder, space heater, fan or window unit.

While your office building probably has sturdy wiring and outlets aplenty, your home office may have more plugs than places to put 'em. That leaves you relying on power strips and extension cords to make up the difference—which can elevate your fire risk.

Check your outlets, power strips, cords and switches. If they're hot, switch off your equipment and plug some of your electronics into an outlet on a different circuit, maybe in another room. If your workspace is overtaxed and there *isn't* another room, plug in items as you need them. Case in point: I've plugged my printer, tablet and a task lamp into a single, heavy-duty power strip. I use those items rarely, and in combination. I can easily energize them at once. When I'm finished printing and proofing, I pull the plug until next time, saving energy and outlet space.

If you're using extension cords, make sure their rating meets or exceeds the power requirements of the equipment they're serving. Take a moment to examine those cords. Confirm their condition. Don't run them under carpets or rugs, or through high-traffic areas.

Plug power-hungry equipment—AC units, large printers, microwaves—into outlets on different circuits. If you're tripping a breaker, redeploy your electronics. Breaker still tripping? You may have a loose connection, faulty breaker or wiring issue. Hire an electrician to help you troubleshoot.

Finally, make sure your smoke alarms work properly. They can save your life.

In recent months, safety awareness has meant masks, social distancing and counting 20 Mississippis when you wash your hands. And with good reason—you need to be cautious outside your home. But you also need to be safe while you're in it. For more safety suggestions, see page 16, and visit Electrical Safety Foundation International at esfi.org.

Wishing you and yours good health and peace of mind as we move through 2020.

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Coronavirus Response

Offices Remain Closed; Remote Work Plan Extended

As of mid-April, Southwestern Electric Cooperative continued to operate under a remote work plan enacted March 23. At press time, it was unclear when the co-op would open its offices to the public.

At the end of March, Gov. J.B. Pritzker extended Illinois' shelter in place order through April 30. In turn, Southwestern Electric extended its remote work plan.

"Our workforce will continue to assist our members from in-home offices across our service area," said Southwestern CEO Bobby Williams. "Our line crews are responding to outages, just as they always do. And our training and technology ensure we'll continue to provide safe, reliable service to Southwestern Illinois' homes and businesses."

Williams said the co-op was constantly monitoring state and local health department recommendations and CDC advisories. "When those agencies assure us we can open our offices without compromising the health of our employees and members, we'll be happy to invite everyone back. Until that time, we'll continue working remotely."

During this time, members are encouraged to manage their accounts, report outages and make payments using Southwestern Electric's online payment portal, by using the SWEC IL app, or by calling the cooperative at (800) 637-8667.

For updates on Southwestern Electric news and events, go to www.sweci.com.

WE'VE ALWAYS WORKED OUTSIDE THE OFFICE

Our crews are in the field daily, performing essential operations in 11 counties.

In recent weeks, our office staff has been working remotely as well. We're taking calls, answering questions and helping you solve problems, just as we always do.

Every day of the year, every step of the way, come what may,
we're here for you.



Call (800) 637-8667 or visit sweci.com.



From the CEO

I'm writing to you from my home office outside Greenville on a cold and cloudy mid-April afternoon. As of today, our employees are moving into their fourth week of operating as a distributed workforce. Our crews are performing essential operations and responding to outages, and our member service representatives are answering your calls and helping you solve problems from in-home office spaces across our service area.

I've never been more proud of my coworkers. These are difficult times, and as I've always said, it's during difficult times that our team shines brightest. Each day, I hear from employees who are concerned about their colleagues, their communities, and you. They've offered helpful suggestions and gone out of their way to see that your needs are met. I'm grateful for their initiative and dedication. I'm also grateful to you, for the words of encouragement you've sent our way.

For the past two months, health and safety have been front and center concerns for everyone. For many, finances have followed a close second. With unemployment claims hitting record highs, a lot of people are struggling to make ends meet. If you're concerned about your electric bills, I'd encourage you to look into LIHEAP.

LIHEAP offers a one-time benefit that eligible households can apply to their energy bills. The amount of the benefit is determined by income, household size, and available funding, among other factors. To be eligible for assistance, your household's combined income for the 30-day period prior to application can't exceed the program's income guidelines. You can learn more by contacting the agency that serves your area. You'll find income guidelines and agency information on page 9.

When it comes to safety, the virus may have your full attention at the moment, but I want to touch on a related issue. Unfortunately, there are people who aren't above trying to take advantage of times like these. Fraudulent emails are on the rise. Scammers may design mail to look like it's from a government agency. They may claim to offer important coronavirus updates. Some offer bogus cures or sanitizing supplies and masks. Others ask for donations or investments to support companies producing vaccines. Please remain vigilant and be especially cautious about opening mail or clicking links in the months to come.

As I close, it's still cold and gray outside—but I've seen the forecast. Brighter days lie ahead.

If you have questions or comments about Southwestern Electric, please email me at bobby.williams@sweci.com. I always appreciate hearing from you.

Bobby Williams, CEO

bobby.williams@sweci.com

View, Pay, Create, Update, Alert, Report, Send & Receive?



There's an app for that.

Look for SWEC IL on Google Play or the App Store.



Board Candidate Nominations

Filing Deadline: May 28

As a not-for-profit cooperative, Southwestern Electric is both owned and governed by its members—the consumers who receive their electricity from the co-op. A board of directors, consisting of nine members democratically elected by their peers, is responsible for overseeing the general direction and financial stability of the organization.

The cooperative’s service territory is divided into three voting districts. Three of the nine board seats—one per voting district—are open for election each year. District I encompasses the co-op’s territory in Macoupin, Madison and St. Clair Counties; District II includes Bond, Clinton and Montgomery Counties; and District III covers Clay, Effingham, Fayette, Marion and Shelby Counties. The three directors whose terms expire in 2020 are Richard Gusewelle in District I, Sandy Nevinger in District II, and Annette Hartlieb in District III.

Potential board candidates are advised to begin their preparations for the 2020 election soon. The names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the 2020 Nominations Committee appear below.

Any Southwestern Electric member interested in running for a seat on the board, or who would like to submit another member’s name for consideration, must notify a Nominations Committee member from the appropriate district prior to 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 28.

If the nomination deadline is missed, members may also file for candidacy by petition. Such a petition, bearing the names, addresses and signatures of at least 15 Southwestern Electric

Any Southwestern Electric member interested in running for a seat on the board, or who would like to submit another member’s name for consideration, must notify a Nominations Committee member from the appropriate district prior to 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 28.

Cooperative members, must be filed at the co-op’s headquarters by Monday, June 29. Any candidate who doesn’t file by June 29, 2020 will not be eligible to run for election until 2021.

All members 18 years of age or older and in good financial standing with the co-op are eligible to serve on the board of directors, so long as they meet the qualifications set forth in Section 5(B) of the bylaws. The relevant sections of the cooperative’s bylaws are reprinted on the next page for your reference.

The results of the 2020 board election will be announced at Southwestern Electric’s 82nd Annual Meeting of Members, which will take place on Saturday, September 12. Each director will be elected to serve a three-year term beginning on September 12 and ending on the date of the 2023 Annual Meeting.

Questions about board service and the election process should be directed to Susan File, Southwestern Electric Cooperative’s vice president of member services. She may be reached by telephone at (800) 637-8667, or by e-mail at susan.file@sweci.com.

2020 Nominations Committee

The Nominations Committee will meet at the cooperative’s headquarters to submit the names of qualified director candidates. Members interested in submitting a name for consideration, or who would like to run for a board seat themselves, must notify a Nominations Committee member from their district by 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 28.

District I	Duane Meyer	6223 Staunton Rd	Edwardsville, IL 62025	(618) 633-2349
	Dan Joachimsthaler	88 Timberwood Lane	Collinsville, IL 62234	(618) 345-6474
	Dennis Petry	8201 West Kirsch Road	Troy, IL 62294	(618) 667-6868
District II	Sandy Kuhn	410 East Johnson Street	Pocahontas, IL 62275	(618) 580-8611
	Brad Lurkins	1466 Airport Ave	Greenville, IL 62246	(618) 977-3464
	Clarence Zimmerman	857 RC Cardinal Lane	Greenville, IL 62246	(618) 664-0495
District III	Joe Lawson	274 E 1700 Ave	Vandalia, IL 62080	(618) 780-3731
	Barb Tedrick	778 N 200 St	Vandalia, IL 62471	(618) 425-3543
	Tony Koberlein	2098 N 2200 St	St. Elmo, IL 62458	(618) 292-6952

Candidates for the Board of Directors: Qualification & Nomination Guidelines

Section 5 (B): Qualifications

To be eligible to become or remain a Director of the Cooperative, such person:

1. Shall not be a Close Relative of an incumbent Director;
2. Shall not be an employee or agent of the Cooperative;
3. Shall not be, directly or indirectly, employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise, business selling electric energy or supplies to the Cooperative, or a business primarily engaged in selling electrical or plumbing appliances, fixtures or supplies to, among others, the Members of the Cooperative;
4. Shall not be, directly or indirectly, interested in any contract, permit, franchise or other similar agreement or authorization to which the Cooperative is or may be a party;
5. Shall be a Member in good standing with the Cooperative and receiving energy or service from the Cooperative at his primary place of abode;
6. Shall be a Natural Person;
7. Shall be at least eighteen (18) years of age; provided, however, that a duly elected officer or duly appointed agent of any Member which is not a Natural Person shall be exempt from the qualifications stated in Section 5(B)(6) and Section 5(B)(7) if such Member is in good standing with the Cooperative and receiving energy or service from the Cooperative.

Section 4 (D): Election of Directors

At each annual meeting of the Members of the Cooperative, Directors shall be elected by secret written ballot cast (except as otherwise provided in this section) by the Members present at such annual meeting and qualified to vote under the terms and conditions of the Bylaws. Such election shall be conducted as follows:

1. Appointment of Nominations Committee: The Board of Directors shall appoint, not less than one hundred fifteen (115) nor more than one hundred forty-five (145) days prior to the date of the annual meeting of the Members of the Cooperative, a Nominations Committee which shall consist of nine (9) Natural Persons, three

from each Directorate District. Members of the Nominations Committee shall not be employees, agents, officers, or Directors of the Cooperative, shall not be known candidates for Director, and shall not be Close Relatives of employees, agents, officers, Directors of the Cooperative, or known candidates for Director.

2. Candidates Nominated by Nominations Committee: On or before eighty-five (85) days prior to the annual meeting of the Members of the Cooperative, the Nominations Committee shall:
 - a. Nominate as many Natural Persons who meet the qualifications stated in Section 5B of these Bylaws as the Nominating Committee deems desirable to be candidates for election to the Board of Directors; and,
 - b. Post a list of the names of such Natural Persons so nominated by the Nominations Committee at the principal place of business of the Cooperative.

3. Candidates Nominated by Petition: In addition to those candidates named by the Nominations Committee, any fifteen (15) or more Members of the Cooperative may nominate such other Natural Persons as candidates for election to the Board of Directors by filing with the Secretary of the Cooperative not less than seventy-five (75) days prior to the annual meeting of the Members of the Cooperative a written petition bearing the signatures, names and addresses of at least fifteen Members of the Cooperative nominating such other Natural Persons as candidates for election to the Board of Directors and listing the candidate's name, address, age, and telephone number. The Secretary of the Cooperative shall post such petition at the principal places of business of the Cooperative where the list of nominations made by the Nominations Committee was posted.

4. Notice to Members of Nomination of Candidates: The Secretary of the Cooperative shall mail or cause to be mailed to the Members notice of the annual meeting of the Members of the Cooperative at least fifteen (15) days but not more than sixty (60) days before the date of said annual meeting a statement of the names, addresses, ages, and telephone numbers of all candidates nominated for election to the Board of Directors. Such statement shall identify the Directorate District to which such candidate may be elected, and such statement shall identify which candidates were nominated by the Nominations Committee and which candidates were nominated by petition filed by Members of the Cooperative.

VOTING OPTIONS

Absentee: Available at the cooperative's headquarters (525 US Route 40 in Greenville), Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., August 28 - September 11 (excluding Labor Day).

In Person: Available 7-10 a.m. on September 12, at the cooperative's 82nd Annual Meeting of Members, held at Bond County Community Unit #2 Junior High School in Greenville.

Alternate Sites: Available 7-10 a.m. on September 12, at two Southwestern Electric satellite facilities: 10031 Ellis Road in St. Jacob and on the frontage road southwest of the St. Elmo exit off Interstate 70.

CATEGORIES OF ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP

Individual Residential: One name is listed on the account, and only this individual is entitled to voting rights.

Joint Residential: Two names are listed on the account, but only one of them may vote in a given election.

Commercial: The name of the business is listed on the account, and one duly appointed officer or agent may vote in a given election.

The cooperative may offer additional polling hours at the alternate sites for absentee voting. Updates will appear in future issues of *The Southwestern* and at sweci.com.



Your Spare Change Can Make a **Big Difference** Through Operation Round Up

Neighbors helping neighbors. That's what a co-op is about. And that's the idea behind Operation Round Up (ORU), a charitable program governed, funded and supported by Southwestern Electric Cooperative members like you.

Here's how it works: After you sign up for ORU, Southwestern will round up the amount due on your monthly electric bills to the nearest dollar. Your donations are placed in the ORU account. Each quarter, an independent committee of Southwestern Electric members reviews ORU grant requests. ORU grants support various community projects across the co-op's service territory.

Since launching the program in 2005, **Southwestern Electric's Operation Round Up has assisted a wide variety of organizations**, including local food pantries, senior centers and fire departments.

Ready to get started? To join ORU today, just check the enrollment box on your electric bill or online, or contact Southwestern Electric Cooperative at (800) 637-8667. For more information about Operation Round Up, visit sweci.com.

Energy Bill Payment Assistance Available to Low-Income Families

The State of Illinois offers assistance to low-income families who struggle to pay their energy bills. Applications for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) are accepted on a first-come first-served basis until funds are exhausted.

Please review the income guidelines listed below to see if you qualify. The amount of the payment is determined by income, household size, fuel type, geographic location, and the amount of funding available.

Use the listing below to find the agency that serves the county you live in, then contact the agency and tell them you'd like to apply for assistance through LIHEAP. The customer service representative who takes your application will explain the requirements, the type of assistance available, and your rights under the program.

When you apply for assistance, please bring the following items:

- Proof of gross income from all household members for the 30-day period prior to application date.
- A copy of your heating and electric bills issued within the last 30 days (if energy paid for directly).
- A copy of your rental agreement (if your heating costs are included in the rent) showing the monthly rental amount, landlord's contact information, and proof that utilities are included in the rent.
- Proof of Social Security numbers for all household members.
- Proof that the household receives TANF or other benefits—such as Medical Eligibility or SNAP—if you are receiving assistance from the Illinois Department of Human Services.

The agency will determine your eligibility based on information you provide and will notify you within 30 days of receiving a completed application.

If your application is accepted, the local agency will make the appropriate payment to your energy provider(s) on your behalf, or in some cases, directly to you. All client and vendor payments will be made by the local agency within 15 days of the application's approval. Electric cooperative members, if approved, will receive assistance in the form of a one-time payment.

Members using Pay-As-You-Go may also qualify for LIHEAP funds. Contact your local community action agency to find out if you qualify for energy assistance.

To apply for assistance through LIHEAP, please contact the community action agency serving your county.

County	Community Action Agency	Phone Number
Bond	BCMW Community Services, Inc.	(618) 664-3309
Clay	CEFS Economic Opportunity Corp.	(618) 662-4024
Clinton	BCMW Community Services, Inc.	(618) 526-7123
Effingham	CEFS Economic Opportunity Corp.	(217) 347-7514
Fayette	CEFS Economic Opportunity Corp.	(618) 283-2631
Macoupin	Illinois Valley Economic Development Corp.	(217) 839-4431
Madison	Madison County Community Development	(618) 296-6485
Marion	BCMW Community Services, Inc.	(618) 532-7388
Montgomery	CEFS Economic Opportunity Corp.	(217) 532-5971
Shelby	CEFS Economic Opportunity Corp.	(217) 774-4541
St. Clair	St. Clair Community Action Agency	(618) 277-6790

Income Guidelines

If your household's combined income for the 30 days prior to application is at or below 150% of the federal poverty level, as shown in the chart, you may be eligible to receive assistance. If you rent, and your heat and/or electric is included in the rent, your rent must be greater than 30% of your income in order to be eligible to receive assistance.

Family Size	30-Day Income	
1	\$1,561	Additional
2	\$2,114	\$553 per
3	\$2,666	person monthly
4	\$3,219	income above
5	\$3,771	8 people, or
6	\$4,324	\$6,630 annual.
7	\$4,876	(Note 30-
8	\$5,429	day income
		rounded up.)



For more information on this program, visit IllinoisLIHEAP.com or call the toll-free hotline, (877) 411-WARM.

Keep to the Code

May is Electrical Safety Month. Now's the time to evaluate your home's electrical system and eliminate hazards. Being aware of common electrical issues is a critical step toward preventing electrical fires, burns and electrocution. The balance of accident prevention requires follow-through.

You're probably comfortable making simple repairs yourself. More complex projects require the attention of a professional. If you're questioning whether you should tackle a task or hire help, error on the side of caution and find a qualified electrician to do the work.

INSPECTION & UPGRADE

With the addition of living space, appliances, and entertainment and computer systems, a home electrical system designed to accommodate more modest demands can become overburdened, resulting in faults or fires.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) recommend electrical inspections for houses that are more than 40 years old.

An electrical inspection entails a comprehensive examination of your home's electrical system. The inspection will identify loose connections at outlets, older and deteriorated wiring, and outdated and overburdened electrical service.

Repairs may be minor, such as the cleaning and tightening of connections or the addition of outlets, or more involved, running into several thousand dollars, such as the addition of circuits and subpanels or replacement of degraded wiring.

Older homes may require a "heavy-up," or an upgrade of the electrical service. For example, based on your needs, an electrician may suggest that your 60 amp or 100 amp service be upgraded to a 200 amp service, which is more likely to accommodate today's electric demands.

A qualified, licensed electrician can determine if repairs or upgrades are necessary and estimate the cost.

PROTECTIVE DEVICES

If you're renovating your home, make sure your contractor installs the following electrical safety devices to keep the people in your household safe.

Arc-Fault Circuit Interrupters (AFCI)
AFCIs protect against electrical fires resulting from malfunctions. The CPSC estimates that 50 percent of home electrical fires can be prevented by proper AFCI protection.

Surge Protective Devices (SPD)
Surge Protective Devices protect against transient power events (surges) that can damage or reduce the lifespan of your electrical system and devices.

Ground-Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCI)
GFCIs protect against electric shock and are required in areas where water and electricity may come in contact.

Tamper Resistant Receptacles (TRR)
Tamper Resistant Receptacles function like traditional receptacles, but they feature an internal shutter system to prevent foreign objects from being inserted into the outlet.

ROOM BY ROOM	
For homes undergoing renovation, the 2020 National Electric Code requires installation of the following protective devices.	
Area	Protective Device
Bathrooms	GFCI protection
Basements & Crawl Spaces	AFCI protection (finished basements) GFCI protection (crawl spaces at or below grade)
Bedrooms	AFCI protection
Common Rooms	AFCI protection
<i>Family and dining rooms, libraries, dens, recreation rooms and similar areas</i>	
Garages	GFCI protection
Hallways & Closets.....	AFCI protection
Kitchens	GFCI protection (Where receptacles are installed to serve counter top surfaces or within 6 feet of a sink) AFCI protection
Laundry Areas.....	AFCI protection GFCI protection
Outdoors.....	GFCI protection



HOME SAFETY DEVICES

Renovate your Home to Code

The National Electrical Code is revised **every three years** and outlines the minimum requirements for **safe electrical installations**. Many older homes may not have an adequate electrical system to meet the electrical demands of today. If you're renovating your home, **make sure to have the following electrical devices installed** to maintain an electrically safe home.

Safety Devices



Arc-Fault Circuit Interrupters (AFCI): Available as a circuit breaker and receptacle. AFCIs protect against electrical fires from malfunctions. The Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that 50% of home electrical fires can be prevented by proper AFCI protection.



Surge Protective Devices (SPD) protect against surges that can damage or reduce the lifespan of your electrical system and devices.



Ground-Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCI): Available as a circuit breaker and receptacle. GFCIs protect against electric shock and are required in areas where water and electricity may come in contact.



Tamper Resistant Receptacles (TRR) function like normal receptacles but they include an internal shutter system to prevent foreign objects, other than plugs, from being inserted into the outlets.

2020 Code Requirements

Renovating the following areas in your home? The following protection is required in these areas as of the 2020 National Electrical Code:

<p>Bathrooms</p> <p>✓ GFCI Protection</p>	<p>Basements & Crawl Spaces</p> <p>✓ AFCI Protection (finished basements)</p> <p>✓ GFCI Protection (crawl spaces at or below grade)</p>	<p>Bedrooms</p> <p>✓ AFCI Protection</p>
<p>Common Rooms</p> <p>✓ AFCI Protection</p> <p>(Family, dining, parlor, libraries, dens, recreation, and similar rooms)</p>	<p>Garages</p> <p>✓ GFCI Protection</p>	<p>Hallways & Closets</p> <p>✓ AFCI Protection</p>
<p>Kitchens</p> <p>✓ AFCI Protection</p> <p>✓ GFCI Protection</p> <p>(Where the receptacles are installed to serve the countertop surfaces or where receptacles are installed within 6 feet of a sink)</p>	<p>Laundry Areas</p> <p>✓ AFCI Protection</p> <p>✓ GFCI Protection</p>	<p>Outdoors</p> <p>✓ GFCI Protection</p>

2020 National Electrical Code Highlights



All receptacles in homes, garages, accessory buildings, and common areas of multifamily homes must be protected by TRRs.



New and replaced service equipment are now required to be protected by **listed Type 1 or Type 2 Surge Protective Devices**.



Outdoor emergency disconnects are required for new construction and homes having their service replaced.



www.facebook.com/ESFI.org



www.twitter.com/ESFIdotorg



www.youtube.com/ESFIdotorg

MEMBERS IN FOCUS

Photos allow us to capture and recall a moment. In pictures, we relive a laugh, a smile, a winter snow or summer sun.

Members In Focus is your invitation to share those saved moments with members of Southwestern Electric.

In these pages, you can open our eyes to the people and places that mean the most to you. This is your opportunity to introduce *Southwestern* readers to everything that makes your corner of the world an exceptional place to live, work and play.

Send us your shots of life in Southwestern Illinois. We'll publish some of our favorite photos from time to time in our Members In Focus section. Your subject needn't be on

Southwestern's lines. If you've taken a great photo, and you shot it on the Highland town square instead of the Brownstown back forty, send it. We'd love to see it.

Submission Guidelines

Please include your name, address, phone number or e-mail address, and a brief description of the photo. We'd like to know when and where it was taken, what we're seeing, and the names of any people in your shot. Digital images must be taken in high-resolution JPG or TIF format (300 DPI or greater)—and make sure the date/time stamp is turned off before you shoot.

Digital images may be sent as e-mail attachments or on a CD. Prints are also

welcome. Send photos by e-mail to joe.richardson@sweci.com or by mail to *The Southwestern*, 525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246.

If you're sending prints, please make sure they're copies you don't mind parting with, as we won't be returning them.

Southwestern Electric Cooperative interprets all submissions as unconditional permission to use the photos provided. We also reserve the right to not use photos.

Finally, if you're submitting a shot, it needs to be *your* photo—shot by you. Questions? Contact Joe Richardson at joe.richardson@sweci.com or Mike Barns at mike.barns@sweci.com, or call (800) 637-8667.



Cristy Willman, wife of Michael Willman, vice president of operations for Southwestern Electric, snapped this photo of their grandchildren, Ruby and Beau Willman, a moment before splashdown. Ruby and Beau are the children of Ethan "Bubba" and Riley Willman of Greenville.



Judy Jenne of St. Peter, Ill., captured this white-tailed deer browsing near a Carlyle Lake campground near a Carlyle Lake campground on Independence Day in 2018.



Jim Wiemers of Dorsey shot this snow scenic in his backyard in December 2017. "It had just finished snowing, and I was stunned by the dramatic scene of the red ribbon against nothing but black, white and gray," he wrote. "It reminded me of some Christmas cards I've seen, so I used it as my Christmas card in 2018."



Karen Summers shot this striking photo (left) from the deck of her Maryville home in March.



Leisa Nesbit, wife of Southwestern maintenance foreman Rob Nesbit, caught these action shots (left and above) at their home in St. Jacob.

Home Sweet Home Office

by Julie Lowe, Energy Manager

You may be reading this in a home office that didn't exist two months ago. To curb the spread of coronavirus, many of us transitioned from an office building to a home workspace this spring. There are definite advantages to working from home. The dress code is likely less stringent; you can wear fuzzy slippers and pajama bottoms to the office and your cat doesn't care. You may have cut down your commute; the hour and twenty-minute drive over the river and into the city may have become a 60-second walk from room to room, kitchen coffee detour included.

But while you're saving on dry-cleaning and gasoline, working from home also means you're using more energy.

You may have adjusted your home's heating and cooling schedule. You're preparing more meals at home. You're using electronic devices to reach out to customers and stay connected to your company. And after hours, you're probably using some of those same devices to reach out to family and friends. You'll see that reflected on your bill.

Here are a few tips you can start using today to save energy—and money—while you're working from home.

UNPLUG DEVICES YOU DON'T NEED

After you shut down for the day, your home office may keep running. Your computer, monitor, printer, external hard drive and phone charger can draw energy whether you're using them or not, and that can add up on your power bill.

The simple solution? Unplug devices when you're done with them. Even if you're not actively using them, they're passively using electricity.

Don't want to build powering down into your routine? Simplify or automate it. Use a power strip as a master switch

to turn off your office tools. Or plug your devices into a smart power strip and let it shut down the office for you. Smart power strips cut power to devices that switch to standby mode, saving you time and money.

USE ENERGY-EFFICIENT EQUIPMENT

You've probably scouted for the ENERGY STAR label on appliances. You can buy ENERGY STAR-labeled office equipment as well. ENERGY STAR-certified office equipment uses about half the energy that standard office equipment does. On some devices, energy savings could be as much as 75 percent.

AIR FLOW

Make sure the connections at vents and registers are well-sealed where they meet the floors, walls and ceiling. These are common locations to find leaks and disconnected ductwork. Also make sure your vents are clear of any furniture or rugs to improve air flow and comfort. In winter, if your home has radiators, place

heat-resistant reflectors between the radiators and your walls. You can seal holes around outlets with inexpensive outlet gaskets.

DAY LIGHTS

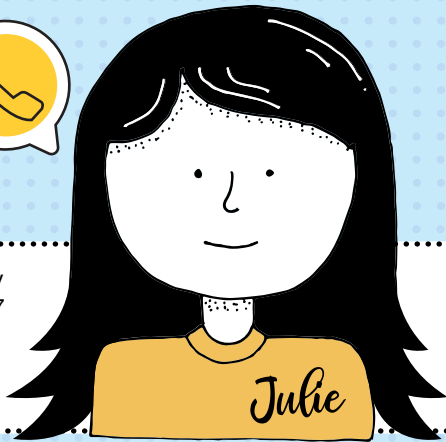
If your home workspace offers natural light, make the most of it. By combining sunlight and energy-efficient electric lighting, you can create an aesthetically pleasing environment that contributes to your productivity, while still saving energy.

If you're working on a computer, you may find a combination of natural light and illumination from your screen makes a comfortable combination. Position your display to avoid glare.

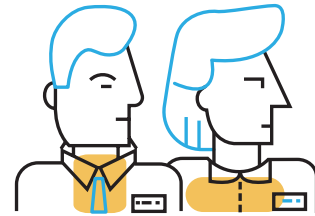
You may have excellent task lighting on hand, but even so, it's hard to beat natural light if you're working with print.



Steps to Solar Commissioning



Contact Julie Lowe, energy manager, at (800) 637-8667 or julie.lowe@sweci.com for our information and commissioning packet.



Contact your installer and insurance agent. Ask your installer for a one-line diagram. Request a certificate of insurance from your agent. They're welcome to send those documents to Julie Lowe at Southwestern Electric. Or if you'd like to review them, they can send them to you, and you can pass them along to Julie.



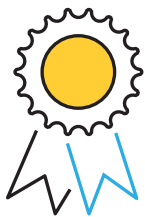
As your installation nears completion, call us. We'll discuss the commissioning timeline. You'll receive a \$500 invoice to cover the installation of your new dual register electric meter, a system inspection, and your array's interconnection to the grid.



After installation is complete, contact us to schedule your system's on-site review and commissioning.



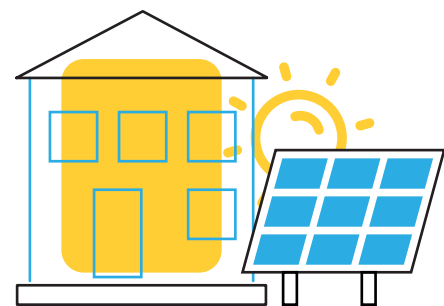
Our commissioning team will visit your site. An engineer will inspect your system to verify it meets our safety specifications. A team member will review a memorandum of understanding with you. You'll sign this document for our files. Note: If you won't be present for commissioning, please schedule a meeting to review and sign the memorandum beforehand. After your system passes inspection, you go live! Your array is connected to Southwestern's distribution system.



We'll send you a certificate of completion, which you'll submit to your installer to receive your solar renewable energy credits, or certificates (SRECs).



Each year, you'll submit documentation to confirm you've renewed your insurance.



Every three years, we'll visit your system to confirm it's connected properly, well-maintained, and that your safety signs are in place.

Do Your Homework

In March, millions of Americans picked up their laptops, printers, planners and a few favorite pens and pencils, and left the office. We migrated from downtown buildings, courthouse complexes and commercial sectors to spare rooms, studies, attics, outbuildings and basements—and we plugged in.

By early April we'd nested.

Some of us love it. Some of us hate it. But pretty much everyone working from home feels fortunate to be actively employed at a time when friends and family are furloughed.

As of this writing, in the ongoing effort to stem the spread of the coronavirus, Gov. Pritzker had extended the stay-at-home order in Illinois through April 30. With shelter-in-place orders in effect across most of the country, for many, working remotely shifted from optional to obligatory. Even after stay-at-home orders are lifted, many of us will continue to work from home more often, now that we've created a workspace and cultivated the practice.

While working from home may be convenient, it also presents heightened electrical safety concerns. Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI), a non-profit organization developed to promote electrical safety at home and in the workplace through education, awareness, and advocacy, created the infographic on the opposite page to highlight potential electrical safety hazards.

While home fires and fire-related injuries are decreasing, property damage and fire deaths are on the rise. Each year more than 35,000 home fires cause more than 1,130 injuries, 500 deaths, and \$1.4 billion in property damage. The ESFI

graphic highlights steps we can take to reduce fires, fatalities, injuries, and property loss. Please take a moment to review it.

In recent weeks, it's been common to hear people say, "Be safe out there." Be safe at home as well. The pointers on these pages will help you make working from home a healthy, safe experience.

ON SCHEDULE

Some of us are flexible and don't mind a change of venue. Others are more sensitive to disruptions in our daily routine. While your surroundings may have changed, you can preserve your work schedule. Maintain the start and stop times you observed at the office. Try to keep your break schedule in place. At what times do you perform particular job tasks? Who do you speak with regularly? Maintain those habits and relationships. You can take steps to keep the *who*, *what* and *when* of your schedule in place, even though you're working from a new *where*.

FACE TIME

Some of us savor solitude. But for many, face-to-face contact is a key part of the workday. Our coworkers are important to us personally as well as professionally. We may also rely on visual cues to hone messages or make sure we're being understood. If making a visual connection is important to you, propose a video call while you're keeping in contact with coworkers, clients and other members of your team. If you're going to suggest a call that includes video, make the visual component optional. Not everyone is comfortable appearing on camera—and some of your colleagues may have adopted bandannas and pajamas as business casual.

HOME STRETCH

Those office interruptions that arise at inopportune moments? You may find you miss them. The coworker who pulls you off-task for a walk around the block to talk out a client issue may be providing you with a much-needed break. Weave that downtime into the fabric of your day. Set a break timer on your PC or phone. Get up, stretch, walk around the house or take a turn around your yard. Have a glass of water or cup of tea. Time away from your task can make on-task time more productive.

SHIFT OUT OF DRIVE

If you've eliminated an hour commute, treat that time as a gift. Use the extra minutes to rejuvenate your body, mind and spirit. Read, move, meditate. In these days of elevated angst and uncertainty, do what you can to nourish a healthy mindset.





ELECTRICAL SAFETY

While Working From Home



Do you have a **home office** or **work from home**? Follow these **electrical safety tips** to keep you and your home safe from electrical hazards.



1



Avoid **overloading** outlets.

2



Unplug appliances when not in use to save energy and minimize the risk of shock and fire.

3



Regularly inspect electrical cords and extension cords for damage.

4



Extension cords should only be used on a **temporary basis**.

5



Never plug a space heater or fan into an **extension cord** or **power strip**.

6



Never run cords under **rugs / carpets, doors, or windows**.

7



Plug in smartly. Make sure cords do not become tripping hazards.

8



Keep papers and other potential combustibles at least **three feet** away from space heaters and other heat sources.

9



Make sure you use **proper wattage** for lamps / lighting.

10



Make sure your home has **smoke alarms**. Test them monthly, change batteries yearly, and replace the unit every 10 years.

Wherever you work, it's always important to be safe.



www.facebook.com/ESFi.org



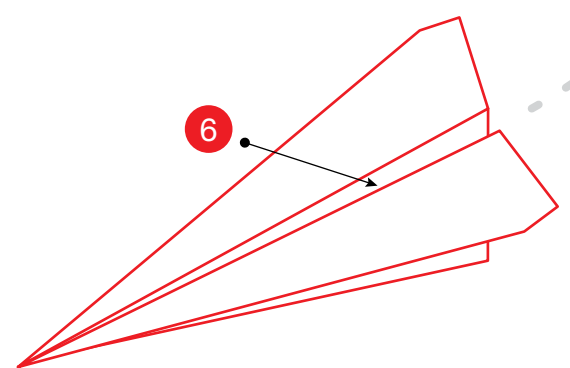
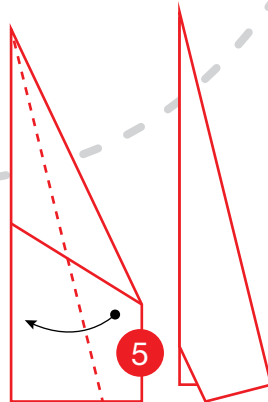
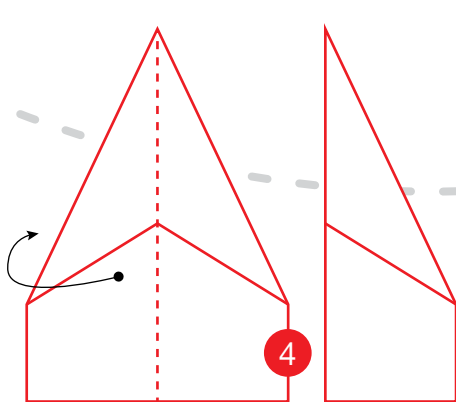
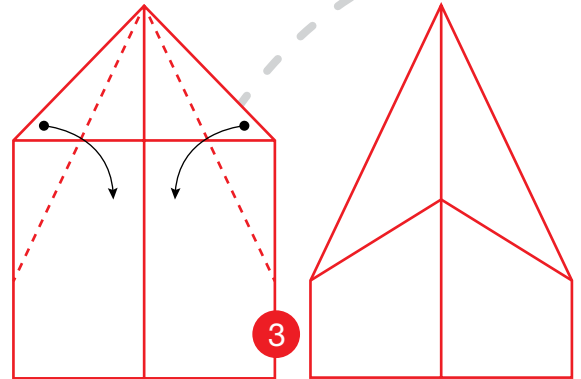
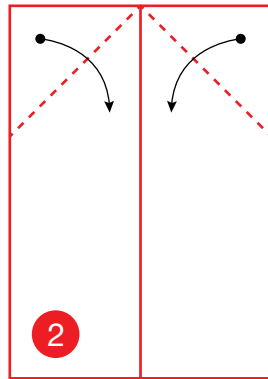
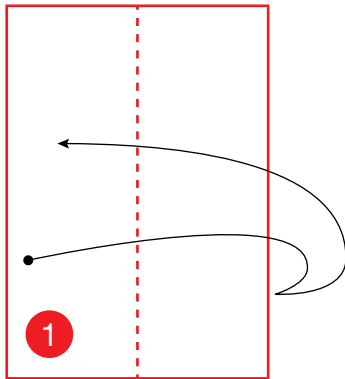
www.twitter.com/ESFIdotorg



www.youtube.com/ESFIdotorg

AT HOME

FLIGHT SCHOOL



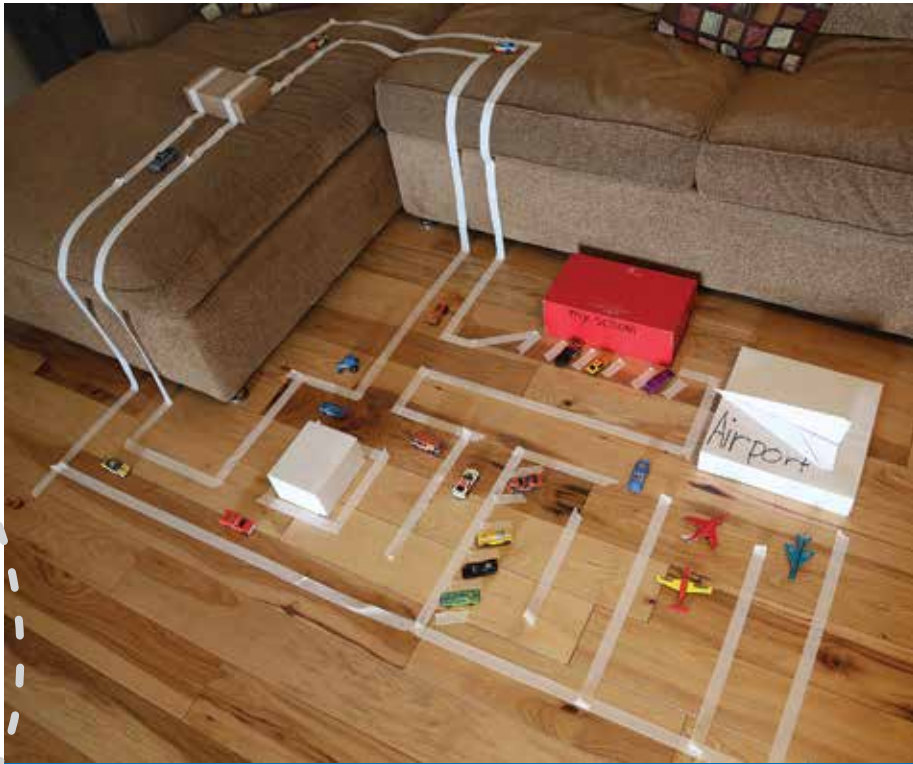
BUILD YOUR OWN AIRPLANE

1. Fold the paper in half lengthwise.
2. Unfold the paper and fold each of the top corners into the center line.
3. Now fold the top edges into the center line.
4. Fold the plane in half lengthwise.
5. Now fold the wings down, lining the top edge of each wing with the bottom edge of the body.
6. Add double stick tape to the inside of the body. The finished plane should look like this.



PILOT PRACTICE

1. Using removable tape, make three boxes nested inside each other.
2. Pick a place to serve as your launching point. To make the game challenging, try different distances.
3. Try to land your airplane in the center box. Be safe. Never throw your plane at pets, friends and family, or air traffic controllers.
4. The center box is worth three points. The middle box is worth two points. The outer box is worth one point.
5. The first player to reach 21 points wins.



BUILD A WORLD

A Stay-At-Home Project for Kids and Grown-Ups

INSTRUCTIONS FOR GROWN-UPS

Here's an easy project you can do with things you probably have at home. If you don't have tape or your floors are carpeted, you can build roads by lining up LEGOs or paperback books. You can also create streets and cityscapes by cutting apart paper sacks and drawing and coloring on them with your kids. Your do-it-yourself cityscape doesn't need to be perfect to be fun. Part of the enjoyment is seeing what you can create with what you have at hand.

Take your time. Engage your imagination. And enjoy an activity that calls you away from the noise of the day, and into a world of your child's making.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR KIDS

Please read these instructions with the grown-up or grown-ups in your home. Some parts of this activity may be hard for them to do. They may not get to use their imagination often. It may be dusty. With your help and a little practice, their pretendability can shine. Thank you for your help!

1. Using removable tape, create your own roads or pathways. Use boxes, bowls, cups and toys (sturdy stuff that won't break) to build your city.
2. Make your roads wide enough for your favorite toys. Cars, planes, tractors, trucks, Nile crocodiles—it's your world, and the way it works is up to you. Maybe your roads move up furniture or around shoes. Maybe the people or creatures in your world don't drive cars. They ride horses. Or fly dragons. Or skate. They can still use paths to lead them home. You can send them on adventures and bring them back safe.
3. Would you like to share the world you built with people who read this magazine? Ask the grown-up you helped with this project to email a project photo to joe.richardson@sweci.com. If your family would like to be in the photo, we'd love to include them. Make sure we can see them and the world you built, and that everyone knows the picture is for our magazine (some people are shy about things like that).

CREATE YOUR OWN BOOKMARK

1. Carefully cut out the bookmark pattern by following the dotted line with your safety scissors.
2. Place the pattern on a blank sheet of paper or construction paper. Almost any color will do.
3. Trace the pattern with a pencil or crayon.
4. Remove the pattern and carefully cut out your bookmark with your safety scissors by following the line you drew.
5. Decorate your bookmark with colorful drawings or stickers.
6. Now find a good book and read, read, read! When you're ready to stop, tuck your trusty bookmark inside and you'll know where to pick up the story next time.

Bookmarks also make great gifts for your family and friends.



WHO • WHAT • WHERE



It's difficult to envision Illinois as it stood 200 years ago. It was a land of prairie grass and hardwood forest, of sprawling streams and unmarked skies, of unchecked beauty, and violence. The monument that served as our April challenge is a testament to the sudden and brutal end that could come to a quiet life in the days before Illinois achieved statehood.

The Wood River Massacre monument was erected Sept. 11, 1910. An inscription on the monument reads: To the memory of the victims of the Wood River Massacre July 10, 1814, William & Joel aged 10 & 8 yrs. Sons of Capt. Abel & Mary Moore. John & George Moore aged 10 & 3 yrs sons of William Moore. Rachel Reagan & her children Elizabeth & Timothy aged 7 & 3 yrs. Dedicated Sept. 11, 1910, by the descendants of Capt. Abel Moore.

The marker stands on Fosterburg Road near the Hilltop Auction and Banquet House. While the history is notable, we don't recommend the marker as a destination for history aficionados. Traffic on Fosterburg Road moves swiftly and there's no comfortable place to park without encroaching on private property.

A second monument (lower left) was dedicated September 24, 1980, in an area more amenable to public viewing. The memorial is on Highway 140 across from Gordon Moore Alton Community Park. The park, the monument, and a nearby historic cemetery and nature area are well worth a visit, once we're safe to get out and roam.

Thanks to everyone who submitted a response to our April challenge. You've a Southwestern Electric member to thank for this month's puzzle. We'll tell you more in June. Can you identify the item on the opposite page? We look forward to your responses.

Meanwhile, here's what you had to say about last month's puzzle.

That's the wood river massacre monument, it's on Fosterburg Road in Alton. I helped paint it once as part of my friend Ryan's Eagle Scout project!
 —Aaron T. Leese, Edwardsville

The monument to the victims of the Wood River Massacre is located in front of the Hilltop Auction & Banquet Center, 2612 Fosterburg Road, Alton. Thanks for your great publication!
 —Cindi Longwisch, Edwardsville

I believe the memorial to Capt. Moore and family is located in Alton, Ill.
 —Effie Volberg, Pocahontas

This month's Who-What-Where is the monument memorializing the Wood River massacre. It's not actually in Wood River—the monument is in Alton, in the corner of Hilltop Auction & Banquet

Center off Fosterburg Road. There used to be two little deer statues standing right by the pillar. We drive by it almost every day!
 —Alyssa Overmann, Bethalto

The April 2020 "Where Are We?" challenge can be found in Upper Alton, Illinois.

On July 10, 1814 what came to be known as "The Wood River Massacre" took place at the forks of the Wood River, east of Upper Alton. The monument pictured, dedicated by descendants of Capt. Abel Moore on Sept. 11, 1910, sits in front of the Hilltop Auction and Banquet Center, just 300 yards from where the massacre occurred.

On that fateful Sunday, the massacre resulted in the death of one woman and six children.
 —Bill Malec, O'Fallon

On Account: If your account number is 77435001, call us within 30 days to receive a \$25 credit on an upcoming electric bill.

What am I?



Who-What-Where is a contest that challenges your knowledge of people, places and objects in and around Southwestern Electric Cooperative's service area. Here's how it works: Each month, we run a photo. Your job is to tell us who's pictured, what we've photographed, or where we shot the photo. You can email your response to joe.richardson@sweci.com or send it by mail to Joe Richardson, Southwestern Electric Cooperative, 525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246. Please include your name, mailing address, and hometown. If you have a story about our photo topic, include that as well—we love these! The puzzle solution—possibly accompanied by a few words from you—will appear in a future issue of *The Southwestern*.

Cabinet Quesadilla

Ingredients

- Soft Flour Tortilla Shells
- Nut butter, chocolate-hazelnut spread, or cream cheese
- Toppings: banana slices, fresh berries sliced if needed, apple slices, granola, chocolate chips, marshmallows, nuts, or whatever sounds good (all optional)

Directions

1. Spread tortilla with nut butter, chocolate-hazelnut spread, or cream cheese.
2. Cover with your favorite toppings.
3. Fold over tortilla and cook in toaster oven or greased skillet until tortilla is lightly browned.

Have a recipe to share?

Please mail recipes to: Co-op Kitchen, Southwestern Electric Cooperative, 525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246. Or you're welcome to email recipes to Mike Barns at mike.barns@sweci.com. When you send your recipe, remember to include your name and hometown so we can credit you in print. If you've taken a photo of your dish, you're welcome to include that as well. Thanks for sharing. We look forward to dining with you.





Investigate with P.I. Plug

What's different between these two homes?
Help find the safety features and electrical hazards.

Have an adult test smoke alarms monthly to make sure that they are working properly. Remember to replace their batteries at least once a year.

Water and electricity do not mix. Keep electrical appliances away from the sink or bathtub.

Are the lights in your home flickering? Is the power going out regularly? These are signs of a potential electrical problem.

ESFi





Electrifying **ELECTRICITY!**

When Benjamin Franklin discovered electricity in the mid-1700s, he may have guessed that it would one day become one of our most frequently used forms of energy. Electricity is now used to light and heat our homes and to help us cook or cool our food. It's easy to take electricity for granted, but you shouldn't!

Space heaters will warm you up, but keep them away from drapes, your bed, clothing, and furniture. These heaters can burn anything they touch, and they even get hot enough to start a fire!

Damaged electrical cords are dangerous. Always have an adult unplug appliances by pulling the plug from an electrical outlet, not the cord.

LINEWORKER GEAR WORD SEARCH

Did you know lineworkers wear special protective gear to keep them safe while working on power lines and other electrical equipment?

Read the descriptions to learn about a lineworker's gear and find the bolded words in the puzzle below.

Safety goggles keep debris away from lineworkers' eyes while on the job.

Hard hats protect lineworkers from head injuries and falling debris.

Work boots provide extra protection while lineworkers work with heavy materials that could fall near their feet.

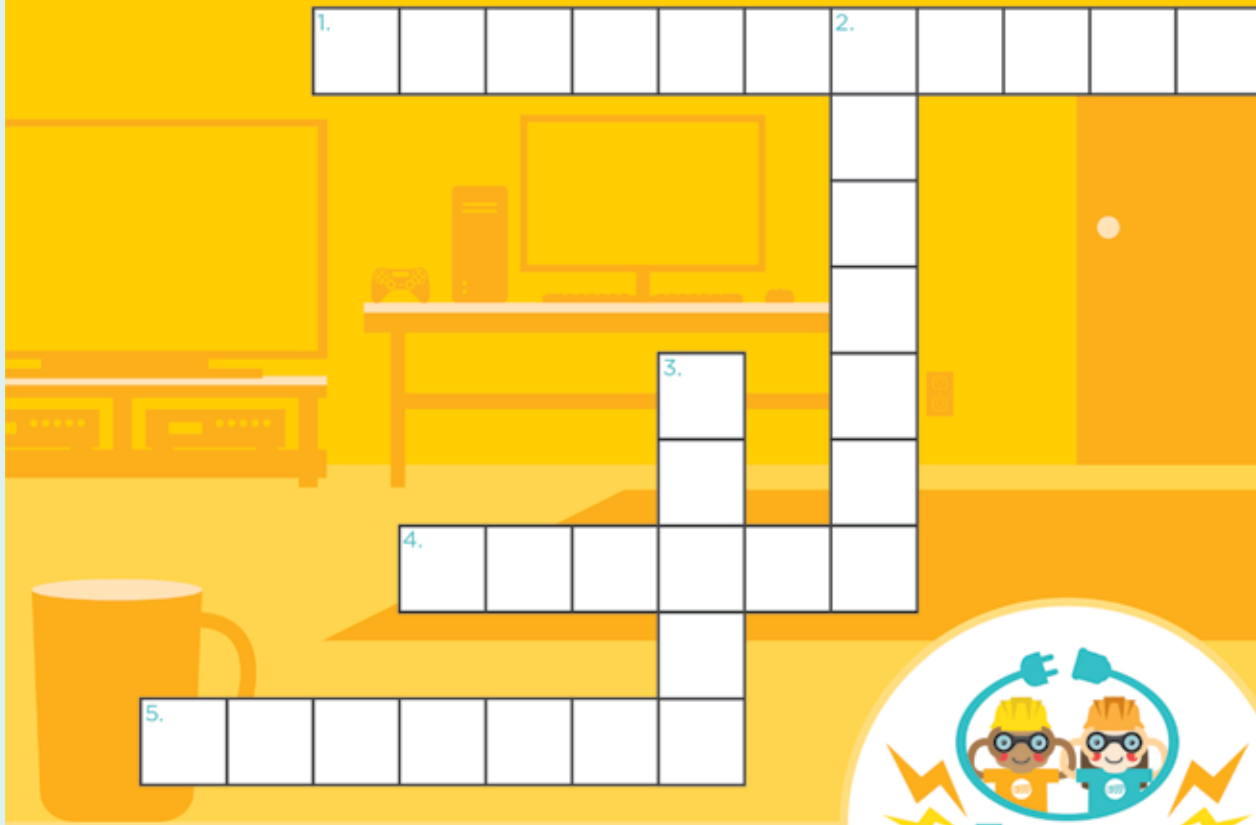
Flame-resistant clothing keeps lineworkers safe from electrical hazards.

Insulated gloves protect lineworkers from electrical shock while working on power lines.

Equipment belts hold several tools that lineworkers need to get the job done.

W Z M H V R H O H E L R M T Y
 S O D O G T E B A A V E Y J I
 T G R V F G R S R A E X Y I B
 X N I K F T E T D P F F M X G
 S P A X B E G L H B P D L N F
 Q N Z T E O F E A O S S K Y C
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ELECTRICAL SAFETY CROSSWORD PUZZLE




May is Electrical Safety Month!

Read the safety tips below to complete the crossword puzzle.

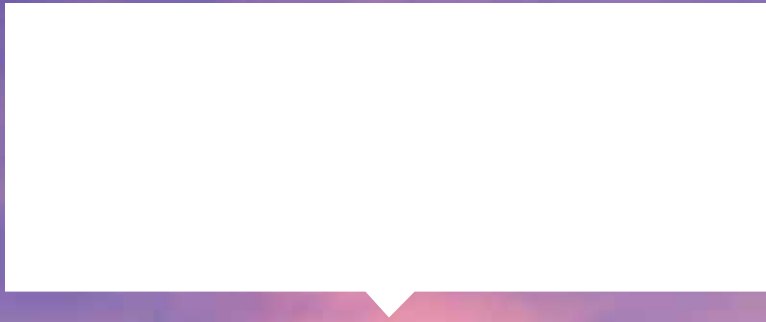
- 1. ACROSS:** Keep all liquids away from _____, like TVs, computers and gaming consoles.
- 2. DOWN:** Never overload electrical _____. This creates a greater risk of fire.
- 3. DOWN:** Never use electrical _____ that feel warm to the touch or are damaged in any way.
- 4. ACROSS:** Smoke _____ should be installed in every bedroom, outside each sleeping area and on every level of your home.
- 5. ACROSS:** Don't run electrical cords under rugs. This creates potential fire _____.

1. electronics 2. outlets 3. cords 4. alarms 5. hazards **ANSWER KEY**

A photograph of a swampy forest. Tall, slender trees with textured bark stand in shallow water. The water is calm, reflecting the trees and the sky. A small, white birdhouse with a pointed roof is mounted on a tree trunk in the middle ground. The background is a dense wall of green foliage. The overall scene is quiet and somewhat somber.

Lights out,
hidden at home,
a resident of
Altamont's
Ballard Nature
Center practices
social distancing.

THE FINAL FRAME



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