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Although EnerStar Electric Cooperative works hard to maintain our equipment, monitor power delivery 24/7, and do all we can to keep the lights on, there are circumstances beyond our control that can interfere with power delivery. Winter weather is one example. Winter storms can impact the distribution of electricity due to ice, heavy winds, sleet and other extreme conditions.

Besides causing outages, wintery conditions can cause hiccups with power delivery that include blinking lights, or ebbs and flows in the amount of power that comes into your home. Although blinking lights can be a symptom of other problems such as loose wiring connections or overloaded circuits, they can also be caused by extreme weather.

**Ice/freezing rain**

Ice accumulation on power lines makes them heavy. Half an inch of ice can add as much as 500 pounds to a power line. This added weight can impact power distribution and even bring down a power line. Ice that forms on power lines also increases its surface area, which means gusts of wind have more to catch. The weight of ice on tree limbs can cause them to fall on power lines as well.

**Wind**

Wind can cause tree branches to brush power lines, which can result in

blinking or flickering lights. Therefore, it's important for us to keep trees cleared around power lines and poles. In addition, heavy winds can cause lines to move and sway. If they gain enough momentum, they can gallop or jump. This can cause disruptions in service since the motion can cause lines to break or make contact with each other.

**Melting ice**

Melting ice can be heavy, putting extra strain on power lines and causing the lines to touch or rest on one another. Because of this, melting ice can cause outages even though the temperature is rising. Depending on conditions, melting ice can cause as many or more problems than the ice itself and days after the weather event.

**Tree branches**

In any weather, tree-related issues cause the most power outages in many service areas. Branches, limbs or even tree trunks can fall into power lines and cause problems. Add wind, freezing rain or ice to the mix for an increased potential for problems.

**Icy roads**

Vehicles that slide on ice or collide with one another can strike a power pole or pad-mounted transformer, causing an outage or other problems.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

11597 Illinois Highway 1  
Paris, IL 61944  
800-635-4145  
Monday through Friday  
7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

*Continued on page 18C*

# Petitions available for June 2025 board elections

EnerStar Electric Cooperative's Annual Meeting of Members is set for June 7, 2025, and cooperative members have the opportunity to run in the upcoming board of directors election. Members who are eligible candidates and can commit the time and energy to the member-owned corporation may want to consider this opportunity.

The role of director is a significant commitment – of time, energy and education – more than most members realize. Thankfully, there are members who are willing to serve in this important capacity. Decisions made can affect the membership into the next generation.

For the 2025 election, EnerStar has three director seats, which are three year terms in Districts A3, B6 and C8.

Members interested in running for the board should contact the cooperative office to verify eligibility and receive a petition packet. The packet includes all the necessary information one would need to learn more about the cooperative and the role of the director.

Board petitions require the signatures of 15 EnerStar members who live in the candidate's voting district. All members signing petitions must have an original membership card on file and must be currently receiving electricity from the cooperative. Candidates will also need to check with cooperative



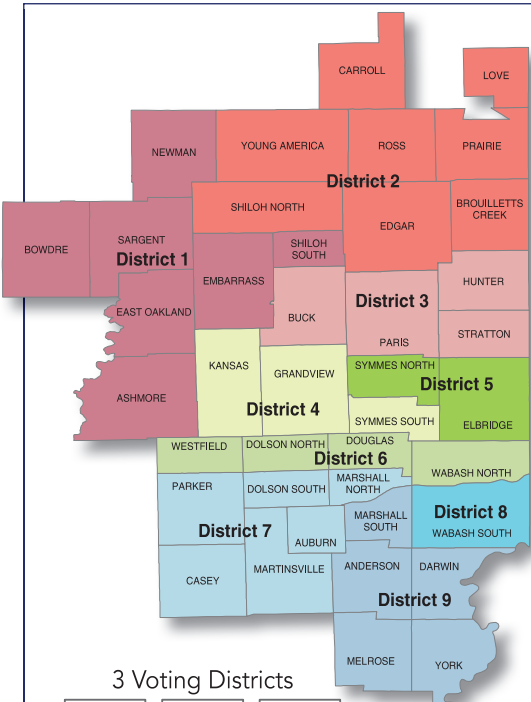
personnel to make certain they reside within the correct Representative District. Petition packets will be available beginning **February 21, 2025.**

Completed petitions may be turned in to the cooperative office from

**March 24, 2025 to April 8, 2025.**

Candidates should also provide a short biographical sketch, 250 words or less, and a digital photo to be published with the Annual Meeting Notice. Candidates should also make plans to attend the 2025 Annual Meeting of Members on **Saturday, June 7, 2025.**

The tentative mailing date of the official notice of the meeting will be late April.



3 Voting Districts		
A	B	C
1	4	7
2	5	8
3	6	9

Voting Districts A, B, and C each contain three Representative Districts in shades of red, green, and blue, respectively.

## 2025 elections

### Representative Board District Descriptions 3-year terms

#### ✓ Voting District A3

**District 3 - Currently served by Granville Colvin, Paris**  
The Townships of Buck, Paris, Hunter, and Stratton in Edgar County, Illinois

#### ✓ Voting District B6

**District 6 - Currently served by Jeff Murphy, Marshall**  
The Townships of Westfield and Douglas in Clark County, Illinois; all that portion of the Township of Dolson lying north of the 2000th Road in Clark County, Illinois; and all that portion of the Township of Wabash lying north of Interstate Highway 70 in Clark County, Illinois

#### ✓ Voting District C8

**District 8 - Currently served by Greg Robinson, Marshall**  
All that portion of the Township of Wabash lying south of Interstate Highway 70 in Clark County, Illinois

Be sure to have a storm preparedness kit ready before a storm strikes to help get you and your family through a power outage. Items to gather include bottled water, non-perishable food, blankets, warm clothing, hand sanitizer, first aid kit/medicine, flashlight, radio, back-up phone chargers, extra batteries and toiletries.

Regardless of the reason for a power outage, know that when the lights go out, even during extreme weather, EnerStar is doing all we can to restore power safely and efficiently. To learn more about preparing for storms and electrical safety, go to [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

**Considering a career  
as a lineworker?**

**Apply today for a  
\$2,000 scholarship!**

The \$2,000 LaVern and Nola McEntire Memorial Lineworker's Scholarship will help pay for costs to attend the lineworker's school conducted by the AIEC in conjunction with Lincoln Land Community College in Springfield, IL. Apply online by April 30, 2025.



## CARTER HAYS



## Third Step Apprentice

Congratulations to EnerStar's Carter Hays for completing the steps necessary to advance to a 3rd step apprentice lineman.

Keep up the great work, Carter!

BEST BETS FOR

## Winter Savings

Energy consumption spikes during winter months as we spend more time indoors and heating systems work overtime. You can help reduce demand and strain on the electric grid by conserving during peak energy times. Reducing energy use will also help lower your energy bills.

### UNPLUG WHEN POSSIBLE



Turn off unnecessary lights and electronics when you aren't using them.

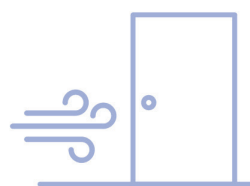


### MAINTAIN HEATING EQUIPMENT

Maintain your heating system by replacing dirty, clogged filters and scheduling an annual inspection for necessary maintenance.

### ELIMINATE DRAFTS AND AIR LEAKS

Seal air leaks and drafts around windows and exterior doors.



### USE APPLIANCES WHEN ENERGY DEMAND IS LOWER

Run large appliances like clothes washers, dryers and dishwashers early in the morning or before you go to bed.



### LOWER THE THERMOSTAT

Home heating accounts for a large portion of energy consumption. Adjust your thermostat to the lowest comfortable setting (68 degrees or lower).





# Know the signs of a scam

It's no secret that consumers with a water, gas or electricity connection have long been targets for utility scams, but fraudsters have changed their tactics since the pandemic. As consumers became more reliant on technology for work, school and commerce, scammers noted these shifts and adapted their tactics to this changed environment.

Imposter scams are the No. 1 type of fraud reported to the Federal Trade Commission. While scam artists may come to your door posing as a utility worker who works for the "power company," in today's more connected world, attempts are more likely to come through an electronic device, via email, phone or text.

A scammer may claim you are overdue on your electric bill and threaten to disconnect your service if you don't pay immediately. Whether this is done in person or by phone, text or email, the scammers want to scare you into immediate payment so you don't have time to think clearly.

If this happens over the phone, simply hang up. If you're concerned about your bill, call the co-op at 800-635-4145. Our phone number

can also be found on your monthly bill and on our website, [www.enerstar.com](http://www.enerstar.com). You can also use our Smart Hub to check your account status. Remember, EnerStar will never attempt to demand immediate payment after just one notice.

Some scammers may falsely claim you have been overcharged on your bill and say they want to give you a refund. It sounds easy. All you have to do is click or press a button to initiate the process. If you proceed, you will be prompted to provide banking or other personal information. Instead of money going into your bank account, the scammers can drain your account and use personal information such as a social security number for identity theft.

If this "refund" scam happens over the phone, just hang up and block the phone number to prevent future robocalls. If this scam attempt occurs via email (known as a "phishing" attempt) or by text ("smishing"), do not click any links. Instead, delete it, and if possible, block the sender. If you overpay your energy bill, EnerStar will automatically apply the credit to your next billing cycle. When in doubt, contact us.

## TIPS TO AVOID ENERGY SCAMS

Scammers will try anything to deceive utility customers, including a tactic that claims customers have overpaid their bill. If you receive a call, text or email from someone claiming you overpaid a utility bill and need to provide your banking or credit card information to receive a credit, it's likely a scam. In most cases, your utility will apply a credit to your account to cover future charges or refund an overpayment with a mailed check.

*Source: Utilities United Against Scams*



Sign up for



Manage all aspects of your account with ease using SmartHub!



Whether you prefer to use the web portal available at [www.enerstar.com](http://www.enerstar.com) or the SmartHub app on your mobile device, you can access many features that simplify managing your account. You can effortlessly pay your bill, track energy usage, report power outages, manage power notifications, and more. We want to thank our many members who are already using the app. If you still need to sign up, we encourage you to do so today!

Scan this QR code to download SmartHub on your mobile device.

