

# Norris Electric

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

## Norris Electric Cooperative

8543 N St Hwy 130  
Newton, IL 62448

**Phone:** 618-783-8765  
or **Toll-Free:**  
1-877-783-8765

**Report an Outage:**  
1-877-783-3221

**Office Hours:**  
Monday – Thursday  
7 a.m. – 5 p.m.


**Chairman**  
Gordon McClure .....Jasper

**Vice Chairman**  
Justin Parcel..... Clark

**Secretary/Treasurer**  
Ted Helmink ..... Cumberland

**Directors**  
Ava Lemmon .....Crawford  
Dean Dietrich..... Richland  
Kurt Holscher .....Crawford  
Gilbert Garbe..... Effingham  
Scott Weiss.....Lawrence  
Dan Strine ..... Wabash  
Dave Sheppard.....Jasper  
Ron Viehman.....Lawrence

**General Manager**  
Tamara Phillips



## YOU GET THE CREDIT

**Norris Electric retires \$1,270,012.23 in capital credits**

Norris Electric is a cooperative, which makes it different from other utilities in many ways. One of the biggest examples of this difference is capital credits. This year, the cooperative is retiring \$1,270,012.23 worth of capital credits to members who bought electricity in 1985.

Most companies charge above and beyond what it actually costs them to run their business so they can generate profits for their investors. Norris does not operate this way. As a cooperative, Norris operates at cost. Its rates are set to collect enough revenue to run and improve the business, not to generate profits for shareholders.

Each year, if there is excess revenue, it is divided and allocated as capital credits among all of Norris' members. The dollar amount is based on how much electricity

each member purchased that year. When the financial condition of the cooperative permits, these capital credits are "retired," or paid, to the members as a check or bill credit.

Members with an active account will get a refund in the form of a credit on their October bill. If a member has multiple accounts, credits will be consolidated and applied to the primary account. All inactive members will receive a check in the mail. These checks will be mailed Oct. 3.

If you move from Norris Electric lines, please keep us up to date with your current address so we can ensure you receive your refunded capital credit checks.

If you have any questions, contact our office at 618-783-8765 or email [capitalcredits@norriselectric.com](mailto:capitalcredits@norriselectric.com).

## Alerts & Reminders

Norris Electric offers many ways to pay your bill, but did you know there are numerous ways to receive notifications regarding your account? Through the Alerts & Reminders option, you can receive a text or email for:

- Due Date Reminder
- Past Due Date Reminder
- Account Profile Change

- Returned Check Alert
- Payment Confirmation
- High Energy Usage Alert
- Outage Declared Alert
- Outage Restored Alert

Call our office to get set up to start receiving your alerts and reminders today! 877-783-8765

# Four Ways to Boost Your Cyber Hygiene

October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month



In today's digital world, cyberattacks are unfortunately nothing new. Cyber criminals can attack on a multitude of levels, from large-scale attacks targeting corporations to smaller phishing attacks aimed to gain an individual's personal information.

October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month, but good cyber hygiene should be practiced year-round. This year's theme is "See Yourself in Cyber" – because we all have a part to play in cybersecurity. When we hear about massive data breaches, it can feel overwhelming and lead us to think we're powerless as individuals to stop cyber criminals.

The truth is, there are several practical steps we can take to safeguard our devices and data. Here are four easy ways to boost your cyber hygiene:

## 1. Enable multi-factor authentication.

Also known as two-step verification, multi-factor authentication adds a second step when logging into an account (to prove you're really you), which greatly increases the security of the account. This second step could include an extra PIN, answering an extra security question, a code received via email or a secure

token. Regardless of the type of authentication, this additional step makes it twice as hard for cyber criminals to access your account. Not every account offers multi-factor authentication, but it's becoming increasingly popular and should be utilized when available.

## 2. Use strong passwords and a password manager.

Remember, passwords are the "keys" to your personal home online. Your passwords should always be long, unique and complex. Create passwords using at least 12 characters, never reuse passwords for multiple accounts and use a combination of upper- and lower-case letters, numbers and special characters. If you have a lot of accounts, consider using a password manager to store them easily and securely in one place.

## 3. Update software.

It may seem obvious, but regularly updating software is one of the easiest ways to keep your personal information secure. Most companies provide automatic updates and will send reminders so you can easily install the update. If you're not receiving automatic software updates, set

a reminder to do so quarterly. Be aware that some cyber criminals will send fake updates; these typically appear as a pop-up window when visiting a website. Use good judgment and always think before you click.

## 4. Recognize and report phishing attacks.

Don't take the bait when cyber criminals go phishing. The signs of a phishing attack can be subtle, so take the extra time to thoroughly inspect emails. Most phishing emails include offers that are too good to be true, an urgent or alarming tone, misspellings and poorly-crafted language, ambiguous greetings, strange requests or an email address that doesn't match the company it's coming from. Most platforms like Outlook, Gmail and Mac Mail allow users to report phishing emails. If you suspect a phishing attempt, take an extra minute to report it.

Cyber criminals are here to stay, but when we all take a risk-based approach to our cyber behavior, we're creating a safer internet for all. Visit [www.staysafeonline.org](http://www.staysafeonline.org) for additional cybersecurity tips.

## Residential electric heat rate available

Norris Electric offers an electric heat rate? The rate is available to residential members of the cooperative for uses where electricity is the sole source of all space heating energy. The heat source must be for the whole house and permanently installed. Types of electric heat which qualify include geothermal heat pumps, air source heat pumps and electric furnaces.

The only obligation is the member must continue the electric heat rate for 12-month increments.

The electric heat rate offers a lower rate in the winter months that more than offsets the slightly higher summer rate when compared to our standard rate.

Call our office today at 877-783-8765 for a rate comparison and see if you can start saving money on your electric bill!

**These members are paying their electric bill while on vacation...**



**because they use the Norris App**

**Download it now and move on with life.**

# Decorate and trick-or-treat safely this Halloween



Halloween is a time for candy, costumes and in some cases, outdoor lighting or inflatable decorations. While preparing for and enjoying the holiday, follow these safety precautions:

## Outdoor lighting

- Inspect each electrical decoration. Check cords for cracking, fraying or bare wires, as they may cause a serious shock or start a fire. Also, inspect for damaged plugs.
- Replace any damaged decorations.
- Make sure any lights, animated displays or other electrical outdoor products are safety tested by a reputable laboratory such as UL (Underwriters Laboratory) and approved for outdoor use.
- Do not overload extension cords or allow them to run through water on the ground.
- Plug outdoor electric lights and decorations into ground fault circuit interrupter-protected outlets.
- When decorating outside, always make sure to look up and check that you and any equipment, such as ladders, are at least 10 feet away from overhead power lines. Always carry a ladder or other long object or tool in a horizontal position.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the Consumer Product Safety Division and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offer these tips:

## Costume safety

- Wear costumes that are labeled flame resistant.
- Wear bright, reflective costumes or add strips of reflective tape for added visibility.
- Do not wear decorative (colored) contact lenses unless you have seen an eye care professional for a proper fitting and instructions on how to use them.
- Wear makeup and hats rather than costume masks that can obscure or obstruct your vision.
- Test the makeup you plan to use in advance for a possible allergy by putting a small amount on your arm.

## Food safety

- Do not let your little ones (or anyone) eat candy or other treats until they have been inspected at home.
- Check all labels for potential food allergens.
- If you have very young trick-or-treaters, remove any choking hazards such as gum, peanuts, hard candies or small toys from the goodie pile.
- Inspect commercially wrapped treats for signs of tampering, such as tiny pinholes, tears in wrappers or anything unusual.
- Limit your risk of questionable candy by only ringing doorbells attached to homes you know.

Enjoy treats and decorate safely. Get more electrical safety tips at [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

With winter weather on the way, now is the time to seal drafty windows. If you can see daylight around a window frame or if you can rattle a window (movement means possible leaks), the window likely needs to be sealed.

Most window leaks can be sealed with caulk or weatherstripping, which come in a variety of compounds and materials. Visit [www.energy.gov/energysaver](http://www.energy.gov/energysaver) to learn how and where to seal air leaks.

Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)



# WHEN POWER LINES COME DOWN



# STAY AWAY

A variety of conditions or scenarios can result in a downed power line. Sometimes downed lines are visible while other times they are hidden by ice, snow, branches or storm debris.

Collisions with a pole or padmount transformer can cause the ground and objects to become energized. Regardless of the cause, always consider a downed line or damaged equipment energized and deadly.

If you are in a car accident involving a downed line, stay in the cab or car and wait until someone from the electric utility says it is safe to get out.

**Call 9-1-1 to report a downed or damaged power line. Stay away and alert others to do the same.**

Remember, if there is a downed line, stay away! Electricity can jump from a wire or object to you to find the quickest path to ground.

Learn more at:



**If you see a downed or damaged power line or pole or a dislodged electrical cabinet:**

- Do not go near it.
- Do not touch it.
- Do not try to move it with another object.
- Do not touch items that could be energized.



**Norris Electric's office will be closed Monday, Oct. 10 in observance of Columbus Day.**