

Norris Electric

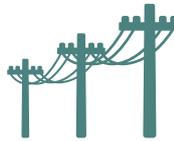
Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

News

October is National Co-op Month and we want our members to get to know us.



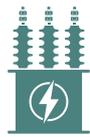
Norris Electric services over
4,100
miles of energized line
in 8 counties



We do not have customers...we have
19,786
members



31
substations feed our members



There are
58 employees who help
keep your lights on



Norris is governed by
11 elected board
of directors



Norris Electric has the
lowest Residential
Cooperative Rate
in the state of Illinois



Norris Electric is your
energy advisor. We are
here to help with energy
efficiency and renewable
energy questions.



Annual Meeting of Members
is held in February
(watch for more details)

October is National Co-op Month.

Electric co-ops are proud to power more than 20 million American homes, businesses, farms and schools in 48 states.

County	Meters Served	Board Director
Clark	1344	Justin Parcel
Crawford	4382	Gary Buser and Kurt Holscher
Cumberland	2025	Ted Helmink
Effingham	5331	Gilbert Garbe
Jasper	3700	Gordon McClure and Dave Sheppard
Lawrence	2949	Ron Viehman and Scott Weiss
Richland	2653	Dean Dietrich
Wabash	398	Dan Strine

Smart devices: *They're definitely smart, but not always secure*

For many of us, buying and using technology to make our homes smarter and interconnected is as tempting as walking through a candy store as a kid.

Although not found in every household, many U.S. homes have one or two components, such as a smart security system complete with cameras, a smart thermostat or a know-it-all “voice assistant” such as Amazon’s Alexa. The rest of our homes range from doing things the old fashioned way (no smart devices at all) to having a home decked out in every smart technology one could imagine.

According to Statista, a company specializing in market and consumer data, North Americans are forecast to spend \$63 billion in the smart home market in 2022. And that’s nothing to sneeze at. (But if we do, millions of Americans may hear Alexa say, “Bless you.”)

Although convenient – who doesn’t want real-time glimpses of who is ringing our doorbell or to hear Google Assistant recite a recipe – smart devices come with their own set of security concerns.

Canada’s CBC News hired hackers (ethically responsible ones of course) to hack a family’s smart home and they got in, literally. “All it took was a white van, a team of three hackers and a phishing email to remotely unlock the front door.”



Cybersecurity Tip

Create long passwords that only you will remember and change them every six months. Remember, a strong password is at least 12 characters long.

This eye-opening scenario is not intended to scare people; rather we encourage you to give your smart devices serious thought before diving in. Security measures for smart devices are similar to the steps we should take in our daily life to protect us against seedy scammers and hackers everywhere.

For example, be leery of emails or calls asking for personal information such as login info or passwords. And although everyone loves to use the same passwords like “abc123” for everything, doing so can make your smart devices vulnerable. (Note: it’s not a good idea to use “abc123.” Be creative and make them hard to crack.) And although it seems obvious, never use the factory-set password; change it immediately.

Many tech companies are considering (and others have already

switched) to two-step authentication for the smart devices they sell. Although the extra step can feel like a pain, the two-step process is a good thing; it is a valuable step in keeping you and your family safe and your conversations private.

Without the code provided in the second security step, outsiders can’t access your device or account — even if they guessed your SweetHomeAlabama1973 password (or whatever).

For more in-depth technology advice, consult an IT professional. For more information about electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org. And if your password is actually SweetHomeAlabama1973, we apologize; it was used for illustrative purposes only.



Keep cyber invaders at bay

Smart device technology tips

Although not an exhaustive list and not written by security experts, Safe Electricity and Norris Electric Cooperative recommend these basic tips to make your smart devices less hackable and more secure:

1. NEVER click a link in an email claiming to be from a security- or smart-home related company, even if it looks official. Scammers and hackers get sign-in information and passwords this way, which they can use to hack your smart technology.
2. Although tempting, don't use all the same passwords for all of your devices.
3. Absolutely change factory-set passwords provided by the manufacturer.
4. Make your passwords complex and challenging.
5. If you do receive an email from your smart device manufacturer, see if the email address the company used is the same as the one they have used to contact you in the past. These emails should be general in nature and should never ask for personal or login information.
6. Never give out login or password or other personal information in an email, over the phone, or for any other reason unless you are the one contacting the company directly via verified phone number or other trusted method of contact.
7. Regularly update the device's software so that it is protected by the latest security.
8. Unless the hacker makes him/herself known, it can be hard to detect if a smart device has been hacked until the obvious happens.
9. If it has been hacked, your gadget might be slower than usual, unresponsive or compulsively reboot.
10. If you are tech savvy, keep watch on the IP addresses that access the devices.

Disclaimer: Tips are designed to increase awareness. For expert and in-depth technology advice, contact an IT professional or manufacturer. For more information about electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

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

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.

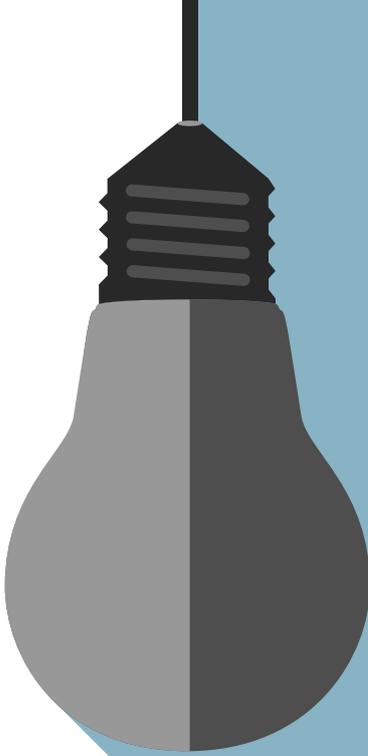
Call our office today at 877-783-8765 for a rate comparison and see if you can start saving money on your electric bill!

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Heating requires more energy than any other system in your home, typically making up about 42% of your energy bill. With proper equipment maintenance and upgrades like additional insulation and air sealing, you can save about 30% on your energy bill.

Source: energy.gov





SIX HELPFUL TIPS

WHEN THE POWER GOES OUT...

- 1** Avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. Generators, camp stoves, or charcoal grills should be used outside and at least 20 feet away from windows.
- 2** Plan ahead before an outage occurs: Have alternate plans for refrigerating medicines, using power-dependent medical devices and charging cell phones.
- 3** Check on your neighbors if you can. Older adults and young children are especially vulnerable to extreme temperatures.
- 4** Go to another location with power if heat or cold is extreme and if conditions are safe to do so.
- 5** Keep refrigerators and freezers closed to maintain temperatures in the appliances for as long as possible. Once the power is back on, when in doubt, throw food out.
- 6** Turn off or disconnect appliances, electronics or other electrical equipment. Power may return with momentary surges or spikes that can cause damage.

Learn more at

