



# Rural HIGHLIGHTS

Local News from Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative

## Free popcorn bags available for local fundraisers



*Katie Gardner and son Griffin eating popcorn at an Auburn home football game. The bags can be seen at several sporting events.*



**If your organization needs bags,  
contact us at 217-438-6197**



*Pawnee High School students are pictured with the free popcorn bags. The sophomore class greatly appreciated the donation.*

# Reporting incidents improves safety

**#1** Trouble crew arrived and noticed that the underground transformer had been slightly moved on the platform. The homeowner said that a landscape company had backed into the transformer. After opening the transformer door, they found a high voltage line lying against the lid; it was still energized. The landscaper had been using the top of the transformer as a table to write a quick note.

**Immediately report contact made with any piece of cooperative equipment. This would include a pole, guy wire, power line or transformer. Do not use underground transformers or cabinets as tables, toys or playground equipment.**

**#2** The linemen noticed that an underground transformer had been knocked off the vault. It had been hit by a vehicle, but was still energized. High-voltage wires were exposed, and there was a potential for grave

damage if contacted. The unsafe situation occurred for an unknown time.

**Always report damage to cooperative equipment. In this case, there was no power outage and we would be unaware of any potential danger. Please notify us immediately if something doesn't look right. You could save a life.**

**#3** A farmer was mowing a hay field. The tall grass was hiding the underground transformer, which was ultimately struck by the mower. The transformer flipped over and fortunately tripped the fuse.

**Get familiar with your surroundings and scout out the area beforehand. It's also a good idea to keep a three-foot area trimmed around transformers. This also makes it easier for our linemen to find if an outage occurs.**

**#4** Kids were driving a golf cart down a hill in a subdivision and lost control, knocking over a light pole. The result

was only property damage, but there was a potential for electric shock, not to mention the impact from the pole itself.

**Please try to avoid contact with our poles. The results can be painful, expensive and even life-threatening.**

**#5** A member was digging a ditch to bury conduit for a new service. They dug through an unmarked primary line. This action could have been fatal.

**Know what's below and always call 811 or JULIE before digging.**



**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.**



## Generator safety

When using a portable generator, never use it indoors and make sure it is not close to windows, doorways or air-intake vents. Do not use it in an attached garage, even with the doors up. Never touch it with wet hands or use in areas with rain, snow or standing water. If connected to your electrical system, a transfer switch must be used to prevent the generator from back feeding power through the cooperative lines. For more information, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

# Rural Electric Youth Day set for March 31, 2020

High school juniors – now is the time to apply for great trips to Springfield and Washington, D.C.! Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative is sponsoring area students again this year for the popular Rural Electric Youth Day in Springfield and a chance to win a free trip to Washington.

Students will be sponsored by RECC at the Illinois Youth Day program, touring the Capitol and other historic sites, and meeting with their state legislators. Two of those students will be selected to attend the Youth to Washington trip, June 19-26, with about 1,000 young people from around the country. RECC sponsors these trips to encourage students to learn more about our government's operation and about electric cooperatives.

Any junior attending a high school in RECC's service area is eligible for these expense-paid programs. Application request forms will be sent to our local schools, or students can contact our office. We will mail an application packet and background information directly to the student. The application form includes a summary of the student's school and civic activities and accomplishments and a brief essay question pertaining to the rural electric program.

Applications must be returned to RECC by February 18, and the students selected for the Illinois Youth Day program will be notified so that they can arrange their school schedules around the trip. Transportation will be provided from Auburn to Springfield and back.

After the day's activities in Springfield, the students will have individual interviews to select two winners for the trip to Washington, D.C. They will be judged on their written application, personal poise and confidence, and demonstrated understanding of the rural electric program. The two winners will travel by bus from Springfield to Washington this summer, in one of the best-recognized youth programs in the nation's capital.

Tell your child, grandchild, neighbor or friend about these two super programs sponsored by your electric cooperative and encourage them to apply. They can call



our office at 217-438-6197 to ask for an application packet or email a request to [recc@recc.coop](mailto:recc@recc.coop). Don't let them miss this chance to meet new friends, learn about our government and co-ops, and have fun!



# Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative

3973 W. State Route 104  
P.O. Box 19 • Auburn, IL 62615  
(217) 438-6197  
e-mail: [recc@recc.coop](mailto:recc@recc.coop)  
[www.recc.coop](http://www.recc.coop)

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## Space heater safety tip

Never leave space heaters unattended. Do not let children or pets play near them. Heaters should be placed on a flat, level surface and kept three feet away from anything that can ignite. Plug them directly into a wall outlet and never use an extension cord or power strip.

