

IEC Outlook

Illinois Electric Council

Summer 2004

Safe Electricity sponsors Live Line Demos at the 2004 Illinois State Fair

Thousands of Illinois State Fair attendees witnessed the spectacular demonstration of electrical force that Kyle Finley presents in his Live Line Demo. Safe Electricity sponsored 20 demo programs during this year's fair.

Adults and children are transfixed as sparks fly during the program that reveals electrifying information and dramatically illustrates the importance of electrical safety. The program demonstrates everyday situations, including live contact with 7200 Volts. Those who see it come away with a lot more knowledge and healthy respect for electricity.

"It is an entertaining yet educational program," remarks Finley in an understated description of the safety exhibition that he has performed since 1992 to hundreds of school groups, firefighter and employee training programs and fairs. This past June, Safe Electricity sponsored the Live Line Demo for hundreds of Illinois firefighters at the University of Illinois Fire Service Institute.

"Kyle's program is a perfect blend of his experience as a lineman and his ability to translate the potential dangers and safe use of electricity in a manner that is easy for any audience to understand," according to Brian R. Brauer, Fire Fighting Program Director at the U of I Fire Service Institute. "His program has given me a sincere appreciation of the hazards of becoming complacent or careless around live power sources.

Brauer not only can speak to the impact of Live Line Demo as a firefighter and trainer, but also as a father.

"My two sons, ages 4 and 6, both saw Kyle's show for children," Brauer related, "They were able to take away an age-appropriate



Kyle Finley's Live Line Demo was a hit at the fair. Demonstrations were held August 13-15 and 21-22. The presentation can be viewed on the State Fair Web site at www.illinoisstatefair.info in the Archive Section.

message that has directly impacted the amount of respect they show electrical devices."

A streamed video of the State Fair program can be viewed on the State Fair Web site at <http://www.illinoisstatefair.info> and will eventually be available on the Safe Electricity Web site.

"I feel through this program, I am making an impact," says Finley, "I'm making people aware of electrical safety, and in the process, saving lives.

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State Fair culminates IEC summer youth activities

Preparations for next year underway

Each summer, many volunteers help conduct IEC-sponsored youth electrical workshops, provide evaluators and judge electrical project entries at 4-H county and



Allan Masterson of Monroe Electric Cooperative (left) and Charlie Peterson of MJM Electric Cooperative were just two of the volunteer evaluators of 4-H State Fair Electric Project exhibits. Other volunteers included Jim Rechner of Menard Electric Cooperative, Robert Milligan of Litchfield, Dana Smith of Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative, and Chris Spears and Kevin Carlen of Shelby Electric Cooperative.

state fairs. The Council also sponsors the Electricity Achievement Award, recognizing a 4-H member in each county for an outstanding achievement and exhibit in the electricity area.

"We congratulate all the 4-H electricity project exhibitors for their outstanding efforts and achievements, and we thank the 4-H Committee members and U of I Extension youth educators who coordinated and assisted with the electrical workshops and judging of 4-H Electricity projects," said Joe Rix, IEC Training Coordinator for the electricity workshops. "Your time and efforts are truly appreciated."

Although the Illinois State Fair culminated this year's youth electrical education, 4-H and council-sponsored events, preparations for next year's activities are underway. Two training programs are scheduled in September in Peoria and Jacksonville to prepare volunteers to conduct next year's youth electricity workshops. The instructor training sessions are about two hours in length, according to Rix.

For more information about these youth programs, contact a local U of I Extension office or visit www.IECouncil.org. ✨

■ Live Line Demos at the Illinois State Fair - Continued from pg. 1

"Some of the most powerful demonstrations I have done have been ones attended by audience members who have survived an electrical shock, or had a near miss," related Finley. "One, an older farmer, asked if he could use my microphone. He told the audience that he ran an auger into a power line and it was only by the grace of God that he was alive today. He turned around and showed the electrical burn scars he received on the back of his legs as a result of the accident. He said, "Listen to this man. If I had seen a program like this when I was young, I don't think this would've happened to me."

The message and life-saving lessons of Live Line Demo have undoubtedly saved countless lives. But, Finley laments for the families of electrical accident victims, for whom his safety message is too late.



This is the first year Safe Electricity has sponsored Finley's program at the Illinois State Fair.

"It hurts to hear their tragic stories because it didn't have to happen. Their deaths could have been avoided," Finley comments sadly. "If programs like Safe Electricity and I keep repeating our message, maybe we can slow the rate down." ✨

Safe Electricity gaining a national audience

While summer projects moved forward on Web site development and addition of new content, the Safe Electricity program was presented in new forums in Indiana and Ohio.

Executive Director Molly Hall was invited to be a part of the NRECA Marketing-Member Services Conference in Columbus, OH and the Tri-State Cooperative Managers Meeting in Elizabeth, IN. These forums provided the opportunity for more than 500 managers to hear more about the program first-hand.

“It’s been gratifying to see the growing interest in the program,” said Hall. “Since late May, we’ve been contacted by dozens of utilities from throughout the country. I would anticipate additional out-of-state partners before the end of the year.”

The 39 member cooperatives of the Indiana Statewide Cooperative Association became program partners in May. Just prior to that, Safe Electricity received a major national sponsorship from Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange.

Meanwhile, Safe Electricity has been working on several core program projects, including completion of new print materials, an expanded issue calendar, the Safe Electricity



Molly Hall describes the Safe Electricity program to more than 400 attendees of the NRECA Marketing-Member Services Conference July 20 in Columbus, OH.

Web site re-design, and the addition of several hundred new pages of licensed content. This month, the program sponsored 20 live power line demonstrations at the Illinois State Fair (see Cover story). ✨

IEC Board Member reflects on tenure

Illinois Electric Council Board Director Ellen Burton is stepping away from her IEC Board duties, but says she takes with her valuable experience and insights that will help her tackle her expanded duties as a U of I Extension Regional Director.

“It has been a wonderful experience to serve on the IEC Board as I have had the opportunity to participate as the work of the IEC has grown in scope and depth through combined leadership and dedication of the IEC Board and professional staff,” said Burton of her tenure on the board. “I have met outstanding professionals from the industry who have increased my knowledge, and my vision of what is not only possible, but probable.”

Burton has served on the Board since 1999, and has been very active as the Board Liaison to its 4-H Committee.

“Ellen’s work with the 4-H Committee led to the adoption of the 4-H workshop development initiative to create new electricity educational programs,” said Executive Director, Molly Hall. “She has also been a champion of Safe Electricity, helping with the original task force and doing a great deal to make Extension aware of what the program has to offer. And she was instrumental in the IEC being recognized as 2002 Friend of Extension.”



Ellen Burton

“We are truly grateful for Ellen’s professionalism, experience, insight and unending energy that she has provided to the Council,” said Board Chairman, Dave Stuva. “We extend our best wishes to her in her Extension leadership role.”

New IEC Board Member named

William Million, U of I Extension Specialist in the 4-H State Office, has been named as a director on the IEC Board. He replaces Board Director, Ellen Burton, who stepped down from the board after assuming her new position as a U of I Extension Regional Director.

Million has been with the U of I Extension for 24 years and for the past eight years, has been with 4-H Youth Development, responsible for curriculum and multicultural education.

Million has served on the IEC's 4-H Committee since 2002 and has been a strong supporter of the Council's youth education and electrical safety efforts. He has worked with member utilities such as Adams Electric in hosting multi-county electricity schools in western Illinois. "I'm looking forward to greater interaction and promoting safe use of electricity to youth audiences in Illinois," said Million.

"Bill invited Safe Electricity to have a presence at the Illinois State Fair in 2002 and 2003, and provided exhibit space in the 4-H building near the electricity-related projects," said Hall. "We appreciate his strong support and are pleased to have him on the IEC Board."

Stuva echoes the sentiment. "Bill provided some valuable input at his first Board Meeting in July. We're delighted to have his participation on the Board." ✨

Calendar of Events

SEPTEMBER 1

Safe Electricity Advisory Team Meeting, Springfield

SEPTEMBER 7

Instructor training session for youth electrical workshops. Peoria

SEPTEMBER 8

Consumer Education Committee Meeting, Springfield

SEPTEMBER 14

Instructor training session for youth electrical workshops. Jacksonville

NOVEMBER 4

IEC Annual Business Meeting/
Quarterly Board Meeting, Springfield

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