In a true youth-helping-youth effort, assistance from groups at Maroa-Forsyth High School and the University of Illinois has allowed IEC to maximize the impact of the grant. University of Illinois Ag. Mech. Club students and Maroa-Forsyth Agricultural Education students assembled all of the new project kits.

The recent $10,000 ComEd grant is generating new youth opportunities in northeastern Illinois and beyond. As previously reported, the grant has been used to greatly expand the number of reusable hands-on project kits available for 4-H youth education and to fund translation of the written lesson plans and schematics to Spanish.

Attendants will receive eight hours of PE credit

Grounding and bonding obstacles occur daily but can still be confusing even to those experienced with the issue. Mistakes made in grounding and bonding while installing electrical equipment cause a majority of future problems – many of which can easily be prevented.

The IEC will host an intensive one-day workshop on the subject in three locations May 9-11 providing a valuable opportunity for you and your organization. This event is geared toward electricians, electrical engineers, inspectors, supervisors and apprentices. Even if you have recently attended a coding or grounding class, you will learn new information.

Presenter Edward Corcoran is a professional electrician and instructor. Owner of EMC Consultants, he presents his own seminars on the National Electrical Code, Electrical Safety in the Workplace, Grounding and Bonding and OSHA Electrical Safety. Corcoran has presented seminars for the national training companies NTT and Llewelyn. Some of Corcoran’s satisfied clients are Boeing, Shell Refinery, Alcoa, US Consumer Product Safety Commission, and Port of Tacoma.

ComEd Grant Expands 4-H Youth Education in Chicago Area

Doubles number of electricity kits available statewide

In a true youth-helping-youth effort, University of Illinois has allowed IEC to maximize the impact of the grant. University of Illinois Ag. Mech. Club students and Maroa-Forsyth Agricultural Education students assembled all of the new project kits.

Continued on page 7

Maroa Forsyth students Mike Jump & Kathleen Gaugh with newly assembled electricity kits
RICING energy costs are driving many businesses to look for ways to be more energy efficient. Farmers and cooperatives are also looking to develop renewable energies to increase supplies.

More than 70 IEC Energy Solutions Workshop participants learned of several resources, including government grant and loan programs that help make energy efficiency and renewable energy projects a reality.

From lighting upgrades and improved insulation to geothermal technology and wind farm development, farmers and rural businesses have multiple options and significant financial incentives for pursuing a better energy bottom line. Patrick Lydic with USDA Rural Development in Champaign says more than $26 million is available through USDA for energy-related grants, and another $176 million is available for loans in the new application period that ends May 2.

During workshops held in Effingham and Normal in February, Lydic walked participants through the specifics of the programs and the requirements for eligibility. USDA grants can fund up to 25 percent of a project’s cost and loans can provide another 50 percent of the funding.

The Illinois Finance Authority (IFA) is another source for loan money. Eric Reed of the IFA says the new Renewable Energy Development program is available for projects launched by the end of this year. Many other loan programs administered by IFA are available to businesses.
Energy Management Seminars Planned for May

Springfield Electric and the Illinois Electric Council are pleased to present “Energy Management Solutions” a business energy efficiency seminar about saving energy and lowering operating costs. These events are geared toward commercial and industrial businesses, architects, engineers, contractors, government agencies, etc.

The events will be held:
• May 2 - Decatur
• May 4 - Champaign
• May 9 - East Peoria
• May 10 - Rockford

These informative one-day seminars will include experts from Ameren and ComEd, SEDAC, Square D, General Electric and many others. Topics include the 2005 Energy Policy Act, ICC pending rate changes and potential impacts; power reduction ideas; power monitoring and collection of energy management data; energy audits; green lighting; energy-saving products fair; and more. Participants can receive four hours of PE continuing education credit.

For agenda and registration details, visit www.IECouncil.org.

Ground/Bonding Workshops (continued from page 1)

Participants will receive eight (8) Continuing Education Credits and may choose from one of three dates and locations:
May 9 - Collinsville, Ill.
May 10 - Decatur, Ill.
May 11 - Rockford, Ill.

Some of the topics covered in the seminar will be:
• GFCI’s and AFCI’s and why they are used in residential, commercial and industrial environments and how they actually work
• The new GFCI, how it is easily misunderstood and UL’s standards for GFCI’s
• Electrodes and proper use of electrode systems
• Different methods used depending on which part of the country you live in
• Meter sockets
• Service panel and disconnect
• Sub panel and end-use equipment
• Differences and similarities between grounding and bonding
• Issues concerning electrical code and how the electrical code can be misinterpreted.

Register by May 1 for the discounted early registration rate $179 IEC members and $199 non-members. After May 1, the cost is $199 for IEC members and $219 for non-members.

For more information, call 217-333-3010 or e-mail info@IECouncil.org.

Program Agenda
• 8:00 Registration/coffee and rolls
• 8:30 - 4:00 Workshop (lunch provided)

Tuesday, May 9 - Collinsville
Collinsville Holiday Inn
1000 Eastport Plaza Drive
Collinsville, IL 62234
(618) 345-2800

Wednesday, May 10 – Decatur
Decatur Conference Center and Hotel
4191 W US Highway 36
(Wyckles Road)
Decatur, IL 62522
(217) 422-8800

Thursday, May 11 - Rockford
Giovanni’s Convention Center
610 N. Bell School Road (near I-90)
Rockford, Illinois 61107
(815) 398-6411

Ed Corcoran recommends participants use the Soares Book on Grounding and Bonding during the workshop. Attendees are encouraged to bring their own copy for highlighting and taking notes.

I will attend the workshop in:
(check one) ___Collinsville ___Decatur ___Rockford

Name___________________________
Organization_____________________
Address_________________________
City_____________________________
State_______________   Zip________
Phone (       )____________________
E-mail___________________________

____I am faxing my registration and have sent check by mail for my fee.
   Please include e-mail address for electronic confirmation. Make checks payable to Illinois Electric Council.

Mail or Fax Form to
Illinois Electric Council
1304 W. Pennsylvania Ave.
360 FAESB
Urbana, IL 61801
Phone 217.333.3010
Fax 217.244.0323
Safe Electricity Welcomes New Partners

Safe Electricity continues to increase its presence nationally with more than two dozen new partners in three states. The program welcomes 25 cooperative members of the Minnesota Rural Electric Association, along with new partners in Georgia and Utah. The new partners include:

- Goodhue County Cooperative Electric Association, Zumbrota, MN
- Itasca-Mantrap Co-op Electrical Association Park Rapids, MN
- Kandiyohi Power Cooperative, Willmar, MN
- Lake County Power, Grand Rapids, MN
- Lake Region Electric Cooperative, Pelican Rapids, MN
- Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc., Tyler, MN
- McLeod Cooperative Power Association, Glencoe, MN
- Meeker Cooperative Light & Power Association, Litchfield, MN
- Mille Lac Electric Cooperative, Aitkin, MN
- Nobles Cooperative Electric, Worthington, MN
- North Itasca, Bigfork, MN
- North Star Electric Co-op., Inc., Baudette, MN
- Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc. Red Lake Falls, MN
- Red River Valley Co-op Power Association, Halstad, MN
- Redwood Electric Cooperative, Clements, MN
- South Central Electric Association, Saint James, MN
- Traverse Electric Cooperative, Inc., Wheaton, MN
- Wild Rice Electric Cooperative, Inc., Mahnomen, MN
- Wright-Hennepin Cooperative Electric Association, Rockford, MN
- Garkane Energy Coop, Inc., Loa, UT

Generator PSA Series Makes a Plug for Safety

Safe Electricity’s newest radio and television PSA series was distributed and began airing early this year. This series focuses on the expanding presence of portable generators and related safety considerations. Of some 10 million portable generators sold, only an estimated 10 percent are installed safely. Improperly used generator systems could threaten the lives of family, friends, neighbors and electric power supplier crews working to restore power.

The IEC worked with the Illinois Broadcasters Association for placement with Illinois radio stations. The radio PSAs became even more relevant and received a boost from IBA following mid-March storms, including two tornadoes that ripped through Springfield, Ill. March 12.

The Waves of Life generator safety campaign includes a 30-second TV spot in English and Spanish; one 60-second and two 30-second radio PSAs, plus 25-second versions that allow co-branding tags as well as Spanish versions; an ad slick; a billboard design and news release. Materials are available on the Members Only section of the Safe Electricity Web site.
Safe Electricity Responds to Severe Weather

As tornadoes ripped across the Midwest in March, Safe Electricity responded by creating and distributing additional safety material to affected utilities and news media. New comprehensive releases in response to specific needs were added to the existing lineup of post-storm topics available on the Members Only Web site.

The programs’ current PSA campaign on generator safety proved to be particularly timely as prolonged power outages spurred sales of portable generators (See Generator PSAs story, page 4).

The stormy spring weather and national safety observations have kept the program busy. Along with additional releases to a full editorial calendar, the program has been updating the Web site Home Page more frequently in response to tornadoes, flooding and other events.

The complete Editorial Calendar and advance drafts of news releases are available on the Members Only section of the Safe Electricity Web site.

A Jeep ensnared in Ameren transmission lines near Herrick, courtesy of Kevin Bernson, Shelby Electric Cooperative.
IEC Energy Solutions Workshops (continued from page 2)

of Illinois, SEDAC provides free services, such as energy audits, to help businesses identify efficiency options and their respective return on investment.

Extension specialist and grant writer Jennifer Rardin brought in a $300,000 renewable energy grant for Lincoln Land Agri-Energy through the USDA program. She shared her experience and several tips for creating a competitive grant application.

IEC hopes increased awareness of efficiency measures and resources will help more farmers and rural businesses apply for funds and accomplish their energy goals.

From lighting upgrades and improved insulation to geothermal technology and wind farm development, farmers and rural businesses have multiple options and significant financial incentives for pursuing a better energy bottom line.

Online Energy Resources

All of the presentations from the Energy Solutions Workshops are available on the IEC web site www.IECouncil.org in the Events section. Additional information on the resources detailed in the program and others can be found via these sites:

USDA Energy Programs
www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/farmbill

Smart Energy Design Assistance Center (SEDAC) www.sedac.org

Illinois Finance Authority
www.il-fa.com

Geothermal Heat Pump Consortium www.geoexchange.org

Illinois DCEO Energy Programs
www.illinoisbiz.biz/dceo/Bureaus/Energy_Recollecting

Energy Star
www.energystar.gov

Wind Energy Resources
www.windustry.org

Rebuild America Program
www.rebuild.org

Sign Up for Connections by E-mail

We're aiming to go electronic with some IEC publications. If you'd like to save some paper and have your newsletter delivered to your desktop instead of your desk, please send us your name, organization name, and e-mail address (via e-mail, of course) to: info@IECouncil.org.
4-H (continued from page 1)

Four hundred new kits are now available for use in the Chicago area, which has a more diverse and much larger 4-H youth population than other areas of Illinois. The new kits - 100 sets of four learning levels – cover basic magnetic motors progressing to advanced electrical circuitry.

The expansion doubles the total number of hands-on kits available throughout the state.

Kits and related materials have been transported to northeastern Illinois and “Train-the-trainer” workshops are being held to educate volunteers and others who will teach youth with these kits. The first training workshop this spring was held April 13 in St. Charles, Ill.

New instructions have been produced for each of the four projects as well as written lesson plans now available in English and Spanish. All will soon be available on CD as well as the IEC Web site (www.IECouncil.org) in the new Youth Education section.

Top photo - Haley Bunselmeyer, Aaron Bruce, Kathleen Gaugh & Mike Jump help assemble the new 4-H kits

Bottom photo - MFHS Ag. students shown loading the new kits for transport to the Chicago area

IEC Annual Report

2005 was a year of significant accomplishments along with a sharpened strategic focus for the Illinois Electric Council. Those activities are detailed in the IEC’s 2005 Annual Report, now being distributed. This useful member resource provides an overview of IEC programs and activities, accomplishments, events, board, committees, and more. If you would like your copy electronically, please e-mail your request to info@IECouncil.org.
Calendar of Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 9</td>
<td>IEC Grounding &amp; Bonding Workshop, Collinsville, Ill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 10</td>
<td>IEC Grounding &amp; Bonding Workshop, Decatur, Ill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 11</td>
<td>IEC Grounding &amp; Bonding Workshop, Rockford, Ill.</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 17</td>
<td>IEC Quarterly Board Meeting, Springfield, Ill.</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 23</td>
<td>Safe Electricity Advisory Team meeting, Springfield, Ill.</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 27-28</td>
<td>Safe Electricity Presentation to Quad State Safety Managers Meeting, Springfield, Ill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 4</td>
<td>IEC Quarterly Board Meeting, St. Louis, MO</td>
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Illinois Electric Council
University of Illinois
1304 West Pennsylvania, Ave.
Urbana, IL 61801

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