

## Like a “blink” of an eye

We often hear the question from members, “What causes my lights to blink?” A “blink” is when the power grid is subject to a momentary loss of power. Lights may turn off and come right back on like when you blink your eyes. It can be annoying, and Shelby Electric Cooperative (SEC) takes all possible measures to prevent these occurrences and minimize their impact on our members. However, the power grid may have just blinked to save you from sitting in the dark through an actual outage.

When an interruption of power or short circuit occurs on a line from a lightning strike, an automobile striking a pole, a critter, bird, or tree branch coming into contact with an energized power line, a device called an “oil circuit recloser” (OCR) opens to reset itself, then quickly closes, which prevents an outage. An OCR is essentially a breaker, functioning much like a breaker in the electrical panel in your home, except it has the ability to reset itself automatically.

Have you ever noticed that blinks often come in sets of three before an outage? If the disruption continues, the OCR will operate or “trip” two more times giving the fault a chance to clear itself. If it does, it saves the cooperative

and our members from experiencing an outage and having to send out a crew to fix the problem. If it does not, the OCR stays open and stops the flow of electricity, protecting the lines from damage until the problem can be fixed.

“Power blinks have always been part of electric service. They just were not as noticeable until more sensitive electronics entered the marketplace. So, while blinks can be aggravating, they are actually protecting our electrical system and preventing an extended power outage,” said SEC Manager of Operations Terry Oldham.

Although the process is quick, blinks may cause circuitry in small appliances to lose their electronic memory, making it necessary to reset digital clocks and appliances with digital displays.



*A digital clock blinking on a microwave often means the cooperative's electrical system is working properly and prevented an outage.*

There are a couple things members can do to lessen the effect and inconvenience of “blinks” when they occur. One is when you purchase small appliances and digital clocks, consider models with a battery backup or smart devices that can reset themselves. The other is to invest in surge-protector power strips with built-in uninterruptable power supply (UPS) for your computer or other sensitive electronic devices whose “memory” would be lost with a power interruption.

We understand the disruption that power outages cause our members. That is why the cooperative takes preventative measures to keep outages to a minimum. This work includes clearing and spraying individual right-of-way to minimize trees contacting lines and installing protective devices on the system to make sure equipment is not damaged, which keeps the number of members out of power and the duration of outages to a minimum.

Remember, when lights blink, while it might be annoying, it is an indication that the cooperative's equipment is operating properly.



*An oil circuit recloser, like you see here, helps protect the electric system from a momentary power disruption when a bird, critter, or tree branch makes contact with the energized power line.*



## Hot Air Balloons return to Lake Shelbyville

*All scheduled events are weather permitting*

**M**ark your calendars now for the annual Touchstone Energy® Hot Air Balloon Festival held in conjunction with Scarecrow Daze over Columbus Day weekend, October 10-12 in Shelbyville. “There will be plenty of exciting family fun and activities for everyone over the weekend,” noted balloonfest organizer Kevin Bernson.

Pilots from around the Midwest plan to take to the skies with fun flights on Saturday and Sunday mornings. The event kicks off Friday evening at Willow Ridge Winery. There

will be a meet and greet with the pilots as some will fly and a handful will provide a short glow at dusk.

On Saturday morning, at sunrise, plan on coming out to Shelby County Airport and watch the balloon pilots participate in the Software Solutions, Inc. sponsored fun task as they fly over the airport and play a game of ring toss with hula hoops. After the downtown parade, come back out to the airport and take a helicopter ride (\$40/person) from Summer Skyz beginning at 2 p.m.

Saturday evening festivities at the airport begin around 4 p.m. with a free Family Drug sponsored kids’ area and music by All Kindz of Soundz. Bring your appetite, as the Shelbyville Fire Department will have their evening cookout fundraiser. Just before dusk, enjoy the Mid-America Parachute Club skydivers from Taylorville as they land on targets at the airport. To cap off an exciting day, watch the balloons light up the night with the J & R Collision Centers sponsored hot air balloon glow. You will also have the opportunity to do a tethered balloon ride for charity.

To round out the weekend, on Sunday morning the pilots will once again be challenged as they perform the Glenda Sphar Realty sponsored fun task over the 9th Street Beach, located at Dam West Recreation Area.



Pilots will attempt to drop a safety ring into a small kiddie pool.

In addition to all the balloonfest activities, the Greater Shelbyville Chamber of Commerce will be holding their annual

Scarecrow Daze on Saturday,

October 11 in the downtown area of Shelbyville. There will be crafters, food trucks, entertainment, a beauty pageant, and so much more, starting with a parade at 10 a.m. “The parade begins at Forest Park and makes its way to the downtown area. It is the official kickoff for Scarecrow Daze, and we appreciate HSHS Good Shepherd Hospital for organizing the parade each year,” said Director of the Greater Shelbyville Chamber of Commerce Katalyn Dragovan.

“Without great community support, our sponsors, and, most importantly, the volunteers, we couldn’t pull off this exciting family event. We can always use more volunteers, especially to help crew for one of the hot air balloon teams. We offer some great crew appreciation gifts! If anyone is interested, contact the tourism office at 217-774-2244,” concluded Bernson.

To stay updated on activities follow the Lake Shelbyville Balloonfest Facebook page or email us at balloons@lakeshelbyville.com.

See you in Shelbyville over Columbus Day weekend, October 10-12.

**SHELBY** News

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**Office Hours:  
Monday - Friday  
7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.**

**Cooperative Offices Closed  
Monday, September 1  
for Labor Day.**



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 **Shelby Electric Cooperative**  
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## Reporting Outages

Ways to report outages:

- ✓ Call 1-800-677-2612
- ✓ Report on the SmartHub App
- ✓ Report online with SmartHub

 Please do not report outages via email or through social media (i.e. Facebook or X). We do not monitor these 24/7.

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Take advantage of "shoulder months," which refer to the transitional periods between peak heating and cooling seasons. During the fall, these milder weeks typically occur between September and November. Shoulder months offer a great opportunity to reduce home energy consumption as the need for extensive heating or cooling is reduced. Look for simple ways to boost indoor comfort without running your heating and cooling system. Use ceiling fans and open windows on breezy days to ventilate your home. On cooler days, add a layer of clothing and avoid running the heat.





# PEACE OF MIND WITH AUTO-PAY

Auto-pay allows you to pay your electric bill through your bank account or charge it to your debit/credit card automatically on the due date each month with no fees. This eliminates the need for manual payments, which can help you avoid late fees or missed payments. Follow the easy steps below or call the cooperative at 217-774-3986, and we will help you set it up.

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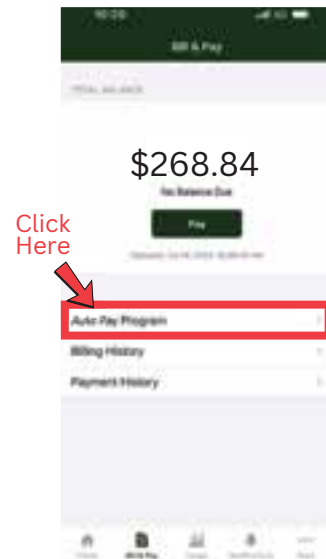
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### Auto-Pay

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### In-person

Visit our Shelbyville office during business hours or use our after-hours dropbox.