

Menard Electric Cooperative's

Connect to MEC

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Mapping and Staking *A look at how our system is evolving*

We are always looking for ways to do what we do better, and with that provide members with the best service we can. Our engineering department is working on doing just that with some new staking and mapping software.

As you can imagine, we have detailed maps of our service territory showing where all of our lines, transformers, meters and more are located.

The maps were originally created on paper of course, and moved to digital some time ago. Now, Bart Bailey and Doug Pettit in our office are working on making the maps more detailed by adding satellite imagery as well as other information from our staking engineers Tim Schafer and John Whitehurst. They hope to have the new mapping system in use by the end of the year.

"Once the maps are complete we can link them to our office computer system and access a great deal of information about each location, making us able to provide members with better service," says System Engineer Brady Smith.

When a member calls in with a question about our equipment at their location, for example, we could pull up a visual image of their equipment to give them fast, accurate information. Of course, our staking engineers are making no plans of stopping their visits to sites requiring changes or new construction; but they'll have more information before they make the trip.

And they'll be able to make changes to the map while in the field. Currently, Schafer and Whitehurst bring back hand drawings of plans and Pettit inputs those changes onto our computer mapping system.

The maps will have other advantages as well, such as GPS capabilities



System Engineer Brady Smith (right) looks at the paper map of our service territory, which takes up an entire wall in our office. Staking Engineer Tim Schafer (above) looks at the same map digitally at his desk while working on a staking order. The new maps will offer even more information digitally.



that could help us pinpoint hardware that has failed and caused an outage for example.

Smith says computer-generated staking sheets are another integral part of the new mapping system. Their purpose is to reduce paper flow, increase productivity and reduce chance of error. In the past, Whitehurst and Schafer have hand written forms concerning changes to the system, sometimes duplicating the information several times.

"That's especially true if we're retiring and building up part of the system--we won't need to draw the same area twice," says Schafer, who has been working out the details of the new sheets.

The new system reduces redundancy and with that, the chance of errors,

along with saving time by automatically pulling together lists of the materials needed to complete the job. Currently Schafer draws out the job and puts together a list of the materials needed and another person inputs that into the system to order parts or gather them together. As you can imagine, it's important the linemen go out to a job with all the materials they need with them. "The continuity of what we and the linemen do together will be greatly enhanced," Schafer says.

Smith agrees, "It's an update to our system that needs to be made; it's an ongoing process that won't be completed right away, but will be a useful tool to help us reduce labor later."

Get Schooled on College Dorm Electrical Safety

A limited number of electrical outlets in student dorm rooms tempt students to use multiple extension cords and power strips, which can cause cords to overheat and create a fire hazard. Small rooms crammed with books, papers, bedding and more only adds to the problem.

Send this safety list with a college student this fall.



Electric Safety Tips

- Don't use extension cords on a continuous basis; they are for temporary use.
- Don't overload outlets or power strips.
- Don't tack or nail cords to surfaces.
- Don't run cords under rugs or furniture.
- Use light bulbs with the correct wattage for fixtures.
- Keep appliances away from bedding.
- If using an item causes the breaker to trip or outlets or cords to feel hot, unplug the item and report the condition to the landlord/housing staff.
- Check smoke detectors and know emergency exit locations.



Does back to school time mean your house is now empty during the day? Consider programming your thermostat to lower the temperature of your home when it's unoccupied, raising it just before everyone is due to arrive home in the evenings. Why spend money heating an empty home?

(Note: if you have a heat pump it's recommended you keep your temperature steadier if dramatic shifts would cause the strip heating elements to come on.)

Office Closing

Our offices will be closed Monday, September 3 for Labor Day



Buy American


As Labor Day approaches, think about one thing — buy American. Become more aware of it. Look at labels to see where the items are made. Support American workers, support the American economy and help to return this country to the manufacturing powerhouse it used to be.

Let's make this Labor Day about honoring those who have pushed the envelope to provide Americans with safe working conditions, a living wage and the independence and pride that comes with creating products on our own soil.

**Happy Labor Day from
Menard Electric Cooperative!**



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Automatic Payment: One less thing to worry about!

You can have the net amount of your bill automatically deducted from your checking or savings account on the 17th of each month. Just get us this form by the 20th of the month prior to when you wish payments to begin.

Mail with a voided check to Menard Electric Cooperative, PO Box 200, Petersburg, IL 62675.

Name: _____ SS No. _____

Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Map Location No. _____

Bank Name: _____ Bank Account No. _____

☐ Checking acct. ☐ Savings acct.

I, _____, authorize Menard Electric Cooperative (MEC) to draw monthly bank drafts through the automatic plan (ACH) on the account shown above for the payment of my electric bill in full and any other services I authorize. I understand that I may discontinue my participation at any time by notifying MEC in writing. Both Menard Electric Cooperative and the bank may terminate this agreement with 10 days written notice. I understand that MEC reserves the right to limit participation in this program to customers whose accounts are in good standing. I understand the amount of my bill each month will be drafted on the 17th or next business day after. I understand that if funds are not available in my account for the draft to clear, there will be a charge posted to my MEC account, for NSF, and I will still be required to make full payment before the due date of the bill.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Board Meeting Report

For full minutes please visit our website at www.menard.com or contact our office.

Present were Manager Lynn Frasco, Attorney Charles Smith and Directors Gary Martin, Jerry Brooks, Michael Carls, Jay Frye, Warren Goetsch, Donald McMillan, Michael Patrick, Roy Seaney and Steven Wornor.

Amendment to CoBank Promissory Note approved.

Frasco discussed 2011 allocated margins to members, in the amount of \$1,114,816.68.

He also discussed the strategy for load control for 2012 and presented several

different scenarios for consideration. After much discussion about frequency of performing load control, there was a general consensus to limit load control to 3 to 4 times a month, if possible, but Manager Frasco would have the final decision if Prairie Power, Inc. recommended more frequent load control.

Frasco reviewed final LIHEAP Report for 2011-2012 program year.

Board Committee and Delegate and Board Member appointments for 2012-2013 approved.

Goetsch reported on Bylaw Policy

Committee Meeting and reviewed proposed revisions to Section V. Revised Policies were adopted as presented.

Year to date margins were \$106,075 compared to \$177,128 a year earlier. Equity as of the end of May was 33.59% and the number of members served was 10,524 compared to 10,577 a year ago. Net Utility Plant at the end of May was \$37,831,286 compared to \$35,859,772 last year. The cooperative continues to meet the requirements of the RUS, FFB and NRUCFC.

Beyond the BULB

A monthly tip to help you use electricity safely and efficiently. See safeelectricity.org and togetherwesave.com for more ways to go "beyond the bulb" to keep your family using energy wisely every day.



Your air conditioner got quite a workout this summer and with autumn just around the corner it's time to make sure your heating system is in tip top shape. Have your system serviced by a professional before the weather turns cold. Buy a few filters now and replace monthly. This will improve efficiency (the air will flow easier) and keep dust out of the system (making it safer to run). Install a carbon monoxide detector in your home if using a gas furnace.

