

Menard Electric Cooperative's

Connect to MEC

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



HomE Lite

Co-op energy efficiency rebates return

In 2011 the electric cooperatives of Illinois received \$2.5 million from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act program through the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's State Energy Plan. Those funds were, in turn, distributed as rebates to co-op member-owners for energy efficiency projects. This investment paid real dividends and helped prime the pump for nearly 10 times that in energy efficiency investments. Better yet, the energy efficiency improvements will multiply the savings for many, many years.

The HomE energy efficiency rebate program was so successful in creating new jobs for heating and air conditioning contractors, plumbers and insulation installers plus saving energy for co-op member-owners that it is being repeated for a second but very limited time.

If you didn't get a chance to participate in the first round of HomE rebates now you have a second chance. HomE Lite rebates are available for a very limited time until funding runs out. They began January 1, 2013.

HomE Lite Incentive Rebates Include:	
Geothermal system*	\$1,500
Air-Source Heat Pump* <i>(16 SEER or higher)</i>	\$1,000
Insulation and Weatherization	50 percent of total project cost, <i>up to \$1,000</i>
Heat Pump Water Heater*	\$250
Commercial installations*	\$500 per ton of capacity, <i>up to a maximum of \$10,000 for geothermal and air source heat pumps.</i>
Energy Audit by BPI certified auditor <i>(and perform one significant improvement noted in the audit)</i>	up to \$300

* can be new construction or existing home

Some restrictions apply. Menard Electric also offers ongoing rebates for geothermal systems, air-source heat pumps and electric water heaters. For more information on all rebates contact Michelle McNeal at the co-op office.

Commitment to community

One of our core values at Menard Electric is Commitment to Community. During the Christmas season we were able to give back to area food pantries.

Our third annual food drive for the Menard County Food Pantry was the most successful to date, with many items donated by members as well as an outpouring of support from employees.

In addition, thanks to an offer from CoBank to match funds of \$1,000 to a charitable organization in our territory, we were able to give \$2,000 to the Community Action Food Pantry in Mason County.



Mary Jane Hurie at the Menard County Food Pantry.

Board changes

Retiring Director



Mike Carls joined the Menard Electric Board in January 1987 and served the co-op diligently until the December

2012 board meeting.

Mike served nearly 25 years as Menard's representation on our G&T's board of directors; from WIPCO to Soyland to CCS to our current supplier Prairie Power. He served many years as chairman of the finance committee for our G&Ts as well.

Mike has purchased a new home outside of the service territory and recently moved.

"He has served this cooperative well as a valuable member of the Board and he will be missed by all of us who have relied on his judgment and experience," says Manager Lynn Frasco.

New Director



Jodie Tate of Virginia was selected by the nominating committee and approved by the board of

directors to fill the seat of retiring director Carls. The membership of the co-op will vote at June's annual meeting of members for a member to finish out Carls' one-year term.

Jodie grew up in the Virginia area and returned after graduating college and getting married. She has been a member of Menard Electric since 2004.

She and her husband, Joe, have a son, Kole, 11, and daughter, Kiley, 9. She serves as Secretary for the PTO and Sports Boosters at their school in Virginia.

Jodie has worked for the USDA Crop Insurance Program for two years. Prior to that she worked 10 years for the U of I Extension Program. She has a bachelor's degree in Ag Business from Western and a master's degree in Ag Economics from Colorado State.

She serves on the Cass County Fair Board and is a member of the First Presbyterian Church in Virginia.

"This is going to be a learning experience for me. It's a desire to understand things better; how everything works and how decisions are made," she says.

"Jodie will be welcomed by the MEC board at the January board meeting, and will bring a fresh perspective to our board deliberations," says Manager Lynn Frasco.

Congratulations!

We drew two names from all new automatic payment forms submitted in November and December. Each winner received a \$25 bill credit.

Congratulations to these four winners, who received the bill credit along with the convenience of having their electric bill automatically deducted from their savings or checking account each month.

November: Michelle Clark
Heath and Barbara Gold

December: Dean Bale
Jessica Danner

Special Giveaway

Seal your home

We are giving away two packages of outlet and switch sealing kits to each member who comes into our office, while supplies last.



The kits will help you seal air leaks in your home.

Each kit contains 14 foam sealers, enough for eight outlets, four light switches and two decorative outlet/switches.

Come in today to get yours. We hope this simple step prompts you to take more simple steps to save energy this year. Visit www.togetherwesave.com for ideas.

Parents of high school juniors:
**Encourage your child to apply for
 Youth to Washington Tour**

Has your teen ever seen the Washington Monument? Toured the Smithsonian museums? Visited face to face with a congressman? Here's an opportunity to send them, all expenses paid, to Washington D.C.



Each year Menard Electric takes a group of high school juniors to the Capitol building in Springfield for the Illinois Electric and Telephone Cooperative's Youth Day. Two students are selected from among that group for an all-expenses paid trip to Washington, D.C.

Youth Day April 17, 2013

Students will visit with local legislators, hear from speakers and tour the Old State Capitol. It is a great way to see local government in action. Interested students can fill out an application available online at www.menard.com. Students must live in a home

with a parent or guardian who is an active member of Menard Electric Cooperative.

**Youth to Washington Tour
 June 14-21, 2013**

The Youth to Washington Tour is an once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for a remarkable trip. An employee from the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives will act as judge and review received applications, choose several students to conduct personal interviews with during the Youth Day activities, and announce the two winners that day.

This year marks the 54th annual trip to the nation's capital and promises to be as exciting as ever. In addition to meeting with Congressmen from Illinois, students are treated to tours of historic sites, given the opportunity to make life-long friends and receive information to help determine career paths. Today, many "alumni" of these programs work in state or federal government or have gone on to serve as elected officials. Two retired members of the Illinois General Assembly are "alumni" of our programs.

For more...

For more details or an application visit our website at www.menard.com, contact Michelle at our office or see your local high school guidance counselor. You and your teen can also view a video at www.youthtour.coop.

LIHEAP

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) provides payment directly to us on behalf of those who qualify based upon household 30-day gross monthly income.

Contact your local county's office for information:

Cass 217-243-9404
 Logan 217-732-2159
 Macon 217-428-0155
 Mason 309-543-2594

Menard 217-632-3878
 Sangamon 217-535-3120
 Tazewell 309-266-9941

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 Worner.

Frasco advised there are a total of 88 new irrigation systems for the year and he anticipated at least 4 or 5 more; 29 are diesel conversions; co-op will need to install 13 miles of line to serve new systems.

Prairie Power completed security assessment with recommendations for data room.

Co-op scored well on Safety Accreditation Inspection.

Co-op will use a web design service from NRECA.

Frasco reported through the CoBank Sharing Success Program the

co-op was contributing \$2,000 to the Mason County Food Pantry.

Co-op will donate \$500 to NRECA International Program.

Frasco discussed proposed new tree trimming bid specifications for 2013 program. Attorney Smith in process of reviewing bid specification form. Goetsch discussed HomeE Lite program.

Goetsch asked Board members to review a white paper entitled Managing Uncertainties in Electricity Costs in Illinois.

Carls and Frasco discussed impact of Prairie Power 2013 base demand re-calculation and its effect on co-op.

Frasco discussed re-establishing power cost adjustment for 2013 energy billing rates; will present different scenarios next month.

Frasco discussed Nominating

Committee, formed to fill the vacancy created by upcoming retirement of Carls. Three members serving on the committee were given list of members in district. Committee will meet and suggest names for consideration. Frasco advised he would like them, with proposed nominees, to attend next month's meeting.

Manager Frasco presented the Financial Report for Oct. Year to date margins were 1,407,167 compared to 735,838 a year earlier. Equity as of the end of Oct. was 35% and the number of members served was 10,555 compared to 10,544 a year ago. Net Utility Plant at the end of Oct. was \$38,549,020 compared to \$36,153,190 last year. The cooperative continues to meet the requirements of the RUS, FFB and NRUCFC.

Beyond the

BULB


Groundhog Predictions

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.

Are we in for six more weeks of winter? Only time will tell if the groundhog's predictions are correct. Either way, you can be prepared for what Mother Nature brings.

In case of winter ice or spring tornadoes: Always call us to report outages; stay away from down power lines and call to

report them; have a disaster kit ready; don't use grills indoors; install transfer switches on generators; and don't enter flooded areas/basements.

If winter winds keep blowing don't let it tempt you to turn up your thermostat now when you're so close to spring.

If spring arrives it's a good time to seal up any drafts you felt this winter and start on any other energy-saving projects you've planned for this year.

Find out more about storm safety at www.redcross.org.

