

Celebrating Co-op Independence

In the midst of Independence Day apple pies and hot dogs, fireworks shows and parades, we can't help but think about the independent streak that inspired groups of farmers around America's countryside to band together and improve their quality of life.

Aside from President Franklin Roosevelt's promise of federal aid in the form of low-interest loans and engineering expertise, rural Americans didn't have much help in bringing electricity to their homes. They did it themselves.

This independence not only inspires cooperatives; it's a guiding principle. The Fourth Cooperative Principle, "Autonomy and Independence," means that no matter what contracts Menard Electric might enter into, we will always remain an independent entity.

And the annual meeting we just held was an independence celebration of sorts. You voted for candidates on the board of directors and we discussed co-op business, shared a meal and had some fun (see page 16a).

Cooperatives like Menard Electric form a vast network across the country, from coast to coast. Co-op lines are strung in 47 states, serving 42 million people—a different world from 1935, when much of America remained dark. This Fourth of July, as we recognize the hard-fought war that created the United States, we also tip our hat to Menard Electric's founders, who beat incredible odds to make life better for themselves and their neighbors.



Our office will be closed Thursday, July 4, for Independence Day.



Automatic Bill Payment Authorization

Send us this form to have your bill automatically deducted from your checking or savings account each month.

The amount deducted will be the total amount due on your bill. Deductions are taken the 17th of each month. You'll still receive a bill statement in the mail so you'll know exactly how much to deduct each month.

This form must be received in our office by the 28th of the month for your next month's bill to be drafted.

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

Name: _____ SS# _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone#: _____ Map Location # _____

Bank Name: _____

Bank Account # _____

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 that 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: _____