



## Celebrating Co-op Independence



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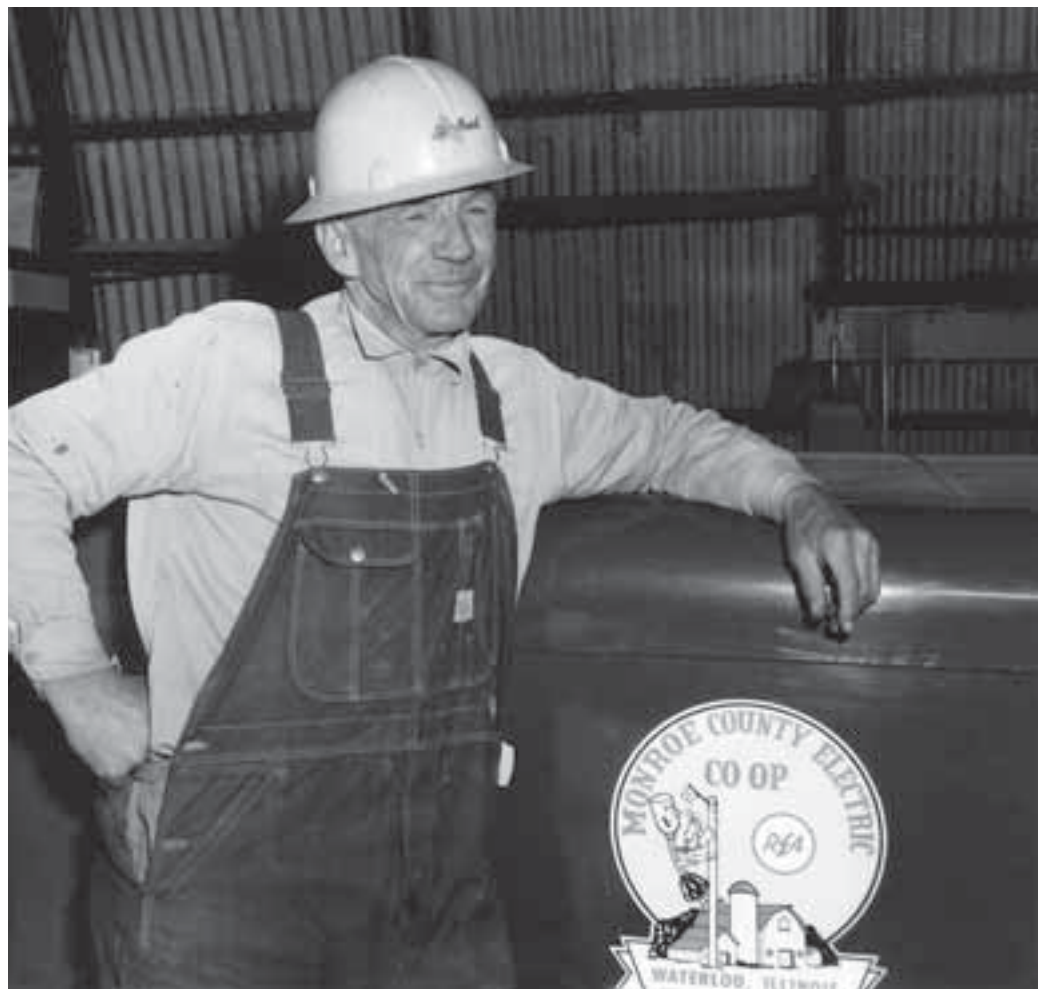
### Across The President's Desk

July is the time we celebrate our nation's independence. In the midst of apple pies and hot dogs, fireworks shows and parades, I 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 pulled themselves up by their proverbial bootstraps and did it themselves.

This independence not only tends to inspire cooperatives; it's a guiding principle. The Fourth Cooperative Principle, "Autonomy and Independence," means that no matter what contracts Monroe County Electric Cooperative (MCEC) might enter into, we will always remain an independent entity.

Each year, MCEC's annual meeting becomes an independence celebration. You vote for candidates on the board of directors, and we



discuss co-op business. We share a meal and have some fun.

Electric cooperatives 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, I'll also tip my hat to MCEC founders, who beat incredible odds to make life better for themselves and their neighbors.

# Be Alert to Avoid Lightning

**D**id you know lightning can strike even if it's not raining? Lightning strikes kill 55 to 60 people every year, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). More than 400 people are hit by a bolt each year.

But if you prepare before an outdoor event and know how to protect yourself, you can keep your family safe from lightning. Follow these tips from NOAA:

- **Plan ahead.** Just as you have an emergency plan for fires and weather events like tornadoes, form an action plan for lightning. Choose a safe shelter, and time how long it takes to get there.
- **Check the weather.** A simple forecast can tell you whether you should delay outdoor activities to avoid a dangerous situation.
- Look to the sky. Dark skies, whipping winds, and lightning flashes are all signs that you should seek shelter.
- **Seek shelter.** As soon as you hear a rumble of thunder, head for a safe place—an enclosed structure, one with plumbing and wiring is best, or a car. Open-air



shelters, sheds, and covered porches are often not safe places. Avoid tall trees that stand alone, towers, and poles, as well as metal fences and other conductors of electricity. And keep out of open areas, so that you're not the tallest object in a field.

- **Wait it out.** Leaving safe shelter too quickly makes you vulnerable to lightning strikes. Wait at least 30 minutes after the last rumble of thunder before you head back outdoors.
- **Avoid corded phones and appliances.** If you're indoors when a storm hits, do not use corded

phones or appliances. Lightning can travel through your home's wiring. Also, water is a great conductor of electricity, so don't take a bath or shower.

If someone near you has been struck by lightning, call 911 immediately. A certified person should begin CPR right away if necessary—the victim will not have an electric charge and is safe to touch.

For more information on how to stay safe in a lightning storm, visit [www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov](http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov).

Sources: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Don't  
**SWEAT**  
Summer Electric  
**BILLS**

**As temperatures rise, there's plenty of things you can do to save energy and trim your electric bill.**

Raise your thermostat a couple of degrees—78° is the most efficient setting. Ceiling fans are a great way to move air around the house, and you can shade your electric bill by planting trees on the south side of your home.

Don't sweat summer electric bills—check out [www.EnergySavers.gov](http://www.EnergySavers.gov) for more ways to save!

Brought to you by  
Monroe County Electric Co-Operative  
Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

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## Seek a safe haven when you travel

When you're traveling, whether on business or vacation, your hotel should be a safe sanctuary. But thieves can rob you of your security along with your valuables unless you're careful. Take these simple precautions to prevent your trip or vacation from becoming a nightmare:

- Pick the safest room. Generally, higher rooms are safer from thieves and criminals. Though if you're nervous about fires or other possible emergencies, you may want to be closer to the ground where rescue is more practical.
- Check your security. Make sure the doors are secure and self-closing, and lock automatically. Deadbolts should have at least a one-inch bolt. Make sure your windows close and lock firmly, and that any balconies can't be accessed from the room next door. Don't be afraid to ask for another room if necessary.
- Don't open the door for strangers. A surprise visit from a maid or a room service delivery you

aren't expecting could be trouble. If you're at all uncertain, contact the front desk to question whether the person outside is really a hotel employee.

- Watch your valuables. Before leaving on your trip, photocopy your credit cards and other documents, and take pictures of any jewelry or valuables you're bringing with you (if you must bring them at all). This will come in handy if they're lost or stolen. Don't let your luggage out of your sight. Take your laptop or other important items with you when you leave the room, or lock them in the hotel safe.
- Know where you are. Pick up a few business cards in the lobby when you check in, and keep them with you at all times. Leave one near your room phone as well. A large city may have more than one Westin or Sheraton, and if you get lost or need to tell someone where you are, you want to have accurate information readily available.



### Energy Efficiency *Tip of the Month*



Don't get your electric bill caught in a spin cycle! When doing laundry, use cold water. If your dryer has a moisture meter, use it to prevent over-drying clothes—50 minutes often works best for a full load. And remember to check your lint filter each time before you run a load to help your dryer run more efficiently (and save energy). Find more ways to save at [TogetherWeSave.com](http://TogetherWeSave.com).

Source: Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives

## Clean up your air with the right houseplants

Clean air is essential to good health at home and in the workplace. One simple way to keep the air you breathe fresh and free of odors and chemicals is to keep a few houseplants around. They'll clean the atmosphere and make your surroundings more pleasant and relaxing.

### *Pick up some of these:*

- English ivy. This climbing vine grows in hanging baskets and low planters, and it helps clear away formaldehyde. (Be aware that it requires regular misting, especially during the winter months.)
- Peace lily. A flowering plant, the peace lily will eradicate toxins like acetone, benzene, and ammonia from the air. Remember to wash the leaves every once in a while.
- Rubber plant. This plant is hardy enough to survive cool temperatures and low light, making it ideal even if you're not particularly good with plants. Like the English ivy, it acts to reduce formaldehyde in the air as long as it gets plenty of water.

## Office Closing

Thursday, July 4th



# Co-op Connections Card Saving Members \$\$\$

Monroe County Electric Cooperative members saved over 50% on prescriptions in 2013 so far, as of May using the Co-op Connections card. There were a total of 56 prescriptions filled for a total savings of \$2,596.



## MCEC Line Outages - May 2013

Time Off	# Out	Duration	Location	Cause Desc	Sub
05/01/13	227	0:38	GG Rd	Vehicles or Machinery	N. Waterloo
05/02/13	777	1:25	Smithton/New Athens Area	Power Supplier	New Athens
05/02/13	886	1:23	Smithton	Power Supplier	Smithton
05/16/13	12	0:42	IL RT 163	Unknown	East Carondelet
05/21/13	8	1:34	Mule Rd	Lightning	East Carondelet
05/27/13	6	0:27	Kropp Rd	Lightning	Millstadt
05/30/13	607	1:53	Smithton South	Lightning	Smithton
05/30/13	3	0:29	Hammond Ln	Lightning	Smithton
05/30/13	2	2:31	Kopp Rd	Trees, Other	N. Waterloo
05/30/13	45	0:45	G Rd	Lightning	Fulfs
05/30/13	12	0:07	South Woods Manor	Lightning	Smithton
05/31/13	45	3:03	G Rd	Wind, Not Trees	Fulfs
05/31/13	5	1:28	Klein Rd	Lightning	Smithton
05/31/13	3	2:19	Tyler Ln	Trees, Other	East Carondelet