



Liberty and a better life for all



Alan W. Wattles

Across The President's Desk

Every July, we take time to reflect on our country's history and remember how the actions of a few helped shape the way we live today. I think back on the rich history of the electric cooperative movement and how a small group of determined individuals were able to improve their quality of life and the quality of life for all those who would come after them.

Every day, Monroe County Electric Cooperative (MCEC) members and employees pay homage to the legacy of our cooperative founders. And, because we are a part of an electric cooperative, we know we have the power to impact our present and shape the future, just like those who came before us.

Through grassroots advocacy efforts, we help influence policy decisions that will affect our communities now and for years to come. We are the catalyst for change in our communities. We leverage our collective power to get things done. From our action.coop campaign that sends a message to our legislators to not penalize the coal industry with regulations that will lead to higher

electric rates, to the development of a rural water system to areas that have low quality drinking water, we are committed to our community.

We work together, partnering with other co-ops, local businesses and community organizers to achieve economic development goals. Creating better opportunities and increasing the quality of life for our families and communities – just as our founding co-op members did.

We understand that the decisions we make today could greatly affect how future generations live, so we invest in energy efficiency programs that protect our future generations while still providing high-quality, affordable electric power. MCEC provides free energy audits to our membership that helps to identify and correct weatherization issues in the home and business. We offer rebate programs that provide incentives for efficient heating/cooling equipment.

Cooperatives are helping to build the next generation of leadership through our Youth Tour Programs; sending high school students to

Washington, D.C. to meet with lawmakers and get an up-close view of how our government functions. Youth Tour participants leave our nation's capital feeling energized. It inspires them to make a difference in their communities and gives them a new perspective. Youth Tour provides young people from our communities with an opportunity they may otherwise have never known.

All of these things, plus so much more, are what make up the cooperative difference. This Fourth of July, as we think about the future of electric cooperatives and how we will continue to shape our country and our society, MCEC remembers what it took to bring power to our communities and let the determination of those who came before us, guide us.



Give your home's energy use a vacation when you're on vacation

Going on vacation? Even if you plan to be away for just a few days, you can save energy in your home when you travel. Here's a tip from Monroe County Electric Cooperative (MCEC) that can give your utility bill a break when you take a break.

Water heater. Turn down the temperature on your water heater, so it doesn't keep the water warm while you are away. Or, talk to an energy expert at MCEC about turning off the water heater.

Thermostat. During hot weather, turn the thermostat higher on your air conditioning system. That way, you'll save energy while ensuring that your home doesn't get too warm. If you're away during the winter, lower the temperature on your furnace. The house can be as cool as 50 degrees without the risk of your pipes freezing.

Refrigerator. Depending on the food stored in your fridge, you may be able to turn the thermostat as high as 38 degrees without risking spoilage. Storing water-filled bottles in your refrigerator can prevent temperature fluctuations, which will save energy. Food in the freezer compartment will stay frozen if the temperature is -5 degrees.

Lights. Turn off all lights in your home. You may want to install timers on one or two lights for security.

Electronics. Unless you're recording something while away, unplug all of your electronic devices—computer, monitor and printer, TV and cable boxes, DVD player, microwave and digital clocks. Any electronics with digital displays, instant-on



features or remote controls will consume energy even if they're not in use.

For other tips on how to save energy—and money—visit Touchstone Energy's energy-saving website or

call the energy advisor at MCEC. Find out how the little changes add up at www.TogetherWeSave.com.

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Water and electricity don't mix

When the weather gets hot, we head outdoors for sun and fun. Keep in mind some tips from the Electrical Safety Foundation International to make sure everyone has a safe summer.

- Awareness of electrical hazards around water while swimming and boating can prevent deaths and injuries. Always remember that water and electricity don't mix.
- Sailboats often have masts of 30 feet or more, which are dangerous when they come into contact with overhead power lines. Look up as you get close to shore, and stay at least 10 feet away from overhead lines. Coming into contact with an energized power line causes serious and sometimes lethal electric shock.
- Use covers on outdoor power outlets, especially near swimming pools. Keep cords and electrical devices away from the water, and never handle electrical items before you've dried off.
- Use a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) to help prevent electrocutions and electrical shock injuries. These devices



The Cooperative Office will be closed Friday, July 4th in observance of Independence Day.



Use extreme caution when using electrical appliances outdoors, and make sure the outlet has ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) protection to prevent shocks.

interrupt the flow of power when they sense a surge. Portable GFCIs require no tools to install and are available at prices ranging from \$12 to \$30.

Working with large appliances

If your air conditioner goes out, keep a few things in mind before you start poking around. Large appliances, such as air conditioners, are responsible for almost 20 percent of consumer-product electrocutions each year.

- Understand your electrical system—know which fuse or circuit breaker controls each switch, light, and outlet.
- Use a circuit tester—always test before you touch.
- Make sure circuits are turned off before starting work and take measures to ensure they're not turned back on while working.

Lightning and storms

Lightning strikes are fatal in 10 percent of victims, and 70 percent suffer serious long-term effects, according to the National Weather Service. Because lightning can travel

sideways for up to 10 miles, blue skies are not a sign of safety. If you hear thunder, take cover.

- If weather conditions indicate a storm, stay inside—away from doors and windows—or seek shelter in a low-lying area away from trees and any metal, including sheds, clotheslines, poles, and fences. If you're near water, stay as far away as possible.
- If you're in a group, spread out—don't stand close together.
- Indoors, unplug electronics before the storm arrives, and don't use corded phones.
- Avoid plumbing—sinks, bathtubs, faucets.
- Don't forget about your pets. Doghouses are not safe from lightning, and chained animals are easy targets.
- If your home is flooded during a storm, don't turn on appliances or electronics until given the green light by an electrician. If there's standing water, don't go inside. The water could be energized.

Find more safety tips at esfi.org.

Electricity remains a good value compared to other consumer goods

Popular demand and short supply drives the cost of everyday necessities higher. Some price tag changes, like the cost to fill your car's gas tank, are obvious to anyone driving down the road. Other increases at the grocery store are more subtle but still impact your family's bottom line. Compare the average price increase of a few household expenses to see how the rising cost of electricity stacks up.

The cost for a gallon of unleaded gasoline shot up 11.1 percent on average every year between 2002 and 2012, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Eggs don't go over easy; the cost for a dozen eggs increased 7.8 percent. Bakers watched the price of flour rise 5.7 percent, and apples felt the crunch with a jump of 4.8 percent every year.

The cost of electricity grew at a slower pace—3.2 percent a year, on average. The U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) reports homeowners across the nation pay an average of 11.7 cents per kWh.

Unlike eggs or apples, electricity is a 24-hour-a-day commodity. Despite energy efficiency advancements, the

average household uses more electronic gadgets and needs more power to operate them every year.

In the past 30 years, the amount of residential electricity used by appliances and electronics has increased from 17 percent to 31 percent according to the Residential Energy Consumption Survey by EIA.

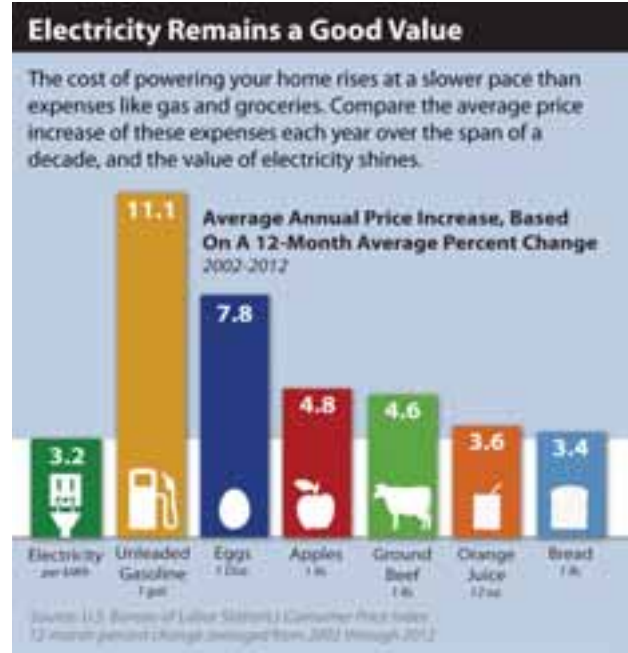
More homes than ever have major appliances and central air conditioning. Digital video recorders (DVRs), computers and multiple televisions are common.

Your local electric cooperative works hard to keep your electricity safe, reliable and affordable, but you play a role in the price of your power. Just as you might cut back on eggs

if your budget is tight, we can work with you to cut your monthly electric bill. See how little changes add up at www.TogetherWeSave.com.

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Energy Information Administration.

Graphic and article by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.



MCEC Line Outages - May 2014

Date	Duration	# Out	Location	Cause Desc	Substation
05/04/14	0:59	618	Waterloo Area	Large Animals	N Waterloo
05/04/14	3:54	6	Stage Coach Subdivision	Other, Deterioration	East Carondelet
05/07/14	3:24	17	Kropp Rd	Trees, Other	Millstadt
05/07/14	3:57	26	Sand Rock/Quirin Rd	Vehicles Or Machinery	Smithton
05/18/14	1:21	35	Brand Lake Dr	Small Animals Or Birds	Poe
05/25/14	2:19	185	Smithton Area	Other, Faulty Equipment	Smithton
05/26/14	1:10	2	Konarcik Rd	Lightning	Waterloo
05/27/14	0:53	4	Rt 156	Trees, Other	Waterloo