



## Please join us in taking action



Alan W. Wattles

### Across The President's Desk

Every day we rely on electricity. We depend on the refrigerator to keep our food fresh, air conditioning and heating to keep us comfortable and, of course, lights on a daily basis. We also depend on electricity to re-charge our electronics. Whether it's a phone to keep in touch with relatives, a tablet for students' homework or the laptop on which we stream movies, these devices all have become integral to our daily routine.

At work, we rely on electricity to power our computers, phones, lights and productivity. Without this consistent, reliable and affordable power source, businesses would relocate, jobs would be lost and prices of goods and services would increase.

That's why Monroe County Electric Co-Operative (MCEC) is concerned about the latest proposed regulations on existing power plants from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This round of rules impacts the power plants on which we rely every day.

Cooperatives are different from other electric utilities. We are owned by our member-consumers. When we look at our power options, we are not driven to make a profit. We strive to provide the most affordable and reliable electricity possible to our members. That's why we

built power plants 20 to 30 years ago to keep costs affordable and supply our own power.

Being a part of a power cooperative has allowed MCEC to keep costs affordable. For co-ops, "energy independence" in part means independence from expensive, profit-driven power.

However, these new regulations could endanger this independent supply of affordable electric power. Electric cooperatives, like MCEC, are small businesses. We're not large utilities with several different power plants operating with a variety of fuel sources. We built power plants when it made sense for our members. But the way the new rules are written, we might have to close our plant and lose our independence.

The EPA has drafted a regulation that adversely and disproportionately affects electric cooperatives. That's why we are telling the EPA that this regulation simply does not work for us.

When the EPA drafted regulations limiting greenhouse gases from new power plants, the agency received more than five hundred thousand emails opposing the regulation. Today we ask you once

again, please join us. Visit [www.Action.coop](http://www.Action.coop) again and tell the EPA you cannot afford these new regulations.

Your voice was heard last time. The EPA took note of electric cooperatives, and our collective voice showed that co-op consumers were engaged.

That's why we're asking you to take action again. The EPA needs to understand the impact that these regulations have on the people at the end of the power lines. Electric cooperative members are uniquely situated to help the EPA understand that these regulations will cost Americans more money.

These regulations also will cost Americans jobs. These regulations will not work for rural Americans.

Please, also ask your friends and neighbors to join us. Ask them to visit [www.Action.coop](http://www.Action.coop) and tell the EPA co-op consumers cannot afford regulation. We can balance environmental needs with affordability and reliability.

America needs a healthy economy. America needs jobs. America needs manufacturing. And affordable, reliable electricity is the linchpin to these vital assets.



RENEWABLE ENERGY



NUCLEAR POWER



NATURAL GAS



CLEAN COAL

America needs an  
**ALL OF THE ABOVE STRATEGY**  
to keep electric bills affordable

**TELL THE EPA TO RECONSIDER  
ITS "ALL-BUT-ONE" APPROACH**

**ACTION.COOP**

# Ask us about our Prepaid Electric Service (PES) program—It can help you save on your energy bills

Last spring, Monroe County Electric Co-Operative (MCEC) began offering its new **Prepaid Electric program (PES)**, a “pay as you go” electric service.

Would it be easier for you to make weekly or biweekly payments rather than one larger payment each month? If so, our **Prepaid Electric Service (PES)** program may be for you.

Our PES program accounts never pay a late charge and avoid paying higher deposits. The initial installation fee is \$50. The member decides how much money should be kept in the PES account so the program fits YOUR budget. You can buy enough energy to last until payday, or you can buy enough to last several months. The choice is yours!

There are several convenient payment options for PES accounts. You can pay online using MCEC’s SmartHub e-bill system on your computer or your smart phone, or call our interactive payment system at 1-855-874-5350. You can also stop by our office at 6132 State Route 3, Waterloo, IL 62298 or mail your payment to P.O. Box 128, Waterloo, IL 62298.

Members can receive three different types of low-balance notifications to alert them if funds are low in the PES account (below \$20). The

member on our PES program can get an email and/or text alert if they have a computer/text capable phone and can also receive an automated phone call. Should the PES account run out of money and service is disconnected, members can simply make a payment to their PES account and your power will be reconnected automatically. It’s easy to do.

Your electric service will be no different when on a PES program. You will have the same reliable electric service you have always had. Since you receive low balance and pending disconnect notifications prior to disconnect, you will know if you are experiencing a power outage or have just run out of funds in your PES account. And, if you have a power outage, MCEC crews will still be on standby, ready to assist you. To report power outages, call us at 939-7171 or 1-800-757-7433.

MCEC members, especially those with an increased meter deposit, can easily convert to a PrePaid Account. If the account is at a zero balance, the existing deposit can be applied to the account, often covering the minimum PES program initial funds required of \$25. Any remaining deposit will then be used to cover your existing electric account balance.

If your current balance due exceeds

your original deposit amount, you can still switch to our PES program. We will use your deposit to pay down your bill, and then work out a payment plan for the remainder.

Rest assured that our member services representatives will work with you to provide a smooth transition to the PES program. The program works best for members who want to take control of their electric account and energy use. By monitoring your consumption on a regular basis, you will begin to notice patterns in your day-to-day use. Any variation from this pattern, such as a house guest, or a vacation, will become evident. Also, monitoring and controlling daily use can help keep your power costs down. Statistics show that pre-pay electricity programs help lower electric consumption due to member awareness of usage patterns. It is another benefit of the program and you might just save some of your energy dollars!

Call Monroe County Electric Co-Operative today at 939-7171 or 1-800-757-7433 so we can get you more information about switching to our PrePaid Electric Service program!

## MCEC Line Outages - July 2014

Date	Duration	# Out	Location	Cause Desc	Sub
07/02/14	1:22	9	Powell Rd	Small Animals or Birds	Poe
07/07/14	1:22	13	Heck Rd	Large Animals	Waterloo
07/08/14	2:34	17	Columbia Quarry Dr	Trees, Other	Millstadt
07/08/14	1:19	7	Five Forks Rd	Other, Faulty Equipment	New Athens
07/08/14	1:41	32	LL Rd	No Cause Code	New Athens
07/16/14	1:11	38	Mule Rd	Small Animals or Birds	East Carondelet
07/18/14	1:30	13	Bruer Lake/Deer Run Rd	Maintenance	New Athens
07/28/14	2:27	20	Long Lake Rd/Steffan Rd	Other, Deterioration	Fults

## Q & A

### Prepaid Electric Service

The Prepaid Electric Service (PES) is a pay-as-you-go plan that offers the opportunity to pay when you want, in the amounts you want. Instead of receiving a traditional paper bill that is generated once each month, your electric use is calculated daily. PES members never pay a late charge, and avoid paying large deposits.

#### What is the PES electric rate?

The rate on PES is identical to the rate you are currently on.

#### Is PES the correct payment option for me?

Would it be easier for you to make weekly or biweekly payments rather than one larger payment each month? If so, PES may be for you. Also, statistics indicate that prepay electricity programs help lower electric consumption due to member awareness of usage patterns. So, any member interested in monitoring his or her electric use may benefit from PES.

#### What if I have already paid a deposit... can I get it back immediately?

Your deposit will be used to pay any existing balances with the cooperative first, then any remaining deposit amount will be credited to your new PES account.

If your existing balance due exceeds your deposit amount, you can still switch to PES. Your deposit will pay down any existing balances, and the remaining balance due to the cooperative will be rolled into a payment plan through PES.

Rest assured, our member service representatives will work with you to provide a smooth transition to PES.

#### How do I make a payment or purchase credits?

Credits can be purchased in several convenient ways. You can purchase credits 24x7 via our SmartHub App, [mcec.org](http://mcec.org), or by calling our interactive



payment system at (855) 874-5350. Credits can also be purchased by calling or visiting our office (6132 State Route 3, Waterloo, IL 62298) or by mail.

#### How much money should I keep in my PES account?

That is entirely up to you! The beauty of PES is that it fits YOUR budget. You can buy enough credits to last until payday, or you can buy enough to last several months. The choice is yours!

#### Will my electric service be different if I utilize PES?

No. You will have the same reliable electric service you have always had. Since you will receive low balance and pending disconnect notifications prior to disconnect, you will know if you are experiencing a power outage or have just run out of credits on your PES account. And, if you have a power outage, our crews will still be on standby, ready to assist you. To report power outages, call us at 939-7171 or 1-800-757-7433.

#### What if my PES account balance runs low?

PES is a self-managed program. You will receive a low balance notice by e-mail, text or telephone (or any combination thereof). This will give you time to purchase credits before the meter actually stops. If you do not purchase more credits, the meter will stop, and the power will turn off. Once more credits

are purchased, your power will be reconnected automatically.

#### How do I make PES work for me?

PES works best for people who want to take control of their electric account and energy use. By monitoring your consumption on a regular basis, you will begin to notice patterns in your day-to-day use. Any variation from this pattern, such as a house guest, or a vacation, will become evident as you monitor your account. Monitoring and controlling daily use can help keep your power costs down.

#### What if I want to know my energy use on an hourly basis rather than on a daily basis?

From our SmartHub App or website ([mcec.org](http://mcec.org)) you can see how much energy you use down to the hour.

#### How long must I stay on the PES program once I sign up?

There is no minimum period to stay on PES after you signup. However once you request to be taken off PES and put on a traditional postpaid rate you may not return to PES for a year.

Call us at 939-7171 or  
1-800-757-7433  
for more information.  
You can also email us at  
[amasterson@mcec.org](mailto:amasterson@mcec.org).

## SmartHub is here



## Make Informed Choices

Go to our website at [www.mcec.org](http://www.mcec.org) and click “smarthub” and get connected to our on-line system. It will allow you to view your past usage (even down to the hour), pay your bill if you’d like, receive reminders and report electric outages.

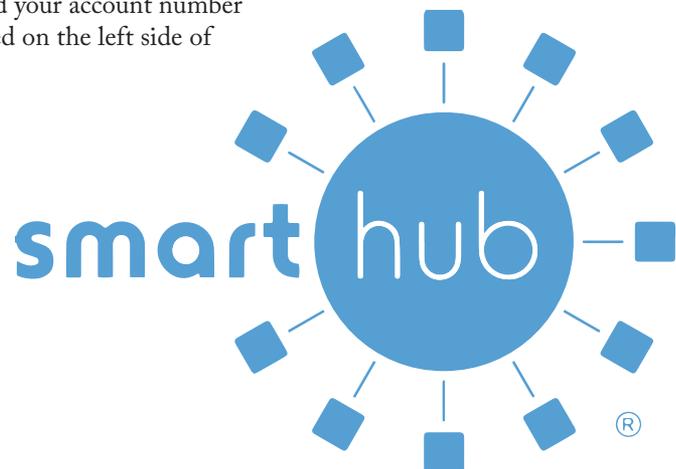
- View your electric usage down to the hour
- See how temperature affects heating & cooling use
- Compare usage between months with temp. data
- Set usage markers, thresholds and alerts
- Receive bill reminders
- Report outages

### Log On Today!

For new users, from your desktop, simply go to our website at [www.mcec.org](http://www.mcec.org) and click “smarthub” on the right side. Setting up a new online account is quick and simple. You will need your account number which is listed on the left side of your bill.

### Free Mobile Apps

To download the free mobile apps for Apple or Android devices, search for “smarthub” in your app store.



## Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, Inc.

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