

MONROE

ELECTRIC NEWS

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Happy Holidays 

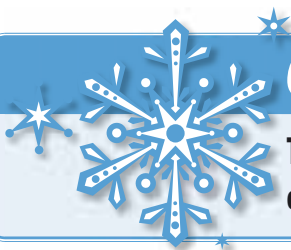
*from the directors and
employees of Monroe
County Electric*

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Office Closings

The office will be closed Friday, December 24th for Christmas and Friday, December 31st for New Year's Day.



Christmas trees for sale:

The Waterloo Optimist Club will again be selling Christmas trees next to the new location of Diehl's Florist on Roger's Street in Waterloo starting on Saturday, November 27th. A second new location this year will be at the Celebration Station, next to Sonic (formerly the old Concord Presby-

terian Church.

The Waterloo Optimist Club is an organization committed to raising money for the benefit of the youth of our community.

Please show your support by purchasing your Christmas tree from the Optimist Club tree lot and helping our area youth.

How to Care for Your Farm-Grown Fresh Christmas Tree

When a Christmas tree is cut, over half of its weight is water. With proper care, you can maintain the quality of your displayed trees. Below are tips relating to the care of displayed trees:

- Displaying trees in water in a traditional reservoir type stand is the most effective way of maintaining their freshness and minimizing needle loss problems.
- Make a fresh cut to remove about a 1/2-inch thick disk of wood from the base of the trunk before putting the tree in the stand. Make the cut perpendicular to the stem axis. Don't cut the trunk at an angle, or into a v-shape, which makes it far more difficult to hold the tree in the stand and also reduces the amount of water available to the tree.
- Once home, place the tree in water as soon as possible. Most species can go 6 to 8 hours after cutting the trunk and still absorb water. Don't bruise the cut surface or get it dirty.
- If needed, trees can be temporarily stored for several days in a cool location. Place the freshly cut trunk in a bucket that is kept full of water.
- To display the trees indoors, use a stand with an adequate water holding capacity for the tree. As a general rule, stands should pro-



vide 1 quart of water per inch of stem diameter. Devices are available that help maintain a constant water level in the stand.

- Use a stand that fits your tree. Avoid whittling the sides of the trunk down to fit a stand. The outer layers of wood are the most efficient in absorbing water and should not be removed.
 - Keep displayed trees away from sources of heat (fireplaces, heaters, heat vents and direct sunlight). Lowering the room temperature will slow the drying process, resulting in less water consumption each day.
 - The temperature of the water used to fill the stand is not im-
- portant and does not affect water uptake.
 - Check the stand daily to make sure that the level of water does not go below the base of the tree. With many stands, there can still be water in the stand even though the base of the tree is no longer submerged in water.
 - Drilling a hole in the base of the trunk does not improve water uptake.
 - Use of lights that produce low heat, such as miniature or LED lights, will reduce drying of the tree.
 - Always inspect light sets prior to placing them on the tree. If a string of lights is damaged, replace with a new set.
 - Do not overload electrical circuits.
 - Always turn off the tree lights when leaving the house or when going to bed.
 - Monitor the tree for freshness. After Christmas or if the tree is dry, remove it from the house.
 - Go to www.realchristmastrees.org and type in your ZIP code to find a recycling program near you.
 - Never burn any part of a Christmas tree in a wood stove or fireplace.
 - To learn more about Christmas trees go to www.christmastree.org, home of the National Christmas Tree Association.

The Air Eliminator Carton

You can help someone save big by weatherproofing their home. Here are some easy-to-use items that can help keep the cold air out and warm air in. And for an extra touch include a “gift certificate” to spend an afternoon helping the giftee weatherize. Some items to consider include:

- Window shrink film (if windows are older)
- Rope caulk (to stop air infiltration at windows and doors)
- Tube caulk (to stop air around windows outdoors)
- Foam weather seal strips (to stop air around doorways)
- Spray foam (for large holes, around pipes, under sinks, etc)
- Switch and outlet foam gaskets (to stop air from coming in around outlets)
- Energy saving dryer vent closure system (eliminates air from coming back in through the vent. Available online for about \$20. You can even use it to vent your bathroom fan or range hood).

A Bucket of Hot Water

Water heating and water usage can be major expenses for some. Some items to include in your bucket are:

- Bath and kitchen faucet aerators (they reduce the amount of water used)
- A hot water heater blanket (if their water heater is electric)
- Water pipe foam insulators (these tubes of foam insulation can help reduce heat loss as water runs through pipes in crawlspaces or unheated basements)
- Showerheads (all of them on the market today are water-efficient, some more than others)
- Water Tummy (a low-flow toilet is hard to wrap but not so a water tummy. The unique name may be enough to intrigue some giftees. It's a refillable bag inserted into the tank of a regular flow toilet to reduce the amount of water stored for flushing. Less energy for pumping the water to and from your toilet as well as less water used. Toilets account for about 30 percent of a home's water usage.)

Electronics Accessories

Here are some accessories to consider adding to other gifts.

- If you give electronics consider giving rechargeable batteries and a charger. They are more expensive initially but with well-used items they can really save.
- If you give a cell phone or accessory you could also give a crank-up charger, solar charger or even a wind-powered charger for your “greener” relatives.
- If you give a computer or television consider a power strip. Power strips can reduce the amount of power drawn by computer and television accessories when not in use. With a simple touch of the switch, you can turn off power to multiple items at once. And a couple of models can sense when devices are not in use and shut off the power automatically.



Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, Inc.

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An Energy-Efficient Christmas

And just for fun here's a little play on the 12 days of Christmas to remind you of all the ways you can save. It might not flow as well as the 12 days of Christmas but hum the tune as you read this and you'll get where we were coming from.

On the twelfth day of Christmas my energy-efficient loved one gave to me:

- 12 CFLs
- 11 outlet gaskets
- 10 motion sensors
- 9 insulation inches
- 8 beads of caulk
- 7 squirts of spray foam
- 6 bits of weather stripping
- 5 Energy Star appliances
- 4 power strips
- 3 night lights
- 2 furnace filters

And 1 programmable thermostat



Reminder: Deadline for 2010 IEC Scholarship applications approaching

Seven scholarships of \$1,250 each will be awarded in 2010 to eligible high school seniors through the Illinois Electric Cooperative (IEC) Memorial Scholarship Program.

Four scholarships will be awarded to students who are the sons or daughters of an Illinois electric cooperative member receiving service from

the cooperative. A fifth scholarship, the Earl W. Struck Memorial Scholarship, will be awarded to a student who is the son or daughter of an Illinois electric cooperative employee. The sixth and seventh scholarships are reserved for students enrolling full-time at a two-year Illinois community college who are the sons or

daughters of Illinois electric cooperative members, employees or directors. Individuals wanting to apply or needing further information should call the cooperative at (800) 757-7433 or 939-7171 ext. 15 or contact your local guidance counselor. **The deadline for applications is Jan. 1, 2011.**

MCEC Line Outages - October 2010

Date	Duration	# Out	Location	Cause Desc	Substation
10/2/10	4:53	18	Arbor Ridge Subdivision	OTHER, DETERIORATION	Millstadt
10/8/10	1:35	2	Imbs Station Rd	SMALL ANIMALS OR BIRDS	East Carondelet
10/17/10	0:46	23	Lou Dell Subdivision	SMALL ANIMALS OR BIRDS	N. Waterloo
10/18/10	0:59	163	Sportsman Rd	OTHER, DETERIORATION	Poe
10/26/10	1:28	34	Press Rd	TREES, OTHER	Smithton

R-U Properly Insulated?

Proper Insulation can lead to lower heating & cooling costs

One of the simplest ways to reduce your home's heating and cooling costs – and improve comfort – involves installing proper insulation. Doing so provides resistance to heat flow. The more heat flow resistance your insulation provides, the lower your heating and cooling costs.

Heat flows naturally from a warmer to a cooler space. In winter, heat moves directly from heated living spaces to adjacent unheated attics, garages, basements, and even outdoors. It can also travel indirectly through interior ceilings, walls, and floors — wherever there is a difference in temperature.

During the summer cooling season, the reverse takes place. Heat flows from the outdoors to the interior of a house.

To maintain comfort, heat lost in the winter must be replaced by your heating system. In summer, heat gained must be removed by your

cooling system. Proper insulation, though, decreases heat flow.

Heat flow resistance is measured or rated in terms of its R-value. The higher the R-value, the greater the insulation's effectiveness.

When calculating the R-value of a multilayered installation, add R-values of individual layers. Installing more insulation in your home increases the R-value.

Insulation effectiveness also depends on how and where it's installed. For example, insulation that gets compressed will not provide its full rated R-value. The overall R-value of a wall or ceiling will be somewhat different from the R-value of the insulation because some heat flows around the insulation through studs and joists. Therefore, it's important to properly install your insulation to achieve the maximum R-value.

If you have R-19 or less insulation

in your attic, consider bringing it up to R-38 in moderate climates, R-49 in cold climates.

- In cold climates, if you have R-11 or less floor insulation, consider bringing it up to R-25.
- Blown in wet cellulose or high-density foam insulation can stop infiltration better than fiberglass.
- Proper installation of insulation should prevent moisture in your walls.
- Perimeter insulation around crawl-spaces, basements, and ceiling insulation are the most important places to have adequate insulation.
- During construction, seal all openings, plates and walls with foam or caulk.
- Insulate and seal ducts in attics, crawl spaces, garages, and other unheated areas.

For more information, visit <http://www.eere.energy.gov>