


Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

# Hi-Lites



## Scholarships now available

Last year, Coles-Moultrie Electric Cooperative provided financial assistance to six members or their dependents for their college education. The Board of Directors has agreed to provide six \$500 scholarships again this year.

To qualify, an applicant must be either a Coles-Moultrie Electric Cooperative member, or under 21 years of age and a legal dependent of a Coles-Moultrie member. The applicant must be enrolled in either a 2- or 4-year degree program at an accredited institution in Illinois. The applicant cannot have previously received a Coles-Moultrie Electric Cooperative

scholarship. Coles-Moultrie Electric Cooperative employees, directors, and any of their dependents are ineligible. Priority will be given to one applicant who is specializing in Electrical Engineering.

Applications must be received at Coles-Moultrie Electric's office (104 Dewitt Avenue East, P.O. Box 709, Mattoon, IL 61938) no later than April 28, 2017. To obtain an application form, contact Kelsey Hawkins, Coles-Moultrie Electric Cooperative, P. O. Box 709, Mattoon, IL 61938 or e-mail at [khawkins@cmec.coop](mailto:khawkins@cmec.coop) or call 235-0341 or toll-free 888-661-2632.



## 2017 Energy Efficiency and Conservation Rebate

If you have made changes or updates to your home to save energy, you may qualify for a rebate from CMEC. Please contact our office at 217-235-0341 or toll free at 888-661-2632 for questions or to request a form.

## DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

Don't forget to spring forward on **March 12!** Set your clocks ahead by one hour.



P.O. Box 709 (104 Dewitt Ave., East)  
 Mattoon, Illinois 61938

Phone: 217/235-0341 or  
 Toll-Free: 1-888-661-CMEC (2632)

Office hours:  
 Monday-Friday  
 7:30a.m. - 4:30p.m.

**Chairman**

Jeffery D. Hudson..... Charleston

**Vice Chairperson**

Debbie Albin.....Mattoon

**Secretary**

John Bowers ..... Lovington

**Treasurer**

Steve Shrader.....Westfield

**Director**

Dean Robison..... Windsor  
 Chris Christman..... Sullivan  
 Scott Uphoff.....Mattoon

**President/CEO**

Kim Leftwich

**To report an outage**

- First check your fuses or circuit breakers and see if your neighbors have power.
- If the problem appears to be with the cooperative's lines, call the office at the toll free number (888-661-2632), give the name the service is listed under, and report any hazardous conditions.

**Board Report**

**January 5, 2017 Board Meeting**

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Coles-Moultrie Electric Cooperative was held at the offices of the Cooperative at 104 Dewitt Avenue, East, Mattoon, Illinois at 7pm on the 5th day of January, 2017, pursuant to notice duly given. The meeting was called to order by Jeff Hudson, Chairman. After calling the roll, the following directors were present: Scott Uphoff, Chris Christman, Jeff Hudson, Steve Shrader, Debbie Albin, Dean Robison, and John Bowers being a quorum of the directors of the Cooperative. Also present were Kim Leftwich - President/CEO, Amy Borntrager - Chief Financial Officer, Jim Wallace - Director of Operations & Engineering and Darla Powell - Director of Human Resources/Office Manager.

Motion was made by Albin to approve the agenda as amended. Motion seconded. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Shrader to approve the Consent Calendar as submitted, the November Safety & Training report, the 12/1/2016 Regular Board meeting minutes and the 12/16/2016 Special Board meeting minutes.

Motion seconded. Motion passed.

Staff presented the 2017 Operating Budget.

After discussion, motion was made by Christman to approve the 2017 Operating Budget. Motion seconded. Motion carried.

Amy Borntrager gave the financial report. CMEC's year to date sales are up 4.15% in kWh and 3.83% in revenue. The increase is because of additional load on our small and large commercial accounts. Residential sales were slightly up from last November by 2.21%.

NITS charges were adjusted on the November billing due to an NITS return of equity refund. On the preliminary billing from PPI the refund was given back as a transmission credit for the month and is based on CMEC's allocation to the monthly costs from November 2013-February 2015. However, when the PPI bills were sent out Ameren had revised the transmission peak for June 2016 a 2nd time and CMEC's NITS charges were actually under billed to CMEC members.

Debbie Albin reviewed the AIEC Board Meeting.

Scott Uphoff discussed the PPI Board Meeting.

Kim Leftwich gave the President/CEO report.

**December 29, 2016 Board Meeting**

**Mattoon Public Library Board**

- Carla Bradbury, CMEC Service Representative, has been appointed to the Mattoon Public Library Board.

**Eastern Illinois University (EIU) and CMEC Collaboration**

- EIU/CMEC/Coles Together met again on December 13th to continue outlining measures to develop a robust energy policy/energy innovation platform in east central Illinois. EIU will solicit participation from other academic institutions; CMEC/Coles Together will solicit community partners including major business concerns and philanthropic entities as well as governmental and non-governmental agencies.

**2017 CEO Close-Up Conference - Veteran's initiative**

- KBL to attend the conference January 8-11; will reintroduce the Serve Our Coops/Serve Our Country veterans' employment initiative in the First General Session of the conference.

**Rate Design/Cost of Service**

- CFC's Bill Edwards and Aaron Stallings met with CMEC Staff December 15th to consider rate redesign concepts. A discussion of the approach will be included in information for the Strategic Planning meeting.

**Marketing and Member Services**

- CMEC was offered a study through Collaborative Efficiency to consider beneficial electrification (BE) measures. The study focused on residential BE and was offered as a free service to CMEC under a grant from U.S. DOE to Collaborative Efficiency and their partners. Largely, the effort targeted potential conversion of propane users to electric usage. Their study revealed that CMEC has considerable penetration, approaching 50% of our residential members - a figure much higher than most cooperatives. Further comprehensive efforts to secure additional residential conversions doesn't appear fruitful although we likely will keep incentives in place. We believe we have much better opportunity in commercial/industrial BE and are seeking programs to capitalize on C/I efforts.
- Key Accounts Luncheon/Seminar is set for April 19th and will be held at LakeLand College with an expanded agenda.

- Bright Options Solar - will begin radio ads shortly to promote the plan.

**CMEC Connect**

- CMEC Connect experienced significant growth during the year and accomplished multiple upgrades for enhanced service.

- Set and met our installation goal for the year – 300 services by the end of 2016. Drew Haumesser, Carla Bradbury and contractor Blake Stiff were instrumental in meeting our objective.
- Both Windstream and Adams Telephone Cooperative fiber connections are up and running; will discontinue bandwidth from Consolidated Communications once we've transferred our internal e-mail.

#### President/CEO Report

- CMEC Connect has topped out at over 200 Mbps usage routinely in the last several weeks. Beneficially, we had developed the two circuits (Windstream/Adams) at 250 Mbps and can readily distribute the load between the circuits as needed. Each circuit can be upgraded to higher levels as we discern the need.
- CMEC Connect continues to develop “spur” sites where small pockets of customers may be served cost effectively; two sites were recently installed, one near Trilla and one north of Charleston.
- CMEC Connect staff met with Cell One, former cell service and ISP in the eastern part of our territory, to discuss purchase of excess remaining equipment and materials; many materials have usefulness and likely we can obtain inexpensively to serve our needs.

#### LED Lighting

- 1080 LED security lights have been installed, replacing a like number of mercury vapor and high pressure sodium fixtures; ornamental retrofits have been secured for change out of those fixtures. Servicemen continue to change lamps as time permits.

#### Engineering

- Engineering produced 317 work orders for 2016
- Awaiting quotes for refurbishing the substation transformer removed from Neoga substation; once complete, it will be used to replace the three single phase transformers at Fairgrange substation (eliminating the last of single phase transformers).
- Reviewed accomplishments for the 2016 Construction Work Plan; a separate report is provided for your interest.
- Finalized a pole attachment agreement with Ameren; the agreement allows Ameren to attach repeaters for the gas system AMI where it intersects with our territory.
- Developing a plan with PPI wherein they will maintain a stock of substation transformers available to PPI members in the event of a substation transformer failure; benefit to CMEC – no outlay of capital to have a standby set of transformers or to perform bi-annual testing and maintenance; purchase from PPI when needed.
- Evaluating replacement of the Bruce substation transformer; working through PPI and Toth & Associates; best case – we would acquire a specially wound transformer,

“in-phase” with other substations so that no outages would have to be taken to service the Bruce substation, a highly inconvenient and disruptive situation to members served off Bruce.

- 92 Siemens voltage regulator panels to be delivered January 20th and training will be provided to all field personnel; the panels have a communications unit capability offering us
- enhanced distribution automation down the road.
- Finalizing a job description for a Shared Electrical Engineer position, shared with Eastern Illini and employed by PPI. Each will only pay for the percent of service time attributed to each party. Offers means to “build a bench.”

#### Fleet

- Inspected new bucket truck; delivery early January (budgeted 2016); considering serviceman's truck – a demonstrator model, saving \$30,000 – budgeted for 2017 and likely will deliver late January.

#### Operations

- PPI transmission pole replacement complete but for 2 poles that CMEC will finish.
- Tree trimming supporting PPI transmission clearance has been completed for the year by CMEC and Shade Tree personnel; CMEC reimbursed by PPI.
- 8 of 10 planned gang operated switches installed in 2016; the switches are highly beneficial when opening or closing three-phase normal open points.
- W1D and W1E miles are close to completion; all poles set and stringing of conductor begins the first week of January. All poles were stake dropped by Anixter and material for the project was delivered in an enclosed semi-trailer placed on site reducing the need for crew handling. Allowed for much improved crew productivity with less time at the office/pole yard, more time on site, and ready availability of material. We are evaluating the cost savings/cost avoidance experienced – it is significant.

#### IT

- Working on transition to Office 365; the move eliminates reliance on Consolidated Communications and provides multiple benefits:
  - Reduces cost from \$1500/month to \$220/month.
  - Avoids need to continually seek Office suite software upgrades that typically cost \$800/user or +/- \$20,000
  - Provides complete back-up of office data and email transactions
  - Allows PPI to perform email spam filtering as additional security.
  - Permits more mobility for the workforce.
- New OSI/PPI supported SCADA live in December; continuing to add data points

and has means to support greatly expanded distribution automation.

- Four office servers were transferred to PPI's Hosted Server Plan this month.
- Upgrading office radio repeaters to improve voice radio communication
- Continuing computer software upgrades to eliminate security vulnerabilities.
- Moving all scanned documents from LibertyNet to NISC Document Vault providing significantly more accessibility and usefulness and will complete by end of the year.

#### GIS

- As of the end of December, approximately 65% of all poles have complete attributes assigned to them; 23,017 poles out of 35,676 are mapped (map attached that depicts progress).
- Migrated GIS to PPI Hosted Servers this month. As of 12/29/2016, GIS Server is accessible 24/7 to all CMEC users.
- Joined Multi-Speak initiative through NRECA; Multi-Speak is a platform software that permits communication among software systems, particularly beneficial in facilitating integration of systems.

#### Safety

- Reviewed and trained employees on Mayday Procedures; installed a centrally located monitor that displays GPS location of each CMEC vehicle and hand-held radio in the event of a Mayday situation; written instructions are being revised for clarity and completeness for all responders.
- All personnel completed Online Safety Training for 2016.
- Outside personnel underwent refresher training on use of the VON Fault Locator

#### Information items were reviewed as follows:

- Bylaw Committee Meeting – 01/10/2017
- CMEC Strategic Planning Sessions – 01/30/2017 & 01/31/2017
- Facebook comment by former Director Joe Bicknell
- 2017 CMEC Annual Meeting Timeline
- Thank you from a member
- 2016 Energy Assistance to our members
- Illinois Budget Impasse
- Illustration of Impact of VM/VOI
- Motion was made by Robison to go into executive session. Motion seconded. Motion carried.
- Motion was made by Uphoff to come out of executive session. Motion seconded. Motion passed.
- Motion was made by Christman to adjourn.
- Motion seconded. Motion passed

# Plant the Right Tree in the Right Place

For more tips on smart tree planting in your community, contact your local electric cooperative or visit [www.ArborDay.org](http://www.ArborDay.org).

Trees beautify our neighborhoods, and when planted in the right spot, can even help lower energy bills. But the wrong tree in the wrong place can be a hazard... especially to power lines.

## LARGE TREES

Height/spread of more than 40 feet, such as:

- Maple
- Birch
- Oak
- Sweetgum
- Spruce
- Linden
- Pine

## MEDIUM TREES

Height/spread of 25 to 40 feet, such as:

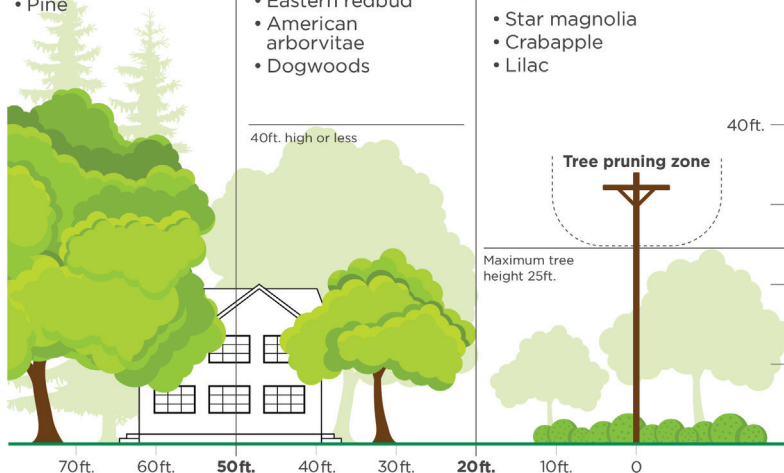
- Washington hawthorn
- Goldenrain tree
- Eastern redbud
- American arborvitae
- Dogwoods

## SMALL TREES

Avoid planting within 20 feet of power lines. When planting within 20 feet is unavoidable, use only shrubs and small trees.

Height/spread of no more than 25 feet such as:

- Star magnolia
- Crabapple
- Lilac



Be safe! Always call 811 before you dig to locate any buried utility lines.

Source: The Arbor Day Foundation and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association



## Mark Your Calendars Now!

Coles-Moultrie Electric Cooperative's 78th Annual Meeting

FRIDAY,  
June 16, 2017  
Peterson Park, Mattoon

### Registration

10:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.

### Buffet Lunch

11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

### Business Session

1 p.m.

Watch for more information in upcoming Hi-Lites!



A Touchstone Energy® Partner



## Member Exchange

### For Sale

- Suzuki GZ250 motorcycle. Exceptionally nice condition. Only ridden by older person. Must see to appreciate. Asking \$1,500. Call 217-345-5048.
- National Home Gardening Club books, set of 31, covering topics of shade, container, vegetable, and herb gardening. Also, books on bird and butterfly gardens as well as problem solving. These are nice hardback editions in great shape. \$50. Call 217-345-5048.

Member Exchange is a free service for CMEC members.