



www.mcdonoughpower.com

The Wire

McDonough Power Cooperative • Macomb, Illinois 61455



Operation Round-Up Funds Three Local Organizations

Just under \$7,500 in Operation Round-Up grants was awarded for the fourth quarter of 2016. Area organizations benefiting from the grants are as follows: **5330B3-255B**

- **West Prairie Elementary School -**
\$956.36 for heart rate monitors and heart rate charts for their physical education program.
- **Bridgeway Foundation -**
\$2,500 for their Night Sky program
- **Warren Achievement Center, Inc. -**
\$4,000 toward their Achiever Medical Fund



The Operation Round-Up program is funded by members of McDonough Power Cooperative who have their bills rounded up to the nearest dollar. The extra pennies are used to support community betterment projects. Since the initial round of funding in January 2016, the program has donated \$28,143.32 to local organizations. The next deadline to apply for an Operation Round-Up grant is April 3, 2017. For more details, visit www.mcdonoughpower.com or contact Kelly Hamm at (309) 833-2101.





1210 West Jackson Street
P.O. Box 352
Macomb, Illinois
61455-0352

309-833-2101

www.mcdonoughpower.com

Office hours:
7 a.m. - 4 p.m. - Weekdays



DIRECTORS

Jeff Moore, Chairman

Walt Lewis, Vice Chairman

Steve Youngquist, Secretary

David Lueck, Treasurer

Jerry Riggins

Mike Cox

Bob Dwyer

Steve Hall

Steve Lynn

John D. McMillan, Attorney

**All Co-op Electric
Outages 837-1400**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative
The power of human connections



The importance of interconnection agreements

Electric cooperatives are responsible for maintaining a safe, reliable electric grid to power the communities they serve. As an increasing number of consumers install grid-connected distributed generation systems, like solar panels or small wind turbines, electric co-ops are prepared to assist members while still maintaining the safety of the grid.

Grid-connected generation systems allow you to power your home or business with renewable energy, but the system must be connected to the grid to keep power flowing when the sun does not shine or the wind does not blow. In most cases, these systems must be interconnected to feed excess power back into the electric grid.

Co-op members who are interested in distributed generation systems for their home or business should contact McDonough Power first. We want to help you choose a system that includes the safety and power quality components necessary to keep you, co-op crews and members of the community safe. If a storm hits and a power outage occurs, for example, distributed

generation systems must be able to properly disconnect from the electric grid to ensure lineworkers are not injured or electrocuted while restoring power.

An interconnection agreement must be reviewed and signed before your distributed generation system is connected to the electric grid. The agreement is intended to ensure safe, reliable and quality electric service for all. **8124KC2-858C**

In addition to safety concerns, members who are interested in distributed generation systems should contact McDonough Power to review applicable metering rates. When grid-connected systems generate more electricity than you can use, the excess electricity is fed back into the grid and used elsewhere. This means your utility bill will be adjusted to reflect the additional power your system provided.

The way we generate and use electricity is evolving. Let's work together to ensure a safe, reliable electric system. McDonough Power is here to help. If you have questions about grid-connected generation systems, please contact us.

Ways to Pay

■ Pay Online

Set up your account through our website. Make one-time payments, schedule a future payment or a recurring draft. Also, view your usage and billing history. www.mcdonoughpower.com

■ Automatic Draft

Set up a recurring draft from your checking account or credit card. Your bill will indicate the amount to be drafted prior to the draft date.

■ E-Check

Using the information from a check, make a payment from your checking account.

■ Credit Card

Pay with your Visa or MasterCard.

■ Drop Box

Make your payment any time of the day or night. Simply drop it in the box located in front of our office.

■ Mail

Mail your payment to us at McDonough Power Cooperative, P.O. Box 352, Macomb, IL 61455.

■ In Person

We're open weekdays, 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

POWER at your Fingertips

Our Member Service Portal provides members with a virtual service representative – 24 hours a day...7 days a week...365 days a year! Weekends and holidays are included!

The Member Service Portal is a single point of access to a variety of options including bill payment, energy use monitoring, plus account and billing history.

Although we've had the portal available for several years, one great tool is the Alerts and Reminders, found under the My Alerts tab within the portal. Alerts and Reminders can be used to help monitor your account activity. Whether receiving a text on your cell phone or having an email sent to your preferred account, you have a choice of how you would like us to inform you of changes to your account.

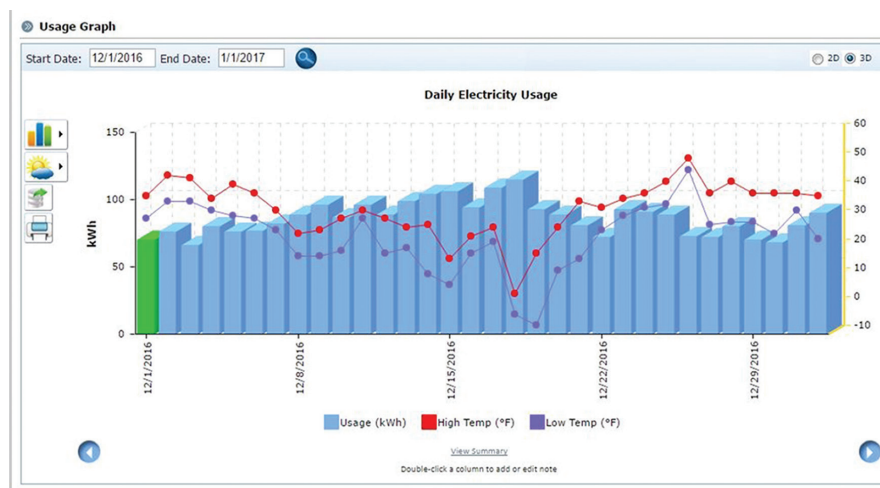
We have found that the High Energy Usage Alert comes in handy for those who may have a second home or a hunting cabin on our lines – a place that isn't occupied on a regular basis. With this particular alert, members can customize it to be alerted via email or text message when the daily energy usage reaches a certain dollar amount. **541C5-270C**

Another great feature is the capability to set up your own bank or credit card draft. This allows members to schedule their own automatic payment draft – pick any day of the month to pay your bill. We do ask that members avoid scheduling payments between the 1st and the 5th of the month since that is when the bills are cycled.

Probably one of the best tools available is the Usage History. Through the portal, you can track your consumption – monthly, even hourly. Simply click on the My Usage tab and select Usage History.

Customize your graph by selecting a particular date range and adding weather overlays. Click on a certain day to see hourly data for that particular day. This is a powerful tool in helping you understand your energy consumption.

Members not currently utilizing the Member Service Portal are encouraged to check it out – there are so many powerful tools available at your fingertips and registering is quick and easy. Visit us online at www.mcdonoughpower.com and click on the Online Bill Payment button to get started.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Warmer weather is on the way! Use energy efficient window treatments or coverings, like blinds, shades and films, to reduce heat gain in your home. These devices not only improve the look of your home but also reduce energy costs.

Source: U.S Department of Energy

Member Prizes

Every month we will have four map location numbers hidden throughout The Wire. If you find the map location number that corresponds to the one on your bill (found above the usage graph), call our office and identify your number and the page that it is on. If correct, you will win a \$10 credit on your next electric bill.

Sow Seeds of Safety This Season

Planting season is a physically and mentally draining time for farmers, and in the rush to get the seed in the ground, focus on safety can fade to the background. Overhead power lines present a life-threatening risk for those working with large machinery. It is important to exercise caution and respect the power of electricity. Safe Electricity encourages farmers to sow seeds of safety this season and take recommended safety precautions.

Before beginning work in a field, take time to note the location of power lines and equipment. Before getting out of the cab, look up and double check the area around your machinery to make sure it is not in contact with overhead lines. Always be aware of how close tractors, loaders, antennas, extended arms, and other equipment are to electrical lines. Remember to lower extensions to the lowest setting when moving loads.

Even if using an auto-guidance system, stay focused on the location of the tractor and its equipment while in the field, and be ready to take action yourself

if necessary. Do not simply rely on the estimations of a GPS system, but also consider using a spotter to alert you if you come close to making contact. A spotter can see sagging wires that would not be visible on a GPS and provide additional verification that you can pass safely.

Your machinery does not have to touch electrical lines for electrocution to occur, so keep at least 10 feet of space between machinery and overhead lines. Assume that all lines are energized, and if you come across a downed pole or wire, never attempt to move it yourself. **5310D1-260A**

If your equipment does make contact with a power line, do not leave the cab. Immediately call 911 to have the utility notified. Warn others to stay away, and wait for the utility crew to cut the power. Never try to disentangle equipment on your own.

The only reason to exit equipment that has come into contact with overhead lines is if the equipment is on fire, which is very rare. However, if this is the case, jump off the equipment with your

feet together and without touching the ground and vehicle at the same time. Then, still keeping your feet together, hop to safety as you leave the area.

For more information on electrical safety, go to SafeElectricity.org.

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

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



Phone Number Update • Phone Number Update • Phone Number Update • Phone Number Update

When there is a major outage after hours, McDonough Power is equipped with an automated outage reporting system. This allows calls to be taken faster and more effectively. This system is only used when a major outage occurs affecting a large number of members after hours. If the automated system doesn't recognize the number you called from, it will ask for the primary number on file. The primary number is the main number attached to your account. In order for this system to operate efficiently, it is important the cooperative have your primary phone number on file. Please complete the form below and return it with your payment or you may call the office at (309) 833-2101.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Phone Number Update

Name: _____

Account Number(s): _____

Primary Phone Number: _____

Secondary Phone Number: _____

**We need to have your phone number on file for outage reporting.
Help us update our records by completing
this form and returning it with your payment. Thank you!**

Return to: McDonough Power, P.O. Box 352, Macomb, IL 61455 or call us at (309) 833-2101