

Safety presents for the ones you love



The holidays are just around the corner. Do you have shopping lists ready for each member of your family? Although they are not going to win "oohs" and "ahs" when presents are opened, here are some important gifts you may have forgotten that will show your loved ones how much you care.

■ SMOKE DETECTORS

One smoke detector is definitely not enough. December, January and February are the leading months for home fires and associated deaths in the United States. Install smoke detectors near bedrooms and on each floor of your home. Test smoke detectors monthly and replace batteries at least once a year. A good rule of thumb is to change your batteries when you change your clocks. Have children help test and change the batteries so they are familiar with the location and sound of the smoke detectors.

■ FIRE EXTINGUISHER

Every kitchen should have a fire extinguisher that is rated for grease and electrical fires. It is also a good idea to have fire extinguishers near the furnace, fireplace, garage and anywhere else a fire may start in the home. Ensure that every able-bodied person in the home is trained on how to use a fire extinguisher. If you do have to use a fire extinguisher, always be sure that you have a clear way out in case you can't put out the fire.

■ CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS

Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas that is the result of burning fuel for furnaces, unvented kerosene and gas space heaters, stoves or automobile exhaust. More than 200 people in the United States die each year and many more become seriously sick from carbon monoxide poisoning. The risk of carbon monoxide poisoning increases during the winter as more people use furnaces, space heaters and fireplaces. The best way

to ensure the safety of your family from carbon monoxide poisoning is a carbon monoxide detector. Install carbon monoxide detectors near sleeping areas. Carbon monoxide detectors should meet the Underwriters Laboratories (UL) standards, have a long-term warranty and be easily tested and reset to ensure proper functioning. Research the various product features to see what best suits your family.

■ GROUND FAULT CIRCUIT INTERRUPTER (GFCI)

A ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) is designed to protect people from severe or fatal electric shocks or electric burns by monitoring electricity flowing in a circuit and switching off power to that circuit if it senses any changes in the electric current. For example, one of your kitchen appliances has a bare wire inside touching the metal case. The metal case of the appliance is now charged with electricity. If you touch the appliance with one hand while the other hand is touching a grounded metal object, such as your water faucet, your body has just become an unintentional electric path to the ground. A GFCI would have switched off the electric current the moment it sensed the change in the electric current, preventing personal injury.

Portable GFCIs are widely available and easily plug into any electrical receptacle. Qualified electricians can install permanent circuit breaker and receptacle type GFCIs. All GFCIs should be tested once a month to ensure they are working properly.

For more information on safety products, visit the National Safety Council website at www.nsc.org, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at www.cdc.gov/safeusa/ and Consumer Product Safety Commission website at www.cpsc.gov/CPSC/PUBS/.

IEC Memorial Scholarship forms still available

There's still time to apply for the \$1,000 IEC scholarships. Four will be given away this year, with three being given to the son or daughter of an Illinois electric

cooperative member, and the other going to the daughter or son of a cooperative employee or director. The deadline for entries is



Jan. 1, 2002. See your school counselor or call Allan at (618) 939-7171 or (800) 757-7433 for further details.

We can't avoid downed power lines in the winter

Winter is here. And your electric co-op is ready for it. But no matter how well we prepare, we cannot avoid downed power lines. Hours of freezing rain can snap a

power line without warning. Snow-bound trees can fall, taking several lines down with them. If you spot a downed power line, please stay away from it. Call us immediately at

939-7171 or (800) 757-7433. We'll repair it and restore your power as quickly as possible, rain or shine, day or night.

Emergency preparedness

Every year at Christmas time, we hear on the news where families have lost everything due to a fire. If a fire should strike your home, are you ready? You and your family should have a safety routine that you've practiced. You should have fire extinguishers rated for all types of fires, including electrical fires, easily accessible on every floor of your home. Everyone

should know how to safely exit the house in case of fire. You should keep your smoke detectors working, checking, and changing the batteries on a regular schedule.

But here's a very simple factor that you may not have considered. If you or anyone in your family regularly uses eyeglasses, hearing aids, a cane, or other assistance device, it should be immediately available.

When you go to bed at night, make sure glasses and hearing aids are within arm's reach, so you won't have to stumble out into a dangerous situation without being able to see, hear or move as well as possible.

The bottom line is to be prepared in case of an emergency. The best way to do that is to plan ahead.

Source: *National Electrical Safety Foundation* (www.nesf.org).

Safety tips for the Holidays

As the holidays approach, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission urges people to look for and eliminate potential danger spots from holiday lights and decorations that could result in fires or injuries. To ensure your holiday is safe and happy, CPSC recommends the following:

Trees:

- When purchasing an artificial tree, look for a label indicating that it is "fire resistant."
- When purchasing a live tree, check for freshness, evidenced by needles that are hard to pull from branches, and a trunk butt that is



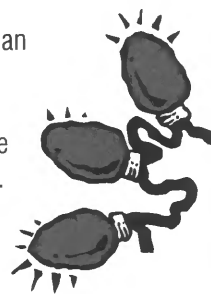
sticky with resin.

- When setting up your tree, place it away from fireplaces and radiators and keep the stand filled with water.
- Use only non-combustible or flame-resistant materials to trim a tree.
- Never use lighted candles on a tree or near other evergreens.

Lights:

- Use only lights that have been tested for safety by a recognized testing laboratory.
- Check each set of lights for broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires, or loose connections and discard damaged sets.

- Use no more than three standard-size sets of lights per single extension cord.
- Do not use electric lights on a metallic tree, as the tree may become charged with electricity from faulty lights.
- Fasten outdoor lights to trees, house walls or other supports to protect them from wind damage.
- Use insulated staples or special hooks available at hardware stores.
- Turn off all lights when you go to bed or leave the house.



Students encouraged to apply for 2002 IEC Memorial Scholarships

Joseph Fellin, president/ceo of Monroe County Electric Cooperative, has announced that for the seventh consecutive year the Illinois electric cooperatives will award \$1,000 academic scholarships to high school seniors. The four scholarships are being awarded through the Illinois Electric Cooperative (IEC) Memorial Scholarship Program. Because of the scholarship program's success, an additional scholarship was added again this year for children of cooperative members.

High school seniors pursuing a college education in the state of Illinois are eligible to participate in the program. Three of the four scholarships will be awarded to the child of an electric cooperative member. The other \$ 1,000 award will go to the child of an electric cooperative director or employee. Deadline for applications to be returned to the cooperative is Jan. 1, 2002.

"The purpose of the scholarship program is to assist electric cooperative youth while honoring past



rural electric leaders through memorial gifts," said Fellin. "MCEC and other Illinois cooperatives want to make a difference in their communities. One of the best ways we can do that is by lending a hand to our youth."

Candidates are judged on the basis of grade point average, college entrance exam scores, work and volunteer experience, school and civic activities, and a short essay that demonstrates their knowledge of electric cooperatives.

The IEC Memorial Scholarship program was established in 1994 by the board of directors of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives. Individuals wanting to apply for the scholarship should contact their high school guidance counselor. For further information on the IEC Memorial Scholarship Program, contact Monroe County Electric at (618) 939-7171 or (800) 757-7433 and ask for Allan Masterson, or ask your high school guidance counselor.

Your window air conditioner may still be cooling your home this winter

When you turned off your window air conditioner this fall, it may not have stopped cooling your home. If it doesn't fit properly, it's allowing cold air to sneak in around the sides, top and bottom. So, the colder it gets outside, the more cool air you get inside. That puts an extra strain on your heating system and costs you more

in energy expenses. An easy way to find out if your air conditioner is cooling down your home is to simply pass your hand across the area surrounding it on a cold, windy day. If you feel a draft, head for your local hardware store. They'll show you an easy, inexpensive way to stop the cold air.

If you depend on life-support equipment, we need to know.

While Monroe County Electric Cooperative strives to maintain the best possible service with a minimum of service interruptions - occasional outages, either planned or uncontrolled, will occur from time to time.

Monroe County Electric Cooperative needs to know the name and location of cooperative members who depend on life-support equipment. We keep a registry of members on life support equipment, and it is impor-

tant this information be current and accurate. We will make every effort to give priority to restoring service to members on life-support systems or contacting them to let them know when extended outages may occur.

If you or a member of your family depend on life-support equipment, please contact us at (618) 939-7171 or (800) 757-7433.



To America's heroes: thank you.



Touchstone Energy[®]
Cooperatives
The power of human connections



HOLIDAY

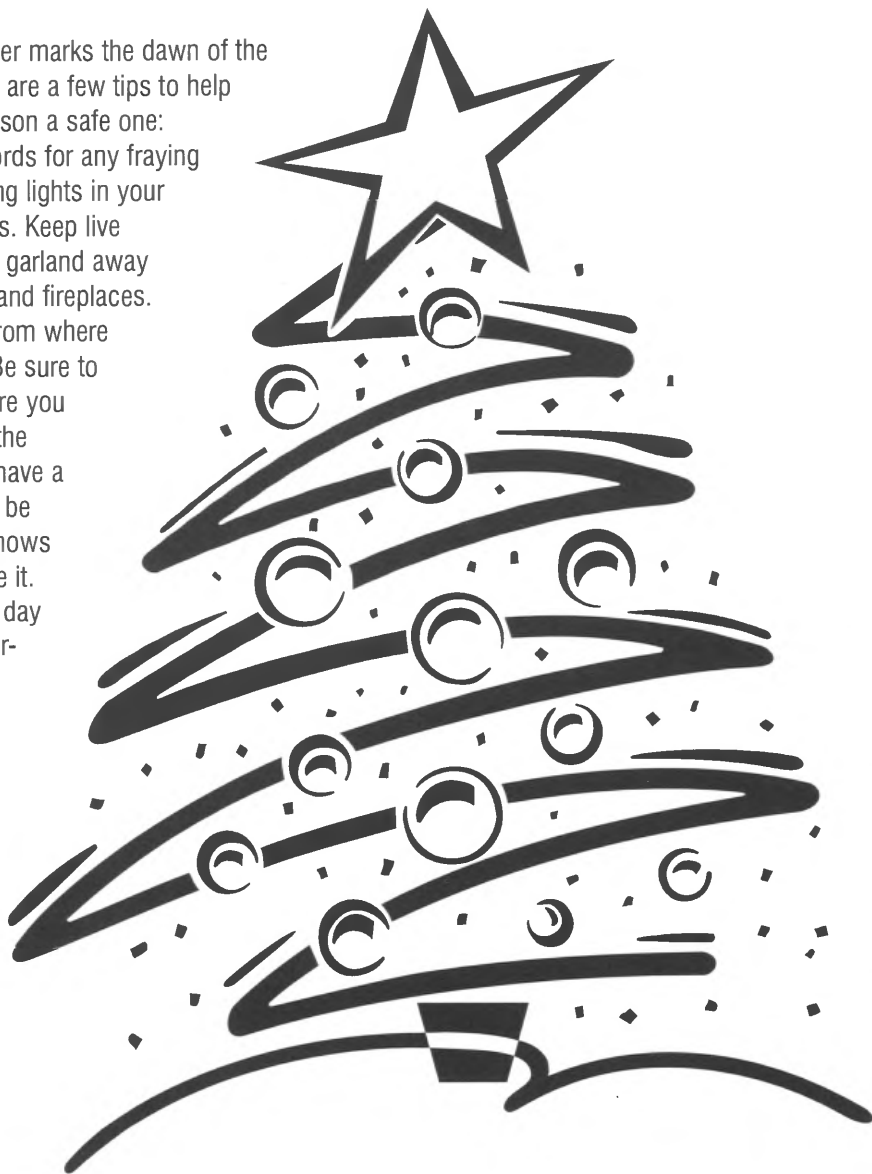
tips to keep you safe

The month of November marks the dawn of the holiday season. Here are a few tips to help keep this holiday season a safe one:

Check all electric cords for any fraying or shorts. Replace any missing lights in your decorations or strings of lights. Keep live Christmas trees, wreaths and garland away from space heaters, candles and fireplaces. Keep burning candles away from where they could be knocked over. Be sure to turn decorative lights off before you leave your home or retire for the evening. If you don't already have a fire extinguisher, get one, and be sure everyone in the house knows where it is and how to operate it. And last, but not least, pick a day each year to change the batteries in your smoke detectors and test them to make sure they're working.

During every holiday season, thousands of deadly home fires are caused by one of these factors. Don't let your home or your family become a statistic.

For more information about holiday safety, call your local electric cooperative.



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Electric News

MONROE COUNTY
ELECTRIC
CO-OPERATIVE, INC.
WATERLOO, ILLINOIS
(618) 939-7171
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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Joseph J. Fellin

Across the President's desk

A series of local member meetings have been scheduled for four locations in the cooperative service territory during November. These meetings will give you an opportunity to learn about your cooperative while you visit with cooperative personnel, friends and neighbors.

At the area meetings we will bring you up to date on cooperative activities and operations. We will set aside a few minutes to answer questions you may have concerning your cooperative.

Each member or family member attending these meetings will receive a year 2002 Saturday Evening Post Appointment Calendar. Five \$10 credits on electric bills will be awarded as attendance prizes in a drawing at the conclusion of each meeting. Refreshments and a fellowship period will close the event.

A post card will be mailed to each member announcing the meeting in their area. If you can not attend the meeting in your area, please feel free to attend one of the other scheduled meetings listed below:

2001 area meetings - dates and locations (All meetings begin at 7:00 p.m.)	
Thursday, November 1	VFW Hall - Millstadt
Monday, November 5	Eschy's Restaurant - Maestown
Wednesday, November 7	Hecker Community Center - Hecker
Thursday, November 8	Monroe County Electric Cooperative-Waterloo

Verizon Wireless day set for Nov. 9

A Verizon Wireless representative will be at your cooperative office on Friday, November 9th from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. The representative will be here to answer questions and will have several models of phones on hand. If you're not able to be here at that time and would like to talk to the representative, you may call our office either before or during those hours and the representative will call you back. Through Verizon Wireless, your cooperative is able to offer several very competitive rate plans for cell phone service.



THANKSGIVING

Office Closing

Monroe County Electric Co-Operative's office will be closed Monday, November 12 in observance of Veteran's Day; and Thursday and Friday, November 22 and 23, in observance of Thanksgiving.

Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, Inc.

Through

Southern Services, LLC

is now offering

Business and Residential Long Distance Phone Service



Billed by PowerNet Global Communications

Utilizing the Qwest Long Distance Network (The nation's 4th largest carrier)

4.9 cents **6.9 cents**

All calls in Illinois All calls out of state

24 hours a day – 7 days a week – no codes to dial

- Free to join – No monthly fees – No monthly minimum
- No term agreements – Major carrier
- 800 Number 4.9 cents – 6.9 cents per minute – no fees
- Free calling cards 13.9 cents per minute (No surcharge)
- 6 second increment billing (18 second minimum)

Low overseas rates. Call the United Kingdom for just 12 cents per minute.
(Rates may vary from country to country) No fees or service charge.

Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, Inc., in conjunction with Southern Services, LLC, is offering long distance telephone service through PowerNet Global Communications. This long distance service is one of the lowest-cost long distance services available. You can call anywhere in the State of Illinois for a low 4.9 cents per minute or anywhere out of state in the continental United States for 6.9 cents per minute. In addition, you can have your own personal 800 number to receive calls from family members or acquaintances. Incoming calls on your 800 number are billed at the same rates noted above. All rates are the same 24 hours a day-7 days a week. There are no monthly fees, no minimums, or long-term agreements.

For additional information or to enroll by phone call toll free: 1-866-266-7531
Mail application to: Southern Services, LLC, P.O. Box 1478, Mt. Vernon, IL 62864
Applications may be faxed toll free to 1-866-326-6753

DETACH HERE

Name _____ Social Security Number _____

Street _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone Numbers (____) _____ - _____ (____) _____ - _____

Other Services Desired: Toll Free 800 Number Travel Cards...Number of cards requested _____

*If 800 service is desired, enter the telephone number it should ring to (____) _____ - _____
(existing 800 numbers may be transferred to this service...applicable forms are available upon request)

I hereby authorize PowerNet Global Communications, or its designator/agent, Southern Services, LLC, to transfer my long distance service. I agree to financial responsibility for all charges arising from all long distance services provided. The service requested will be provisioned only on the approval of credit for the application. A service charge may be assessed by the local telephone company when they make the carrier change.

Customer Signature _____ Date _____

Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, Inc.

The **Cooperative** Difference. . . **People Working Together** to Find **Solutions**

Finding the best solution by working together. That's what cooperatives are all about.

Member-owned and democratically controlled enterprises, cooperatives belong to the people who use them—people who have organized to provide themselves with the goods and services they need when those needs are not being met by other types of businesses.

All across America, 120 million people are finding



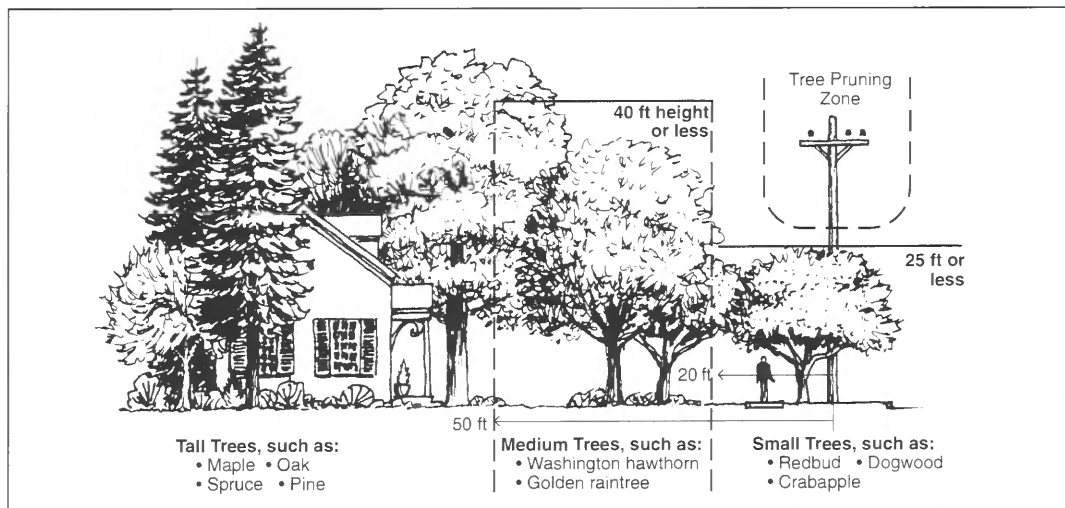
solutions to community needs through their cooperatives. This means cost-savings, less risk and more choices for America's consumers and producers. And more choices mean more innovation in the marketplace and more accessible products and services. Today, more than 48,000 cooperatives exist for farming, banking, housing, child care, health care, electric and telephone service, food retailing and other goods and services.

People trust their cooperatives to help them find solutions. Support your local cooperatives.

For more information about cooperatives, visit www.ncba.org.

Cooperatives
 Businesses People Trust

Please, plant the right tree in the right place



Trees are prized possessions in our yards and communities. They give needed shade in summer, provide protection from winter winds, help clear the air of pollutants, furnish a home for songbirds and wildlife and they please the eye with the beauty of their foliage.

But, when a tree's branches grow too closely to, or actually touch power lines, the result is going to be a power outage or at least a power blink. This is a case of the wrong tree being planted or allowed to grow in the wrong place.

Trees and power lines can co-exist. But the trees must be selected and planted with size and growth characteristics appropriate to their location.

All responsible arborists and their associations subscribe to the following tree-planting rules in relation to overhead power lines:

Low zone - Tree species that will not exceed 25 feet in height can be planted directly beneath power lines and for 20 feet to either side. Taller existing trees in this zone have to be pruned (sometimes drastically) so they'll grow around the wires. We're all in agreement that trees pruned in this manner are not attractive.

Medium Zone - Trees that grow to 40 feet in height at maturity are recommended for areas immediately adjacent to the Low Zone. This will rule out the possibility of limbs overhanging the power lines that

we'll need to prune or trees that can topple into the lines during a bad storm.

Tall Zone - Taller maturing trees should be planted at a distance of 50 feet or more from the power lines. This will insure they'll reach their full potential undisturbed by pruning. There is also little likelihood that wind or ice will cause them to do damage to the power lines.

Please call Monroe County Electric Cooperative at 939-7171 or (800) 757-7433 extension 19 if you have a specific question about trees or for a copy of our brochure - *Avoiding tree and utility conflicts* - that explains where to plant or not to plant trees for your yards.

Heating system health checkup

As fall arrives, it's time to have your heating system checked and serviced by a qualified professional. No matter what kind of system you have, a heating system check-up will ensure that it's operating efficiently and safely before the first cold days arrive.

That heating safety check should also include any portable heaters that you may be using. Make sure the cord to a portable electric heater is in good condition and that the switches and controls are working properly.

If you use a fireplace or wood stove during the winter, have the chimney cleaned and the flues checked out. Taking these simple steps now can help you stay comfortable - and safe - this winter.

Source: National Electric Safety Foundation Web site



MONROE COUNTY
ELECTRIC
CO-OPERATIVE, INC.

WATERLOO, ILLINOIS

618-939-7171

800-757-7433

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative 

October is co-op month

There is a place where buyers and sellers meet and it is usually called a market. There is another place where people meet for business, and that place is called a cooperative.

Through the cooperative form of business, people become something more than buyers or sellers. They become full participants in the free enterprise system. Co-op members not only buy goods and services from the cooperative, they also own the business. They use their combined power to invest their capital, operate their own business, provide themselves and others with goods and services and share the benefits.

Each year, cooperative businesses generate more than \$100

million in economic activity and enhance the lives of more than 100 million Americans. During the month of October, people from every type of cooperative business celebrate their achievements. Cooperatives contribute so great a value to our nation that we should join the celebration.

Consider that cooperative businesses bring into the American free enterprise system people from every walk of life and every economic condition. Cooperatives bring people together for housing, health care, groceries, electricity, hardware, telephone, telecommunications and financial services. Cooperatives are inseparable from our nation's agricultural production, processing and distribution industries.

Earlier in this century, the U.S. Congress, by law, confirmed cooperatives' role in the mainstream of American business. That wisdom has been tested and proven correct year after year, and today cooperative businesses are an irreplaceable part of our economy. As we look around, we can see many examples of how cooperatives have enriched our communities and contributed to our shared prosperity.

Business trends go up and down, and fads and fashions spring up and fade away; but cooperative businesses produce an enduring economic liberty for all people. That liberty is worthy of celebrating and preserving.

Mission Statement

"As a member-owned organization, Monroe County Electric Cooperative's mission is to provide, market and maintain quality electric service and to develop other services that will enhance the growth and welfare of its service area."

Essay contest winners visit Washington

Two area youths spent the week of June 15-22 exploring Washington, D.C. The students met with Illinois congressional leaders and learned about their government during the annual "Youth to Washington" tour. This event, sponsored by the electric and telephone cooperatives of Illinois, began in the late 1950s to introduce rural youths to our democratic form of government and cooperatives.

Left to right; Christine Janson from Gibault High School and Krista Taake from Waterloo High School preparing to depart for their journey to Washington, D.C.

2001: A Youth Odyssey

Youth To Washington

ILLINOIS



Energy tips can help cut utility bills

Using energy wisely can reduce consumption and save money on utility bills. Here are some tips:

1. Seal leaks around doors, windows and other openings, such as pipes or ducts with caulking or weather-stripping.
2. Set thermostats between 65 and 70 degrees in the winter, at least 5 degrees lower when sleeping, and at 58 degrees when away from home for more than a few hours. (Warmer temperatures are recommended for homes with ill or elderly persons or infants).
3. Set water heater temperatures at 140 degrees (at 120 degrees in homes with infants or elderly persons to guard against accidental scalding), and install water-flow restrictors in showerheads and faucets.
4. Change filters or clean the filters in heating and cooling units at least twice a year. Close vents and doors in unused rooms. If pipes or ducts run through unheated areas, insulate them.
5. Use drapes, shutters, awnings, shade trees, glass with reflective film or solar screens to keep sunlight out in the summer and in during the winter.
6. Check to see if attic and basement (or crawl space) have the recommended level of insulation.
7. If you have a woodburning fireplace, consider installing a decorative electric fireplace with a blower. It can save on energy costs compared with wood and supplement the heating in the room. That may allow you to turn down the setting on your thermostat. It will also dramatically reduce the air pollution created from burning wood.
8. Consider storm or thermal windows and doors or double paned glass. A less-expensive alternative is plastic sheeting, which can be temporarily fastened over doors and windows to retain heat or air conditioning.
9. Be sure that dishwashers, washing machines and clothes dryers are fully loaded before running.
10. When buying new appliances, compare energy efficiency ratings and annual operating costs. Always look for the Energy Star label when shopping for new appliances.

Members' Economic Participation

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the co-

op. Members allocate surpluses for such purposes as developing the cooperative and setting up capital reserves.

Keep it safe around **SCHOOL BUSES**

Summer's over and children are heading back to school. Last year, more than 9,000 students were injured and 26 were killed in bus related incidents. You can help stop these incidents by doing your part to ensure students' safety around buses.

- Always stop your vehicle when a bus is stopped with its stop sign extended from either side of the road.
- Keep a close watch for students that are walking, biking or skating to school.

STUDENTS SHOULD FOLLOW THESE GUIDELINES:

- Take 10 giant steps in front of a bus before crossing the street. (This will enable the driver to clearly see all students as they cross.)
- Never walk behind a bus.
- Watch for cars and cross streets carefully.
- Stay away from the bus until the driver says it is okay to approach.



Taking a closer look at your drinking **WATER**



Whether you have a private water supply, such as a well, or tap into the public water supply, you should be aware of the possibility of contamination. Even though drinking water supplies are regulated for safety by the state, by the time the water comes out of your faucet at home there could be a problem.

Approximately 4.1 million people use water from underground sources in Illinois, according to the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency's Bureau of Water. Thirty percent of communities with their own groundwater supply withdraw that supply from an unconfined aquifer - an aquifer susceptible to pollution because a natural geological barrier, like limestone, does not protect them from pollutants on land. According to the Illinois EPA, 10 percent of the community water supply wells in the state are affected by contaminants.

Those not dependant on the community supplies for their water are the approximately 400,000 private well users in the state. Private wells can threaten area water quality when improperly abandoned. Private sewage-disposal systems, such as septic tanks, can also be hazardous to the community's drinking water. To learn how to properly seal your well, contact the Illinois Water Sealing Coalition at (217) 782-5830, or visit their web site, <http://dnr.state.il.us/orep/inrin/eq/well/trial.htm>.

Proper location of wells will reduce the risk of contamination to pub-

lic and private water supplies. A well must never be closer than 10 feet to sewers, 50 feet to septic tanks, or 75 feet to sewage seepage fields, according to the Illinois Department of Public Health, the department responsible for regulating private wells in the state. They suggest using a bleach solution of chlorine to disinfect a contaminated well, directions for which you can find on the department's web site, www.idph.state.il.us/envhealth/factsheets/drilledwlsFS.htm.

Even if your water is supplied by a large public or municipal body, and therefore regulated for safety by the federal and state governments, there is a chance that deteriorating pipes in your home could cause contamination, according to the University of Illinois Agricultural Cooperative Extension Service. The service suggests testing your water, whether publicly or privately supplied, if the following conditions apply: your water has a bad taste or smell; your household plumbing contains lead pipes, brass fittings, or lead-solder joints; you need a water softener; your water leaves scaly residues and soap scum; the pipes and plumbing show signs of erosion. You can request that the Illinois Department of Public Health collect a sample of your water for testing, free of charge, or you can contact your local extension office for a list of state-wide water-testing labs.

The Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC) meets regularly to


discuss rural water issues. According to Don Wood, director of government relations for AIEC, this type of involvement is part of the state's co-ops ongoing mission to improve the living standards of cooperative members. For example, in 1994 the AIEC was instrumental in passing legislation allowing residents access to the water of Lake Shelbyville. Many electric cooperatives are also involved in rural water projects.

For more information, visit www.waterandhealth.org, a web site geared toward public health and water quality news, or the Illinois EPA web site, www.epa.state.il.us/water/water-quality, or call the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791. To order publications from the Natural Resource, Agriculture, and Engineering Service on the quality of drinking water, call (607) 255-7654 or visit their web site, www.nraes.org. The number for the Illinois Department of Public Health is (800) 825-3518. Send e-mail inquiries about the state's water quality to Paul Terrio, pjterrio@usgs.gov, at the U.S. Geological survey. You can also contact your Illinois cooperative extension service for more information regarding the quality of your water supply at www.extension.uiuc.edu.

Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, Inc.

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MONROE



Electric News

MONROE COUNTY
ELECTRIC
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WATERLOO, ILLINOIS

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A Touchstone Energy Cooperative



Joseph J. Fellin

Across the President's desk

A great buy!

In a day when it seems that a dollar buys less and less, the men and women working at your local electric cooperative are doing what they can to make sure you get the most out of every dollar you spend with them.

Consumer education is one of the primary missions of your cooperative. Wasting energy not only costs you money - it forces your utility to buy more power from generating plants, adding to the cost of operating the system and adding to your electric bill. This publication and others like it regularly carry information to help you keep your electric bill as low as possible.

Whether it's a tip on installing energy-efficient lighting in your home, insulating your water heater, or just changing the filters in your heat pump, your local co-op wants to help you get the best deal you can on the electricity you buy.

That's what makes energy conservation a partnership between you and your local electric co-op. While you work at home to keep your power bill as low as possible, the local co-op is working to put the latest technology in place to better manage the system of power plants, wires and substations that bring the power to you. This new technology adds to the savings that can be passed on to you.

Another important part of your electric co-op's commitment to you is safety education. Electricity is such a normal part of our life that it is easy to forget it can be dangerous if improperly used. Your cooperative reminds you to play it safe by installing child safety plugs in unused outlets, being careful when using electric tools near water, and having underground cables marked prior to digging around your home. Electric co-

ops also provide important information to local schools to help teach children about electric safety.

In an effort to reduce the number of fatal or potentially deadly electricity-related accidents, the Illinois Electric Council, (a coalition of electric cooperatives, investor-owned utilities and the University of Illinois), launched a "Safe Electricity Campaign." The campaign will consist of two primary components. The first is a series of radio and television public service announcements that focus on electrical hazards and related safety tips. The second is a Web site - SafeElectricity.org - that provides information on a wide range of electrical safety topics, including safety around the home, youth safety, agribusiness and contractor safety. The goal is to minimize electrical accidents and the devastation that they cause to families. According to the National Electrical Safety foundation, electrical accidents claim about 370 lives, cause more than 1,400 injuries and result in more than 41,000 residential fires. The Consumer Product Safety Commission notes that at least one person is electrocuted every day. Hundreds of thousands of lives are changed forever by these electrical accidents.

Electrical accidents can be prevented. Awareness, a respect for the power of electricity, and an attitude that refuses to let anyone take chances around electricity are the keys. By providing information in a variety of ways, Safe Electricity wants to create and reinforce that awareness and safety-conscious attitude.

Your electric cooperative was created to serve the people it provides power to - not to provide profits to out-of-town power companies. The principle on which we were founded - service to our local communities - is just as strong today as the day we opened our doors. Regardless of how much electricity you use, your local electric cooperative will do everything it can to help.

OFFICE CLOSING

Monroe County Electric Co-Operative's office will be closed Monday, Sept. 3, in observance of Labor Day.



When you take a dip don't get



After the work is done, it's time to play. Pool-side music makes swimming fun, but swimmers can receive a fatal shock if electric stereo equipment makes contact with the water. Keep your boom box far enough away from the water so there is no chance of it being splashed or knocked into the pool. Install GFCIs (ground fault circuit interrupters) on all electrical outlets. Watch for overhead lines when using pool-cleaning equipment. Take a CPR course. And never let young children swim unsupervised.

The young, the old and the overheated

Heat stroke—a serious, sometimes fatal reaction to too much heat—usually attacks the very old, very young, sick, overweight or alcoholic. But heat exhaustion victims are most often young and healthy. These victims simply work or play too long and too hard when the weather is too hot. The result: excessive sweating and dehydration that can lead to heat exhaustion.



Symptoms of heat exhaustion

- Dizziness or feeling faint
- Nausea
- Extreme sweating or clammy skin
- Rapid pulse
- Thirst

Treatment

- Move to the shade or the cool indoors.
- Loosen tight clothing.
- Drink lots of cool (not cold) water in small sips.
- Rest.
- If you don't feel better in a few minutes, call your doctor.

Prevention

- Drink lots of fluids before, during and after your workout.
- Keep your workouts short until you're used to hotter temperatures.

Test yourself

How much do you know about staying healthy while out in the heat? Test yourself by reading the following statements, deciding if they're "fact or fiction," then comparing your answers with the "truth."

1. A single, severe case of sunburn when you're a toddler can result in skin cancer later on. **Fact.** The most serious form of skin cancer, malignant melanoma, is more likely to be caused by single incidents of severe burning while young, rather than years of sun exposure.

2. You sweat off an average of a pint of water when you exercise out in the sun for an hour. **Fiction.** The number's more like two quarts! So the total amount you need to drink before, during and after your activity should be at least that much.

3. Always wear a hat when out in the sun. **Fiction.** While a hat might protect your eyes and face from sun damage, some styles keep your head from releasing heat. If you want to protect your face from the sun, wear a sun visor or a hat that's well ventilated.

4. You can die from over-exposure to the sun. **Fact.** When overheating or high temperatures won't let the body release enough heat through sweating and blood vessel dilation,



heat stroke can result, causing brain damage or even death. The signs: hot, dry skin; high fever; dizziness; nausea; headache; unconsciousness.

5. Ice-cold water is the best treatment for heat stroke victims. **Fact.** But not to drink! Use the water to sponge down the victim's skin. Do this immediately as you wait for the emergency crew to arrive. If the victim's conscious, give small sips of cool, not cold, water.

6. If you use prescription drugs, you may suffer unusual reactions in the sun. **Fact.** In some cases, antihistamines, tranquilizers, oral contraceptives, blood pressure medicines and antibiotics can cause extreme burning or other serious allergic reactions.

7. As long as the temperature is less than 90 degrees it's safe to be active out in the sun. **Fiction.** It's not only temperature

that determines unsafe weather, but humidity levels too. If the temperature rises above 80 degrees and the humidity level is above 80 percent, don't overdo it!



Aren't you tired of lugging bottled water?

- From the shelf to the cart
- From the cart to the checkout
- From the checkout to the cart
- From the cart to the car
- From the car to the kitchen
- From the kitchen to the pantry

PureWater Filtration System only \$475 and only from Monroe County Electric Co-Operative.

6 months financing available



Get ready for LABOR DAY!

Play ball, have a picnic, go swimming, march in a parade, take pictures of the kids. In other words, have fun. To help "make your day", here are some reminders:



- When you cook outdoors, keep away from bushes and dry grass; avoid the wind.
- Make sure someone is always in charge of the grill, barbecue, or campfire.
- Don't use kerosene or gasoline in place of charcoal lighter fluid.
- Appoint an adult or responsible teenager to oversee the children's fun and games, especially swimming.
- And, of course, don't drink and drive.

A good holiday is a safe holiday, and we hope you and your family have a wonderful Labor Day celebration.

Our office will be closed on Monday, Sept. 3rd in observance of the holiday.

Democratic Member Control

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. The elected representa-

tives are accountable to the membership. In electric cooperatives, members have equal voting rights (one vote per member).

Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, Inc.

907 North Illinois Route 3, P.O. Box 128, Waterloo, Illinois 62298
(618) 939-7171

Office hours: Monday through Friday 8 a.m. — 5 p.m. • 800-757-7433

MONROE



Electric News

MONROE COUNTY
ELECTRIC
CO-OPERATIVE, INC.

WATERLOO, ILLINOIS

618-939-7171

800-757-7433

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative 

Groundbreaking for new facility

After 2 years of planning, a new facility for your Monroe County Electric Co-Operative has started to become a reality.

On Monday, June 11, 2001, a groundbreaking ceremony was held for a new 27,000 square foot building located 2 miles south of Waterloo off of Route 3 and also accessing Quarry road.

Among the many guests, several prominent legislatures were in attendance. U. S. Rep. Jerry Costello, state Sen. David Luechtefeld, and state Rep. Daniel Reitz were on hand for the event.

Costello said it was a great day for the cooperative and its members and that he was glad they were getting a new facility. Luechtefeld added there were a lot of good things happening in Monroe County and that a lot of people in his district would trade for that. Adding his congratulations was Reitz who said that co-operatives were good for Illinois. He said that the new site was great and would do well for them.

Also in attendance were County Commissioner, Donald Dietz and Road Commissioner, Carl Vogt.

President/CEO Joseph Fellin said the cost of the project is \$2.8 million, and the co-op expects 80 to 90 percent of the cost to be repaid from the sale of the other facility.

Fellin introduced all the guests in attendance. Board members present were; Chairman Terry Grommet, Vice Chairman Donald Gleiber, Secretary Richard Liefer and other board members, Larry Haas, Larry Kraft, Joel Harres, Walter Amann and Ross Mueller. Staff personnel on hand were Patsy Hoffmann, office manager/bookkeeper, David Stephens, operations superintendent, and Allan Masterson, director of member services.

Representing the architecture firm of Adams & Assoc. were Jim and Rama Adams. Representatives of R.G. Ross Construction Co. were Bob Herr, project manager, Vince Mannino, exec. vice-president, Rich Mueller, vice-president, and Tom Hoff, project



Front row left to right; President/CEO Joseph Fellin, and board members, Richard Liefer, Walter Amann, Joel Harres, Ross Mueller, Larry Haas. Back row; Bob Herr, Project Manager/R.G. Ross Construction, Donald Gleiber and Larry Kraft—board members, U.S. Rep. Jerry Costello, Rep. Dan Reitz, Sen. David Luechtefeld, and Board Chairman Terry Grommet.

superintendent. Also present was Leo Zerjav from Kuhlman Design Group.

Fellin said the new facility will be three times larger than the present facility located at the intersection of Route 3 and North Market Street.

"This new building has been in the works a little over two years," Fellin said. "We have been growing at a rate of about 5 percent a year and need larger facilities."

Terry Grommet, president of MCEC board, said, "This is a great and exciting day for Monroe County Electric. It is a tribute to all who worked at the co-op for the past 63 years." He added MCEC is part of the community, including the Red Bud area, and that they hope this is all part of making it a better community.

With a 74,600 square-foot material yard, the site will cover more than 100,000 square feet.

The cooperative is owned by its members and now serves more than 6,000 accounts.

MCEC started operations in 1938 on Mill Street in downtown Waterloo. In the late sixties, their present facility was constructed just north of Waterloo on Route 3.

Employees attend tree trimming workshop

Two employees of Monroe County Electric Co-Operative attended a line clearance tree trimming school May 8-10, at Lincoln Land Community College in Springfield. The school was hosted by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC). Instructors included Frank Kinnison and Cal Williams of Corn Belt Energy Corporation and Brian Anderson and Roger Stegeman of the AIEC. Instructors taught pruning techniques that prevent disease and train trees to grow away from power lines. Pictured from left are: Steve Drennan and Gary Gilbert.



What to do in an electrical storm

Lightning surges from the clouds to ground along the best conductor around. **Don't be that conductor.**

If you are outside in a storm, these are the things to do:

- Seek shelter. The best shelter is a house or building.
- Get in a car or truck.
- On a golf course, get in your golf cart.
- Caught afoot in the open? Seek low ground. Sit or lie down; it may be uncomfortable, but it may save your life.

Things not to do:

- On a golf course? Don't continue to play. And never hold a metal club in your hand.
- Don't swim. If you are in the water, get out!
- Stay away from metal objects that are lightning conductors.
- Don't stand under a tree. Instead of providing shelter, a wet tree can attract lightning. Never stand out in the open during a storm.

Lightning is usually attracted to the highest object around. **Don't be that object.**

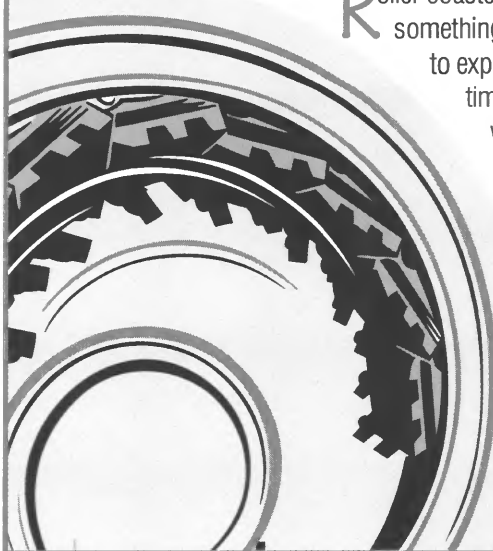
Life doesn't have to be a roller coaster

Roller coasters are the most popular rides at the amusement parks. There is something exhilarating about the extreme highs and lows, never knowing what to expect or what's coming around the bend. Unfortunately life can sometimes be like that. Fluctuating electric usage, due to summer heat or winter cold, can make us feel like we are back on that roller coaster.

Monroe County Electric has two budget payment plans that can help even out the highs and lows of your electric usage. One plan takes your last 12-month average and you pay that amount the next 11-months. The twelfth month you catch up with a debit or credit balance.

The other plan keeps a rolling 12-month average and changes slightly each month. There is no official catch-up month on this plan.

If you are interested in finding out more about these two budget billing plans, please call our office for more details at 939-7171 or 800-757-7433.



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Your electric co-op is here to stay

The electric utility industry is changing every day, and the information you hear can be as dizzying as a merry-go-round. One thing is certain, though, your electric co-op is here to stay. You won't see us

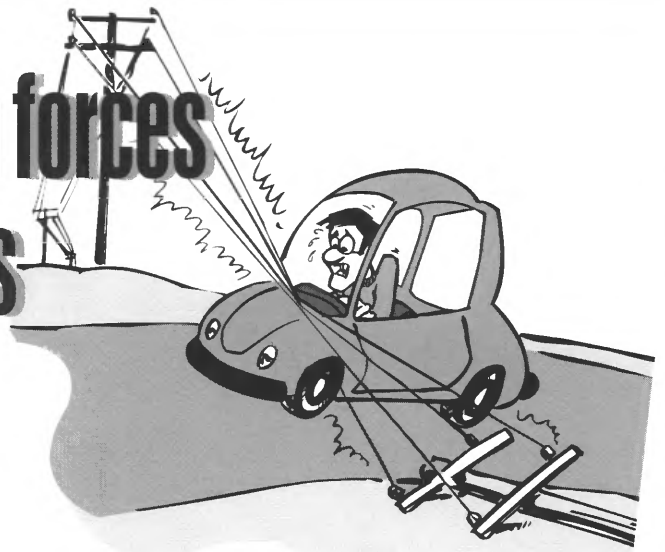
pulling up stakes and cutting services — you'll still see the same friendly faces from your co-op you've always known and trusted right here in your local community.



Electric Cooperatives of Illinois

We've here to serve you and we're working hard to remain your best choice

Illinois utilities join forces to prevent accidents



Last fall a young Illinois man slid off a blacktop road late at night and hit a utility pole. Getting out of the car he walked into the downed 7,200 volt power line. He died instantly. In another Illinois car accident a young mother also lost control of her car and hit a utility pole, causing the high voltage line to drop on top of the car. Because she had recently heard a safety message from her local utility she knew the best thing to do was stay in the car until help arrived. After the line was turned off by linemen, the young mother and her children walked away from the accident.

These two stories highlight the need to increase public awareness of the dangers electricity can pose even during everyday activities as simple as flying a kite or cleaning a pool. Through the Illinois Electric Council (IEC), your electric cooperative has joined forces with other electric utilities and the University of Illinois to create the first cooperative effort by utilities to prevent electricity-related accidents.

"Each member of the IEC is committed to electrical safety and promotes safety through their own organization," said Paul Benson, IEC executive director. "This cooperative effort expands upon those individual programs, and extends the reach of safety information beyond each organization's activities."

The campaign focuses on electrical safety in four main areas – home, youth safety, agribusiness and contractor safety. The Safe Electricity effort uses a number of vehicles to deliver information to broad audiences, including radio and television public service announcements (PSAs), the Internet and print materials.

The centerpiece is a comprehensive web site, www.SafeElectricity.org. The site has detailed information and lists educational materials available, such as videotapes and books for teachers and others promoting safe use of electricity.

The first series of radio public service announcements has been distributed to stations across Illinois, and companion television announcements are being completed for distribution. The announcements feature a variety of hazardous situations and safety tips, and direct people to the SafeElectricity.org Web site for more information.

The initial public service announcements include safety information about operating tall equipment around electric lines, using electrical appliances around water, working around the house, exercising caution during and after storms and children playing near electrical equipment. The goal is to focus attention on issues related to outdoor safety as more and more people head outside for summer activities.

Like the announcements, the web site is intended to promote awareness of topical and timely safety issues, and will be continually updated and expanded.

The Web site to be easy for anyone to use – teachers, students, contractors, homeowners, farmers, business owners, public safety officials – anyone who has questions about electrical safety.

Today www.SafeElectricity.org includes sections for home safety, youth safety, rural safety, contractor safety, educator resources, videos and links to sites with additional information.

"We are committed to making this campaign and the SafeElectricity.org web site a lifesaving resource for Illinois," Benson said. "If we save one life or keep one person from being hurt, we will be successful."

"Electric cooperatives serve the citizens of rural Illinois and many of them are engaged in the hazardous occupation of providing food and fiber to the people of our state and nation," said Earl Struck, president and CEO of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives. "By working together all of the utilities in Illinois can present these safety messages more efficiently, effectively and economically than they could by themselves. We're also grateful to the University of Illinois for their leadership and involvement."

If you would like more information about safety programs or SafeElectricity.org, please contact your electric cooperative.

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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Joseph J. Fellin

Across the President's desk

Guest editorial

**Glenn English, chief executive officer
National Rural Electric Cooperative Assoc.**

In a day when it seems that a dollar buys less and less, the men and women working at your local electric cooperative are doing what they can to make sure you get the most out of every dollar you spend with them.

Consumer education is one of the primary missions of your cooperative. Wasting energy not only costs you money — it forces your utility to buy more power from generating plants, adding to the cost of operating the system and adding to your electric bill. This publication and others like it regularly carry information to help keep your electric bill as low as possible.

Whether it's a tip on installing energy-efficient lighting in your home, insulating your water heater, or just changing the filters in your heat pump, your local co-op wants to help you get the best deal you can on the electricity you buy.

That's what makes energy conservation a partnership between you and your local electric co-op. While you work at home to keep your power bill as low as possible, the local co-op is working to put the latest technology in place to better manage the system of power plants, wires and substations that bring the power to you. This new technology adds to the savings that can be passed on to you.

Another important part of your electric co-op's commitment to you is safety education. Electricity

is such a normal part of our life that it is easy to forget it can be dangerous if improperly used. Your cooperative reminds you to play it safe by installing child safety plugs in unused outlets, being careful when using electric tools near water, or having underground cables marked prior to digging around your home. Electric co-ops also provide important information to local schools to help teach children about electric safety.

Your electric cooperative was created to serve the people it provides power to - not to provide profits to out-of-town power companies. The principle on which we were founded - service to our local communities - is just as strong today as the day we opened our doors. Regardless of how much electricity you use, your local electric cooperative will do everything it can to help you get the most out of your power dollar.



Be sure to visit
our booth at the
Monroe
County Fair
July 30 - August 5
Monroe
County Fair

(Continued from page 16a)

that all sectors of the electric industry are treated fairly. The policy should not create competitive advantages for any one sector of the industry, and it should aggressively protect the rights of consumers. It should definitely "grandfather in" the hard work and responsible legislation our state legislators created.

Deregulation legislation, no matter how well it is crafted, can not prevent an energy crisis if the supply system is not healthy, diversified, competitive and fair. Illinois is better prepared to supply dependable power than it was just two years ago. However, there is still plenty of work to be done. We need to increase the generating capacity available in our state and the transmission access within our state and region.

Monroe County Electric Cooperative (MCEC) is currently a wholesale power customer of Southern Illinois

Power Cooperative (SIPC) Marion, Illinois. In June 2002, MCEC will become a full class A member of SIPC.

SIPC is a generation and transmission cooperative that supplies the electric power MCEC delivers to its members. SIPC currently serves three other distribution electric coops - Egyptian Electric, Southern Illinois Electric and Southeastern Illinois Electric Cooperatives along with two municipalities - the cities of Red Bud and McLeansboro. In total, that's more than 50,000 co-op members and 5000 municipal residents served by electricity generated at SIPC.

All cooperatives follow seven cooperative principles. Four of these principles are very relevant to this discussion.

The second cooperative principle, democratic member control, means this is your cooperative. You can help determine the direction we take with deregulation. The fifth principle, educa-

tion, training and information, means we have a duty to keep you informed and I would encourage you to ask questions and let us know what you think about deregulation. The sixth principle, cooperation among co-ops, is our hidden strength. You might think that your co-op is just a small utility that will never be able to survive in a deregulated world where the big utilities just get bigger. But we have a network of national, regional and statewide cooperation that gives us real market and political power. Finally, the seventh principle, concern for community, means we're here to stay. This is our hometown too and we're not closing up shop. We're not here just to provide electricity. We're here to make this a better place to live and raise our families.

This is the co-op difference and the reason I believe electric cooperatives will grow and prosper in a deregulated utility industry.

A new spin on ceiling fans

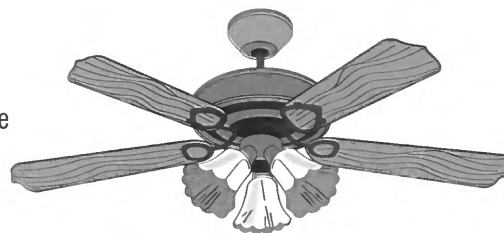
Ceiling fans are popular not only because of their good looks but also because they can help make your home more comfortable during summer and winter. But it pays to take note of a few facts that could make your ceiling fan an energy drain instead of an energy boost.

For instance, if you keep those fans turning for cooling power but don't raise the setting on your air conditioning system, you can use more energy than you need to cool your home. Although the fans aren't big energy users, if you keep them running at high speed and keep the air cranked up high, too, you're wasting energy—as much as

15 percent. However, if you raise your air conditioning thermostat by just three degrees and use your fans, you can cut your energy use by about the same amount.

Many fans come equipped with switches that change the fan's direction. In the winter months, you can use that adjustment to make your fan push warm air down from the ceiling (remember, hot air rises) and help your home feel warmer. In the summer, reverse the switch so the fan brings cool air up from the floor. Check the information on your fan to determine how your model works.

If you're running your fan the



wrong way during the heating or cooling season, you're really wasting energy and not getting the benefits of that ceiling fan.

Would you like more information on how to cut your electric bills? Call Monroe County Electric Cooperative for more information. As a consumer-owned utility, we're always happy to help you save money.

Source: Rocky Mountain Institute

IEC Scholarship winners named

Winners of the 2001 Illinois Electric Cooperative Memorial Scholarship were announced in May, with three students receiving \$1,000 scholarships. In the son or daughter of an electric cooperative member category, the winners were Debra Leann Meyer of Western Illi-

nois Electric Cooperative and Nicole Wier of Norris Electric Cooperative.

In the son or daughter of an electric co-op employee category, the winner was Haley J. Loy of Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative.

There were 171 applications for the scholarship contest this year, the

most ever received. All applicants were notified of the selections, and the winning students will receive plaques at their local high school ceremonies. There were 5 applicants from the Monroe County Electric Cooperative area this year.

Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, Inc.

Through

Southern Services, LLC

is now offering

Business and Residential Long Distance Phone Service

Billed by PowerNet Global Communications

Utilizing the Qwest Long Distance Network (The nation's 4th largest carrier)

4.9 cents **6.9 cents**

All calls in Illinois All calls out of state

24 hours a day – 7 days a week – no codes to dial

- Free to join – No monthly fees – No monthly minimum
- No term agreements – Major carrier
- 800 Number 4.9 cents – 6.9 cents per minute – no fees
- Free calling cards 13.9 cents per minute (No surcharge)
- 6 second increment billing (18 second minimum)

Low overseas rates. Call the United Kingdom for just 12 cents per minute.
(Rates may vary from country to country) No fees or service charge.

Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, Inc., in conjunction with Southern Services, LLC, is offering long distance telephone service through PowerNet Global Communications. This long distance service is one of the lowest-cost long distance services available. You can call anywhere in the State of Illinois for a low 4.9 cents per minute or anywhere out of state in the continental United States for 6.9 cents per minute. In addition, you can have your own personal 800 number to receive calls from family members or acquaintances. Incoming calls on your 800 number are billed at the same rates noted above. All rates are the same 24 hours a day-7 days a week. There are no monthly fees, no minimums, or long-term agreements.

For additional information or to enroll by phone call toll free: 1-866-266-7531
 Mail application to: Southern Services, LLC, P.O. Box 1478, Mt. Vernon, IL 62864
 Applications may be faxed toll free to 1-866-326-6753

DETACH HERE

Name _____ Social Security Number _____

Street _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone Numbers (_____) _____ - _____ (_____) _____ - _____

Other Services Desired: Toll Free 800 Number Travel Cards...Number of cards requested _____

*If 800 service is desired, enter the telephone number it should ring to (_____) _____ - _____
(existing 800 numbers may be transferred to this service...applicable forms are available upon request)

I hereby authorize PowerNet Global Communications, or its designator/agent, Southern Services, LLC, to transfer my long distance service. I agree to financial responsibility for all charges arising from all long distance services provided. The service requested will be provisioned only on the approval of credit for the application. A service charge may be assessed by the local telephone company when they make the carrier change.

Customer Signature _____ Date _____

Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, Inc.

Get rid of that old gas guzzler — buy a heat pump

If your heating bills were high this winter because of high gas prices, and you're wondering if your old air conditioner will make it through this summer, now's the time to consider switching to a high efficiency heat pump. You've probably heard of heat pumps, but do you really know what a heat pump is or how they work?

Heat pumps have been around for more than 60 years and are used to heat and cool homes, hotels, offices, schools and factories in every part of the country.

Webster's dictionary defines a heat pump as "an apparatus for heating or cooling a building by transferring heat by mechanical means from or to a reservoir (as the ground, water, or air) outside the building." Well, that makes it perfectly clear, doesn't it? Okay, maybe not.

Ask most people what an air conditioner is and they will tell you that it's a device that cools the air inside their home — and they'd be right. But an air conditioner isn't really creating cool air, it's removing heat. You've probably walked past the outside unit of an air-conditioner when it was running and felt the hot air being discharged. A heat pump, unlike an air conditioner, can move heat in two directions not just one.

How heat pumps work

In the summer a heat pump or air conditioner moves heat with the help of a compressor and a refrigerant system, and discharges the heat to the outside air. In the winter a heat pump reverses the flow of refrigerant and blows hot air inside.

Okay, but how do you get hot air out of freezing outdoor air, you ask? Theoretically, heat can be extracted from air down to absolute zero. Practically, heat can be extracted from air past the freezing point. If you've felt the warm air coming off your freezer while it's running, that is the warm air being extracted from the air inside the

freezer. Air to air heat pumps also use back up heat strips for times when temperatures go below the freezing point.

Geothermal heat pumps

Geothermal heat pumps rarely, if ever, need backup heat strips. And geothermal heat pumps are the most energy efficient heat and cooling systems on the market.

Geothermal heat pumps can reduce your heating and cooling bills by 50 percent. The reason they are the most energy efficient is because they use the earth as a source for heat in the winter and as a heat sink to exhaust heat in the summer.

Since a condenser fan is not needed, the entire system can be located inside your home, in the utility room, garage or basement.

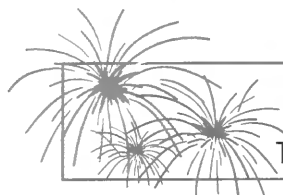
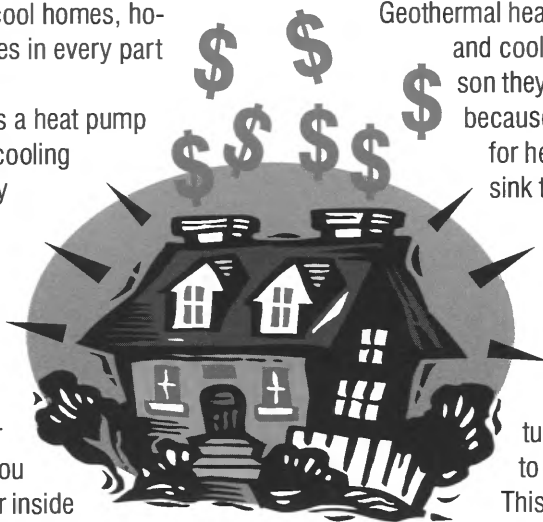
In summer, ground temperatures several feet deep can be 30° to 40° cooler than the outdoor air.

This makes it easier for the heat pump to exhaust heat from your house. In winter, the ground can be 40° to 50° warmer than the air, so it's easier to draw out the free heat.

A closed-loop geothermal heat pump circulates a water/antifreeze solution in a small pipe buried in the ground. This pipe can be laid horizontally in a narrow trench, or well drilling equipment can be used and the pipe inserted vertically in the bore hole.

Another benefit of a geothermal heat pump that is often underestimated is the fact that these heat pumps will provide free hot water in the summer by transferring the heat from your home to your water heater.

New air to air and geothermal heat pumps are quiet, need less maintenance and are more energy efficient than older heat and air systems. It's an investment in your comfort, and the energy savings will pay dividends every month. Call your local heat and air dealer or electric cooperative today to find out how much you can save with a new heat pump.



OFFICE CLOSED

The cooperative office will be closed Wednesday, July 4th in observance of the Fourth of July.

Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, Inc.

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A Touchstone Energy Cooperative 



Joseph J. Fellin

Across the President's desk

The California electric mess - can it happen here?

The impact of California's electric utility deregulation law has shocked that state's residents with high bills and rolling blackouts and has left utilities facing bankruptcy. Concerns about deregulation and power supply are spreading across the West Coast and the nation. Could it happen here? The short answer is: probably not. Thankfully, our state's deregulation plan has more safeguards. Also, our state's power supply situation, while not perfect, is in much better shape than California's. Monroe County Electric Co-Operative is working closely with Southern Illinois Power Cooperative to assure the continued reliability of our power supply.

Many of California's problems, but not all, stem from the hasty deregulation of its electric utility industry. The plan might have worked, but they forgot the basic economic principle of supply and demand. The state's refusal to build new power plants and transmission lines left the new deregulated market high and dry without a reliable supply of power. California's economy increased by 34 percent and the demand for electricity kept pace, yet the state hasn't sited a new power plant in the last 10 years, and they now need as many as 40 new generating plants.

It's easy to poke fun at California and we often criticize our own elected officials. They do make mistakes, but our Illinois legislators took on this very complex issue, worked very hard, and crafted a thorough and well-thought-out plan. They took a long and careful look at all aspects of deregulation. The California legislature acted quickly and obviously made several major mistakes.

During the consideration of Illinois' deregulation legislation, co-ops were offered the opportunity for input in the

process, as were all interested parties. While our deregulation law may not be perfect, there are safeguards in place to keep Illinois citizens from suffering the way California's consumers are now.

For Illinois electric cooperatives the major difference between our state's deregulation law and several other states legislation is that in Illinois, cooperative members still have the right of self-determination. Illinois lawmakers had the wisdom to allow co-ops to continue to be self-governed and self-regulated, to take advantage of the benefits of local control. Your locally elected co-op directors are members just like you. I believe they are best qualified to make decisions about the future of our cooperative.

I would like to point out that in California one of the few utilities that has not passed on rate increases is Anza Electric Cooperative in southern California. Before deregulation California had only a couple of electric cooperatives. Now several new electric cooperatives are being formed. In New York, another state that is having power supply and deregulation problems, a new electric cooperative was recently created in New York City. And right here in Illinois an electric cooperative is being organized in Chicago. The consumer protection that cooperatives offer is just as appropriate for urban consumers today as it was for rural consumers 60 years ago.

Many observers and commentators, as well as California's leaders, have looked at the cooperative business model as a remedy for some of the woes of the restructured electricity marketplace. This places control in the hands of consumers rather than investor-owned power producers and transmission system owners, who some say have manipulated the wholesale power market to their advantage. Consumer-owned utilities, what a concept!

Deregulation simply will not work if consumer protection is not a part of the process. For example, issues such as tax incentives for electric utilities and repeal of the Public Utilities Holding Company Act (PUHCA), which regulates interstate public utility holding companies, are some of the issues we have to monitor as national deregulation is debated. The PUHCA law was enacted to break up multi-state utilities decades ago. Bigger is still not necessarily better. Market power can be, and often is, abused.

In the development of national energy policy legislation to establish the "rules of the road" for the future, it is crucial

(Continued on page 16d)



Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, Waterloo received a safety honor recently during the Safety/Supervisory Technical Conference held at Northfield Center in Springfield. The member-owned electric cooperative received an award for "best lost-time accident record." The Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives sponsors the annual event. From left are Roger Stegman, AIEC manager of safety; David Stephens, superintendent of operations; Ronald Birkner, shop mechanic; and Maurice Kleyer, line foreman.

May is electrical safety month

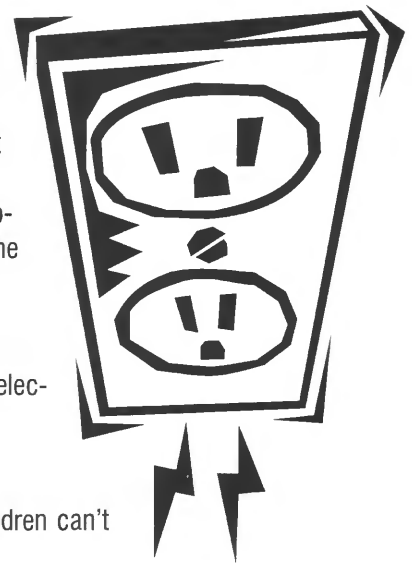
Have you ever had a friend turn against you and become an enemy? . . . It can really hurt.

Electricity is a great friend; but it can hurt, too, if you don't treat it with respect.

During May, Monroe County Electric Co-Operative is helping to observe *National Electrical Safety Month* by reminding everyone about the **four Rs** of electrical safety:

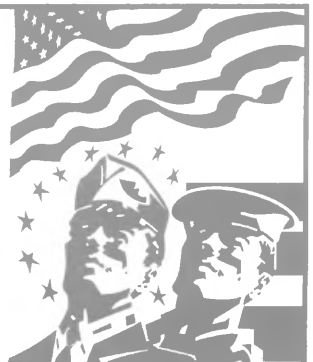
- **Respect** the power of electricity.
- **Read** and follow the operating instructions that come with every electrical product.
- **Replace** worn or frayed electrical cords.
- **Relocate** appliance cords so they won't get walked on and children can't pull on them.

Electricity can keep your home comfortable, light the path to your door and cook your food. Or it can cause a shock. . . or start a fire. Often, the choice is yours. Keep electricity your friend.



Office closing

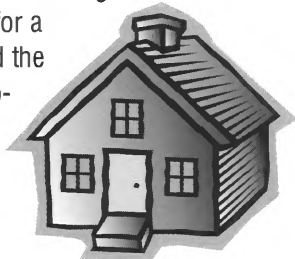
Your cooperative office will be closed Monday, May 28th, in observance of the Memorial Day holiday. The office will be open for normal business hours on Tuesday, May 29th.



Your lifestyle affects your energy bills

With all the other things we have on our minds, it's easy to forget that we have complete control over how we use our electricity. We make decisions that are necessary to maintain our standard of living.

Think about these things for a moment: The way you live and the way you use your electrical appliances have a greater impact on your electricity consumption than how many appliances you have.



Here in Illinois, we enjoy a relatively good lifestyle, and we tend to use more energy — not just electricity — than the national average.

Let's take a look at some of these "lifestyle considerations" that can make the ol' electricity bill appear to be higher than "normal."

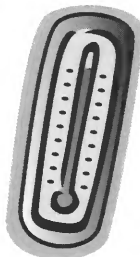
Family size

It's a proven fact that there is a direct relationship between the number of people living in a home and the amount of energy it uses. That's especially true if you have teenagers at home. In addition, if friends and relatives are visiting, you can expect to use more energy for cooking, baking, laundry and hot water.



Space heating and cooling

From the standpoint of comfort, most of us prefer to be relatively cool in summer and warm in winter. Others prefer temperature extremes. Here in Illinois, humidity plays an important part in our year-round comfort, too. If we operate dehumidifiers in the summer (and, to a lesser degree, humidifiers in winter), this contributes to our household energy consumption because they tend to run continuously. Portable space heaters, air conditioners, and fans in such places as the garage and basement also contribute to our energy consumption.



By taking a look at our "comfort" lifestyle in terms of relative humidity and temperature, we can use energy wisely in many ways. These range from adding caulking and weatherstripping to just turning down the heat and turning off the air conditioning in a room that's not being used.

Water heating

Perhaps it's because the water heater sits out of sight somewhere, but that big unit uses about 15 percent of the energy consumed by the average American home. Hot water plays a very important role in every-one's lifestyle — but many lifestyles require substantial quantities of hot water, and that results in high energy use.



In order to get a feel for how you use as much hot water as you do, ask yourself some of the following questions:

"When I take a bath, do I use hot water sparingly, or is the tub completely full of water?"

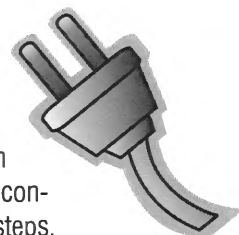
"Do I take short showers, or do I stay in the shower until the hot water's gone?"

"Do I repair leaky faucets, or simply let them drip and waste hot water? (Ever notice that it's always the hot water faucet that leaks)?"

"Do I operate automatic washers and dishwashers with a full load, or just whenever it's convenient? (Like with a pair of jeans or just a few dishes?"

Appliance use

We have many time-and labor-saving appliances to help us do our work whenever we need their service. Your appliances work for you around the clock, whenever you choose to use them. Wise use of appliances can have a positive effect on your energy consumption, if you'll take a few simple steps.



Ask yourself questions like these:

"Do I turn off lights when a room is not being used, or do I leave them on?" "Does my TV entertain the entire family, or does it play to an empty house?"

"Do I leave the oven on 'warm' for a long time, or do I cook many dishes at one time and then turn the oven off?"

These are prime considerations that affect your lifestyle, and the cost of maintaining it. All Americans are part of the residential sector, and spirited energy-management consciousness is likely to start at home.

The effects of a home and farm energy management program can save money, if you'll just take a few simple steps!



KEEP your COOL

this summer with a geothermal heat pump

Think your antiquated air conditioner's problems disappeared during the winter? Well, they didn't, and the sweltering heat is looming just around the corner — you need to do something now!

Solve your air conditioning problem and save up to 60 percent on your power costs by installing an all-electric geothermal heat pump. Geothermal systems utilize the earth's constant temperature to heat and cool your home and provide hot water at a fraction of the cost of other systems. Geothermal heat pumps are safe, clean, reliable, quiet and flexible to install.

Call your local electric cooperative for a reference list of local geothermal heat pump dealers, and prepare yourself for the coming seasons.



Electric Cooperatives of Illinois

Offering solutions to today's problems



**MONROE COUNTY
ELECTRIC
CO-OPERATIVE, INC.**

WATERLOO, ILLINOIS

618-939-7171

800-757-7433

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative 

Warn children about dangers of substations

We all know that children love to climb up, on and over things. Fences are particularly inviting. With your children on summer break, it is the perfect time to talk to them about electrical substations and why they must never climb the fences surrounding them. Your electric cooperative has placed signs, "Danger — Keep Out" or "Warning — High Voltage," on substation fences for your protection. Make sure your child understands this fact.

If your child is somewhat older, he or she may ask plenty of questions about the dangers involved. If a more detailed answer will help get the message across; here is a simple explanation that should help your child respect a substation fence - and the power of electricity.

The electrical substation changes the extremely

high voltage carried by the long-distance transmission lines into the lower distribution voltage that serves homes and businesses. In order to perform this task, the substation needs a direct feed from the transmission line into the substation structure. The equipment within the substation is always under high-voltage electrical load.

Substation technicians, co-op linemen and maintenance crews are trained to work in high-voltage situations and to recognize and avoid potential hazards in the substation. Just how high is the electric voltage? *Some of the pieces of equipment in the substation equipment could be energized at more than 100,000 volts.* Remember: Substation fences mark the danger zone for you. You are safe if you stay away from them.

Aren't you tired of lugging bottled water?

From the shelf to the cart
From the cart to the checkout
From the checkout to the cart
From the cart to the car
From the car to the kitchen
From the kitchen to the pantry



PureWater Filtration System
Only \$475 and only from
Monroe County Electric Cooperative.

6 months financing available

Warning from Julie

The Illinois One-Call System
Before you dig call



(800) 892-0123

The Service is **FREE**
Operates 24 Hours
7 Days a Week

Outage Summary for 2000

Electric service is one of the most dependable items you can buy. Monroe County Electric Co-Operative takes pride in bringing you reliable electric power. Occasionally, however, your power may be interrupted by circumstances over which we have little or no control. It is our goal to keep the average outage per member as low as possible and keep the momentary blinking and surges to a minimum.

During 2000, there were 264 outages on the cooperative's system totaling 8847 consumer hours of outage time. This represents an average outage time of 1.53 hours per member for 2000. This is up .41 hours per member from 1999.

During 2000, power supplier outages accounted for 35 percent of the outages on our system. Weather-related outages accounted for 26 percent of the outages. This was down about seven percent from last year. Equipment failure, which includes overload, transformer failure, deterioration, and underground cable failure accounted for 23 percent.

To ensure reliable electric service, your cooperative places a high priority on system maintenance. Approximately 25 percent of our operating expense is for up-

keep and maintenance. Tree trimming and right-of-way maintenance is of utmost importance in keeping our electric distribution lines clear of trees and falling limbs during storms. Other maintenance performed includes pole testing and change-out, testing of substation regulators and transformers, meter testing, upgrading and replacing Oil Circuit Reclosers (OCR's) or breakers and other routine maintenance.

Service is our most important commodity. We are aware of the inconvenience resulting from outages. Management and employees alike are committed to keeping our system in top operating condition.

The following chart shows the cause, total consumer hours and percentage of outage for 2000:

CAUSE	TOTAL CONSUMER HOURS	PERCENT
Power Supply	3069	35 %
Construction & Maintenance	61	1 %
Equipment	2037	23 %
Weather	2306	26 %
Animals	269	3 %
Accidents, unknown, other	1105	12 %

More efficient lighting lowers electric bills

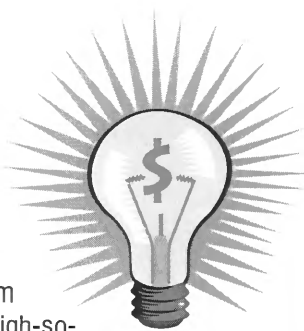
Increasing your lighting efficiency is one of the easiest ways to decrease your energy bills. For example, if you replace 25 percent of your lights in high-use areas with fluorescents, you can cut your lighting energy bill by about 50 percent. Remember to review your indoor lighting and, if applicable, your outdoor lighting as well, and always look for the Energy Star® label when shopping for lighting products.

The U.S. Department of Energy offers these money-saving tips for your home or office.

INDOOR LIGHTING — Use linear fluorescent and energy-efficient compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) in fixtures to provide high-quality and high-efficiency lighting. Fluorescent lamps are much more efficient than incandescent bulbs and last six to 10 times longer. Although fluorescent and compact fluorescent lamps are more expensive than incandescent bulbs, they pay for themselves by saving energy over their lifetime.



OUTDOOR LIGHTING — Many home and business owners use outdoor lighting for decoration and security. When shopping for outdoor lights, you will find a variety of products, from low-voltage pathway lighting to high-sodium, motion-detector floodlights. Some stores also carry lights powered by small photovoltaic (PV) modules that convert sunlight directly into electricity; consider PV-powered lights for areas that are not close to an existing power supply line.



Would you like more information on how to cut your electric bill? Contact your local electric cooperative for more information. As a consumer-owned utility, your electric co-op is committed to providing you with high-quality energy service at the lowest possible price.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Project

Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, Inc.

907 North Illinois Route 3, P.O. Box 128, Waterloo, Illinois 62298
(618) 939-7171 • Office hours: Monday through Friday 8 a.m. — 5 p.m. • 800-757-7433

Use your air conditioner efficiently

While we're finally at the tail end (we hope), of a dreary, six-month-long winter, it seems odd to be thinking of air conditioning, yet it won't be long until we're looking for a little cool in the midst of sweltering heat. Now, before everyone else calls their cooling expert, may be a good time for you to do just that. And, there are some steps you can take to ensure that you get the most out of that machine.

Here are some things you can do to get the most comfort from your system for the least cost:

Clean the filter

Air conditioning systems do more than just cool the air. They lower humidity and also remove dust and dirt by moving the air through filters.

When these filters become clogged with dirt, the system has to work harder to do its job, wasting energy and adding to the cost of operation. Depending on the amount of dust in the air, filters can become clogged in just a month or two of operation.

Most residential systems have disposable filters. These should be checked every month during times of peak use, and replaced when necessary. Permanent filters should be cleaned in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Under no circumstances should you operate your system without filters. To do so could lead to a need for more frequent cleaning of the heat exchangers.

Air leaks are costly

Some people like to "help" their air conditioner by opening doors and windows on warm days. But doing that just lets all the cool, dehumidified air out, and lets in the hot, humid air. The better your home seals out heat, humidity and dust, the more efficiently your system will run.

Most people think of thermal insulation, storm windows and weatherstripping in connection with cutting heating costs, but these energy-saving measures help with cooling, too.

The amount of insulation you need, and the number of hours a day and days per year air conditioning systems operate varies greatly from area to area. Talk to a building materials dealer to figure out what you need.

Weatherstripping, which plugs holes and gaps around doors and windows, not only blocks out drafts in cold weather, but also helps lock in cool air when it's hot. Closing those air leaks helps the year around.

Sunlight streaming in through windows during the winter can bring a lot of welcome heat into the home, and that's great. Unless your windows are shaded, it can add even more heat to your house in the summer, when you don't want it.

Insulated or thermal windows can help. Pull draperies and/or shades over the windows when the sun is hitting them directly. This will reduce the cooling load significantly and help keep costs down. Some people install awnings over windows to provide shade.

More cost-saving tips

We've talked about heat coming into the home from outside, but the operation of appliances can also generate heat and humidity inside. When they're operating, washers, dryers, ovens and ranges can put out both heat and moisture. Using these appliances during the warmest times of the day, when your cooling system is working hardest, just adds to the burden.

By scheduling washing, drying, baking and cooking for mornings or evenings when it's cooler, you can ease the load on your air conditioner.

An exhaust fan near an oven or range can help remove a lot of the excess heat and humidity from cooking. Also, make sure your clothes dryer is vented outside.

Leave your thermostat at one setting.

As always, preventive maintenance is the least expensive kind. And, keeping your system in top shape through regular checkups is the best way to ensure that it will keep working for you when you need it most.

The best time to have your system checked by a competent service technician is in early spring, before the cooling season starts.

Many firms offer a service contract that provides routine maintenance including lubrication of motors, tightening of belts and checking of refrigerant level. If you're handy, there are some maintenance checks you can do yourself. Check your owner's manual to see what you can safely do.



Day in and day out, most of us are served by cooperatives...in all kinds of ways. Across Illinois, in the small country crossroad towns and the big cities alike, you'll see the influence of cooperatives.

Cooperatives help to spread the news, deliver and process dairy products and grind and transport the feed and seed that keep American agri-business thriving. Cooperatives help farmers with financing and provide millions of people from all walks of life with insurance, housing, food and financial and telephone services. Cooperatives also provide dependable electric services to more than 600,000 downstate Illinois residents.

Cooperatives work because they meet people's needs efficiently and economically, providing top-notch services for their members at cost.

When
cooperatives work,
all of America
benefits.



MONROE



Electric News

MONROE COUNTY
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A Touchstone Energy Cooperative 



Joseph J. Fellin

Across the President's desk

Where Do Electric Co-ops Fit in a Dot-Com World?

*Guest Editorial : Keven Groenewold
Executive Vice President
New Mexico Rural Electric Cooperative Association*

Since a small group of weavers founded the first cooperative in Rochdale, England, over 150 years ago, the idea of people joining together to pursue shared business interests has been adopted around the world in the form of the cooperative business model. In the United States, cooperatives provide food, housing and financial services; market agricultural and dairy products; and bring electricity and telephones to rural consumers—just to name a few cooperative businesses. They exist to meet the needs of their members; they don't exist to make profits or pay dividends to shareholders.

Will this approach work in the New Economy?

We read every day about Internet businesses whose employees work 100-hour weeks for stock options that will, hopefully, make them millionaires before they turn thirty. Financial markets operate 24 hours a day, powered by computers and instant information transmitted around the globe. Consumers are gradually abandoning local shops for Internet stores that are open whenever the consumer wants to buy something or just browse quietly through screen after screen of merchandise.

What relevance do co-ops, especially electric co-ops, have in this tremendously fast-paced, dynamic, rapid-fire world?

In a word, everything. Electric co-ops were born in the last great technological revolution, the electrification of America. This revolution was about much more than electrical lighting and televisions and phones and dish-

washers and 10,000 other things that form the fabric of our post-electric lifestyles. The electrical revolution was really about communications and choice.

We use electricity to know more about the world around us and to create choice in how we live our daily lives. How we use it may look like a telephone or a light bulb; what we do with electricity is communicate and choose.

Communications and choice are the cornerstones of the Internet economy. Co-ops, in turn, are about people. And people are about change and challenges and excitement. I can't tell you how co-ops will adapt to the new economy any more than my grandmother could have predicted the World Wide Web 20 years ago. I can say the co-ops that survive the dot-com revolution will listen to their members and learn from them what makes sense in the 21st century. Then, they'll find a way to make it work.

Providing electric service will remain their core mission. However, they will realize that they aren't really in the business of shipping electrons across wires to their member's homes. They will realize, instead, that they are in the lifestyle business.

They will realize that electricity is a means to an end. It powers a way of living, just as the Internet powers its new economic model. And, they will take the next step and learn from their members what is needed for the emerging lifestyle.

I won't predict what that may be. It's been pointed out that 2000 is the final year of all the five-year business plans written in 1995. None of them predicted half of what is happening in today's economy, so there is no point in adding to the list.

I will predict, however, that co-ops have a vital and integral role to play in bringing the future—whatever it may look like—to their members. We all look forward to the challenge.

OFFICE CLOSING

Monroe County Electric Co-Operative
will be closed for Good Friday, April 13.
For emergencies, call: (800) 757-7433 or (618) 939-7171



Visit our new website

Your electric cooperative has a new website on the internet. The web address is www.mcec.org.

The site begins with who we are here at Monroe County Electric Cooperative (MCEC) and what an electric cooperative is.

Different subjects are covered such as what Touchstone Energy is: businesses and subdivisions served by MCEC; new member information; programs and services offered; rates and rebates; energy saving options; how to report outages effectively and our affiliation with ACRE.

There are also links to major cooperative organizations, energy usage sites, and links to subjects such as

geo-thermal heating and cooling, weather, agriculture, state and federal government, news, sports and even some kids links.

The website is just getting started but we plan to update it with new and changing information about MCEC.

Please visit the site and if you have any comments or suggestions, let us know. Our e-mail address is mcec@htc.net.

We hope this site proves useful in making our presence known and along with our Illinois Country Living magazine and Coop-Echoes newsletter, provide another means of communication to our membership.

**Mark
your
calendar**



**Monroe County Electric
Co-Operative's
63rd Annual Meeting
is scheduled for
Monday, March 26, 2001
at the Hecker Community Center.**

Is it time to retire your fridge?

Refrigerators are among the biggest energy-users in American homes. You might want to take a look at yours and decide if you should retire it in favor of a new, more efficient model. An old inefficient model can cost you more than \$100 more per year to operate than a new one and puts more waste heat into your home, too, putting an extra strain on air conditioning.

The good news is that the most efficient standard refrigerators are less expensive. The bad news is that many of the features consumers want, such as automatic icemakers and on-door ice and water dispensers, make refrigerators less efficient. You have to consider your family's needs to make the best choice.

Some points to consider if you're refrigerator shopping:

- Side-by-side refrigerator/freezers use more energy than top-freezer models.
- It costs much less to buy and operate one large re-

frigerator than two small ones.

- Piling things on top of the refrigerator can affect air circulation. Keep it clear.
- Check the interior temperatures of your fridge and freezer with a separate thermometer. For maximum food safety and energy efficiency, the refrigerator should stay around 35 to 40 degrees F, the freezer from 0 to 5 degrees F.
- Clean the condenser coils once a year to help the fridge run efficiently. Mount your refrigerator on a wheeled platform or slides to make access to the coils in the back simpler. If you would like more information on how to cut your home electric bills, call your local electric co-op. As a consumer-owned utility, your co-op is always happy to help you save money.

Source: Rocky Mountain Institute

Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, Inc.

907 North Illinois Route 3, P.O. Box 128, Waterloo, Illinois 62298
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Is your standby generator ready for an outage?

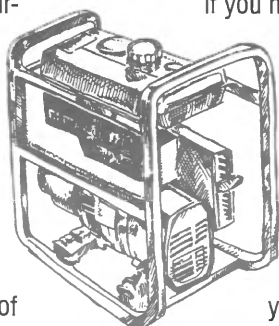
Even with our extensive efforts to keep the lights on, an occasional outage will occur, and some members have installed a standby generator to keep critical loads going until service is restored.

However, if you have or are considering purchasing a standby generator, remember that it's vital to follow proper safety procedures. If used incorrectly, a standby generator can cause serious harm or even death. Here are some important things to know.

Generators can provide 120/240 volt power to a home or farm. However, if a generator is not properly connected to the electric system, the "backfeed" will result in an output of 7,200 volts on the distribution line - which a lineman may assume is dead. As a result, a line crew working on the system would be put in danger.

For everyone's sake - yours, the co-op and our crews - generators need to be isolated from the co-op's power

lines. This means you should install a double-throw switch to separate your generator from the co-op's system. Or, you can connect appliances or other devices directly to the generator with appropriate-size cords.



If you have a generator, and it hasn't been run recently, get it now and try it! If it's powered by a tractor PTO, make sure it's accessible, not buried behind every piece of equipment in your shed. Make sure all power connection cords are in place and in good condition. Operate the generator to make sure it's working properly!

For self-powered generators, make sure you have fresh fuel and a charged starting battery. Run the engine under load at least once a month. Clean out any animal nests on the equipment, and provide for adequate air supply and ventilation of the exhaust. Always follow the manufacturer's recommendations on how to use your generator.

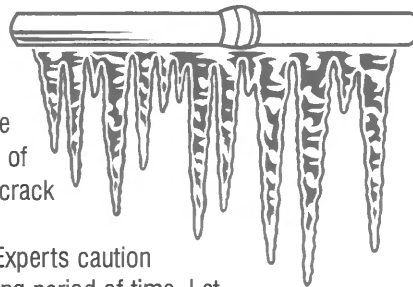
Give frozen pipes the cold shoulder

Each winter 250,000 homes suffer water damage from frozen pipes. Proper prevention, however, can protect homeowners from this costly household disaster.

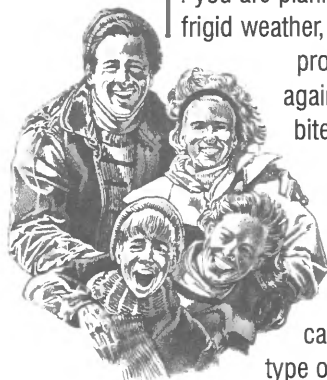
Plastic and metal pipes can freeze if exposed to freezing temperatures. State Farm Fire and Casualty Company notes that frozen pipes can build up thousands of pounds of pressure downstream from the ice until they burst. A one-eighth inch crack can spew more than 250 gallons of water a day.

A pipe break while homeowners are away can be particularly devastating. Experts caution against lowering thermostats below 55°F, even if the home will be vacant for a long period of time. Letting your faucets trickle slightly also will help keep pipes from bursting by preventing pressure from building.

Pipes in crawl spaces and attics should be insulated with products approved by an independent testing organization such as Underwriters Laboratories, Inc. Pipes that are located inside building insulation should be checked for exposure to cold air through cracks or openings such as those for cable or telephone wires.



Wrap up for winter warmth



If you are planning to be outside during frigid weather, it's important to dress properly and protect yourself against hypothermia and frostbite.

Hypothermia occurs when the temperature of your body's core, the chest and abdomen, falls below normal. This causes the body to go into a type of shock that restricts the flow of blood to the extremities in order to protect the core. The victim loses feeling in the hands and feet, muscles

stiffen, and the brain shuts down.

You cannot contract frostbite if the temperature is above freezing, no matter what the "wind chill factor." However, when the temperature falls below freezing, exposed skin can be frozen within 10 or 15 minutes.

The National Safety Council advises that you dress warmly and in layers. Since your head and neck lose heat more rapidly than any other parts of the body, you should wear a wool hat and a scarf; a turtleneck sweater will help too. Mittens provide better protection than gloves, since gloves expose more surface area to the cold. Wool socks and waterproof boots will help keep feet warm and dry. If you wear an extra pair of socks, be sure they fit loosely so warm air can be circulated between layers.

Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, Inc.

Through

Southern Services, LLC

is now offering

Business and Residential

Long Distance Phone Service

FREE

Personal
800 NUMBER
No Fees
Same low rate

Billed by PowerNet Global Communications

Utilizing the Qwest Long Distance Network (The nation's 4th largest carrier)

4.9 cents **6.9 cents**

All calls in Illinois

All calls out of state

24 hours a day – 7 days a week – no codes to dial

- Free to join – No monthly fees – No monthly minimum
- No term agreements – Major carrier
- 800 Number 4.9 cents – 6.9 cents per minute – no fees
- Free calling cards 13.9 cents per minute (No surcharge)
- 6 second increment billing (18 second minimum)

Low overseas rates. Call the United Kingdom for just 12 cents per minute.
(Rates may vary from country to country) No fees or service charge.

Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, Inc., in conjunction with Southern Services, LLC, is offering long distance telephone service through PowerNet Global Communications. This long distance service is one of the lowest-cost long distance services available. You can call anywhere in the State of Illinois for a low 4.9 cents per minute or anywhere out of state in the continental United States for 6.9 cents per minute. In addition, you can have your own personal 800 number to receive calls from family members or acquaintances. Incoming calls on your 800 number are billed at the same rates noted above. All rates are the same 24 hours a day-7 days a week. There are no monthly fees, no minimums, or long-term agreements.

For additional information or to enroll by phone call toll free: 1-866-266-7531
Mail application to: Southern Services, LLC, P.O. Box 1478, Mt. Vernon, IL 62864
Applications may be faxed toll free to 1-866-326-6753

DETACH HERE

Name _____ Social Security Number _____

Street _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone Numbers (____) _____ - _____ (____) _____ - _____

Other Services Desired: Toll Free 800 Number Travel Cards...Number of cards requested _____


*If 800 service is desired, enter the telephone number it should ring to (____) _____ - _____
(existing 800 numbers may be transferred to this service...applicable forms are available upon request)

I hereby authorize PowerNet Global Communications, or its designator/agent, Southern Services, LLC, to transfer my long distance service. I agree to financial responsibility for all charges arising from all long distance services provided. The service requested will be provisioned only on the approval of credit for the application. A service charge may be assessed by the local telephone company when they make the carrier change.

Customer Signature _____ Date _____

Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, Inc.

MONROE



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A Touchstone Energy Cooperative 



Joseph J. Fellin

Across the President's desk

Monroe County Electric Co-Operative will have its 63rd Annual Meeting of Members on March 26th at the Hecker Community Center. Registration and pre-meeting activities begin at 5:00 p.m. We will again have health-related organizations with informational booths. Verizon Wireless will have a cellular phone display, Harrisonville Telephone Company will be demonstrating DIRECTV and Pure Water filtering systems will have a display and a representative on hand to answer questions. A chicken dinner will be served from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

During the business meeting, you will hear and approve reports of directors and officers, elect three mem-

bers to serve three-year terms to the Cooperative's board of directors, and act on any other business that may come before the meeting.

Lewis Baumgartner, farmer and humorist from Fulton, Missouri, will be the featured speaker at this year's meeting. Since 1987, he has entertained at hundreds of meetings and conventions all over the United States and Canada. Billed as the "World's Worst Farmer", his main goal is to entertain but also deliver the message that we need to laugh more and not take life quite so seriously. Come hear Lewis at your Annual Meeting of Members for some down home fun and entertainment.

Registered members in attendance will receive a polished vegetable knife as a door prize. Four \$25.00 credits on electric bills will be given as "Early Bird Prizes". Attendance prizes will be awarded at the conclusion of the meeting.

So please come join us at our 63rd Annual Meeting of Monroe County Electric Co-Operative on March 26th at the Hecker Community Center.

Projections for 2001

Your management and staff have been busy preparing the 2001 Work Plan and Budget. We project to build over 200 new services in 2001. Revenue for 2001 is estimated at \$8,901,523 on projected sales of 86,711,619 kilowatt hours. Expenses for maintenance of transformers, regulators, oil circuit reclosers, testing of single and three phase meters, tree trimming and right-of-way spraying are included in the 2001 Budget. On-going system maintenance is a high priority at your cooperative to ensure a reliable continuity of electric service to our members.

We will continue a lightning protection program started in 1997, of changing out old arrestors with a new-type arrestor to give better protection to our system from lightning damage. It should also help with some of the blinking problems and help reduce outages due to lightning.

Most of the construction projects for 2001 will be growing subdivision development. Several of the existing subdivisions are expanding into the next phases of their work plans. In the Smithton area, Wildwood Lakes North is

starting Phase 5 of development; Villas of Stonegate is started on Phase III; and over in Columbia, The Pines is into Phase III.

We'll also be working on a single-phase to three-phase upgrade of the line feeding the Pines subdivision to help balance the load. A similar type of upgrade is planned for areas to the south and east of Smithton as well as around the East Carondelet substation. A three-phase line extension is planned to the new Stonehenge subdivision on Gilmore Lake road between Waterloo and Columbia.

Long range plans still call for a 69,000 KVA transmission line from our Poe Substation to a metering point near Red Bud, completed by Southern Illinois Power Cooperative in Marion. Conversion of the 34,500 KVA line between the Waterloo and Poe Substations to a 69,000 KVA line is also in the long-range plan.

These maintenance and construction projects will improve service reliability and assure adequate voltage to areas with heavy growth.

Nominating Committee named: meeting set for Feb. 7

A committee on nominations has been appointed and will meet at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 7, 2001 at the Monroe County Electric Cooperative meeting room in Waterloo. The committee will meet to place the names of three persons in nomination to be elected at the cooperative's annual meeting, to serve a three (3) year term as directors of Monroe County Electric Co-Operative.

The cooperative's 63rd Annual Meeting of Members will be held Monday, March 26, 2001 at the Hecker Community Center, Hecker, Illinois.

Directors whose current terms expire and who are eligible for re-election are:

District 3 Joel H. Harres
2612 Harres Lane
Columbia, Illinois

District 7 Walter G. Amann
8585 Nike Road
Red Bud, Illinois

District 8 Manlee Knobloch
3321 LL Road
Fults, Illinois

As a cooperative member, you have the right as well as an obligation to participate in the election process. If you have any comments or suggestions for the election, please contact members of the 2001 Nominating Committee.

Cooperative Bylaws state: Any twenty five (25) or more active members, acting together, may make other Nominations by petition received at the Cooperative office not less than twenty one (21) days prior to the Annual Meeting of members and shall be posted at the same place as nominations by the committee is posted, and shall appear in the official notice of the meeting and on the official ballot. Additional nominations may also be made from the floor. Any

nomination by petition or from the floor shall meet the same qualifications and eligibility as nominees by the nominating committee.

2001 Nominating Committee

District 3 Steve Degener, 8081 Gall Rd.,
Waterloo, Illinois, 62298
Walter Stuckmeyer, 9204 Bluff Rd,
Waterloo, Illinois, 62298
Ron Imm, 983 White Oak Dr.,
Waterloo, Illinois, 62298
(Alternate)
Jeff Phelps, 404 Autumn Ct.,
Columbia, Illinois, 62236

District 7 Richard Toenjes, 7842 State Route 156
Waterloo, Illinois, 62298
Elaine Parker Rader, 7669 State Route 156,
Waterloo, Illinois, 62298
Dale Papenberg, 7579 State Route 156,
Waterloo, Illinois, 62298
(Alternate)
Ralph Eckart, 9153 Nike Rd.,
New Athens, Illinois, 62264

District 8 Vernon Matzenbacher, 3378 Wild Rd.,
Fults, Illinois, 62244
Randall Esker, 3731 Fults Rd.,
Fults, Illinois, 62244
Allyn Rohlfing, 5203 Bluff Rd.,
Valmeyer, Illinois, 62295
(Alternate)
Glenn Voelker, 3146 LL Rd.,
Fults, Illinois, 62244

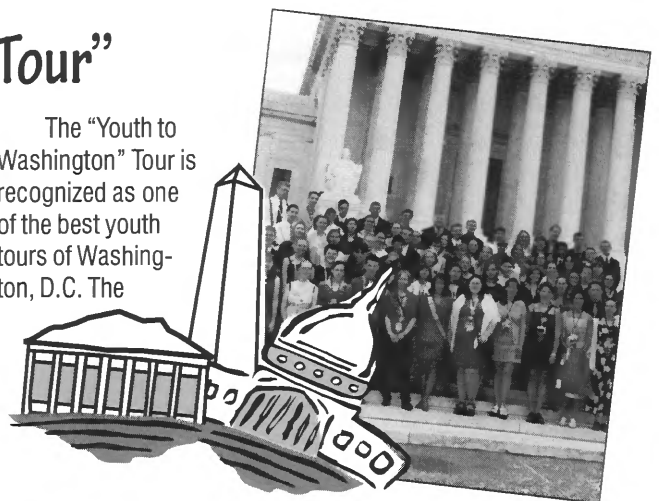
2001 "Youth to Washington Tour"

In June of each year, the electric and telephone cooperatives in Illinois and across the United States sponsor groups of young people to Washington, D.C. on the "Youth to Washington" program. During a full week in the nation's Capital, these students get an up-close look at democracy in action and get to meet with their Congressional delegation and staff.

Past participants will tell you it is the trip of a lifetime. It's an experience they never will forget, full of fun, new friends, non-stop touring and yes, they actually learn something too. Most come back with an even deeper respect for our Country, our form of government and their opportunities.

Since 1957, hundreds of future leaders have been introduced to government and the legislative process through this program. Many alumni of the program have gone on to leadership positions in our communities and government. Two current members of the Illinois General Assembly, State Representatives Tom Ryder and Art Tenhouse, are past members of the tour.

The "Youth to Washington" Tour is recognized as one of the best youth tours of Washington, D.C. The



tour is well organized with good chaperones. Participants will see monuments and memorials and visit historical places.

Last year, Andrea Knobloch of Valmeyer, and Lauren Sandheinrich of St. Libory attended and had a great learning experience.

For more information, contact the cooperative office.



The profit is all yours

A lot of companies sell service. Automobile and appliance manufacturers, insurance companies, hotels, banks ... they all promote their services because they want to make a profit.

But when your member-owned electric cooperative talks about service, we're talking about a completely different meaning ... because we're nonprofit. We're not seeking your patronage in order to keep some stockholder in Rhode Island or California happy. We provide reliable, efficient service because we're committed to the well being and success of our members. That's why we were founded 65 years ago and also why we exist today.

So, when our construction crews build a few miles of distribution line, it means we're interested in helping you use energy efficiently and safely...not in earning a sales commission. Providing for your well being is our primary goal. And the profit in that is all yours.



Electric Cooperatives of Illinois

Powerful solutions for over 60 years

Locally owned • *Not for profit* • *Democratically controlled*

Small WINTER kit

can offer big comfort if you're stranded

WOW! The "fall" that we've just endured seems to many of us to have been winter, and the weather experts tell us that we're heading for much more of the same, if not worse.

With that in mind, you might want to put a small winter survival kit in your car and leave it there until the end of winter. The Illinois Highway Patrol (IHP) recommends that you do, and offers a booklet that gives you tips.

This information in this article is based on common sense and the recommendations gleaned from IHP pamphlet and a few others. The IHP recommends that you use a two or three-pound metal coffee can, and fill it with things that will ease your stay if you slide into a drift, and that will help rescuers find you if your car's half covered by blowing snow. Be sure to keep your kit in the driving compartment during the winter months. If you have a cell phone, be sure to keep it with you and keep the battery charged as much as possible.

Remember, though, that such a kit is just for help. You should always have at least a hefty blanket in your car, too, and you should dress for the weather even for the shortest of drives.

You should punch three evenly spaced holes around the outside of the can. That's so you can use the three pieces of string, each about 24" long, to suspend the can from your car headliner. To do that you'll need a couple of large safety pins. Be sure to put them in the can.

The reason you'll want to do that is so you can put a candle under the can to melt snow for drinking water. The candle will provide light and a surprising amount of warmth.

Then, you'll want to include these items: A reasonably sharp pocket knife or a pair of small scissors; three brightly colored ribbons to tie onto your door handle or radio antenna; Several packets of dry soup mix or bouillon cubes for warmth and nutrition, and some peanuts for protein.

In addition, you might want to add the following:

- Small package fruit-flavored candies, such as jelly



beans, orange slices or spice drops (Avoid chocolate, since it may melt).

- One pair athletic socks
- One pair cotton work gloves
- Three packages book matches
- One space blanket, or two large plastic garbage bags to reflect body heat
- One penlight and batteries (keep the batteries separate to avoid having them discharge when the light accidentally comes on).


When you've assembled your kit, the above items should just about fill a two-pound coffee can. If you have a three-pound can, don't waste the space! Add more stuff.

More candles should be helpful, as well as cocoa packets, tea or instant coffee. Then, cover the can with a good stocking cap, and put it in your car.

Keep in mind that as you prepare to go somewhere to take more clothing than you think you'll need. If you think a light jacket will be enough to get you to the nearest C-store, wear it. Then toss a big heavy jacket into the back seat where your blanket and can will already be. We hope you won't need to use a kit like this, but someday you may be glad you had one with you.

Remember that the IHP recommends strongly that you stay with your car. A big vehicle is easier to find than a lone pedestrian.

MONROE



Electric News

MONROE COUNTY ELECTRIC CO-OPERATIVE, INC.

WATERLOO, ILLINOIS

618-939-7171

800-757-7433

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Joseph J. Fellin

Across the President's desk

New long distance rate

Early in 1999, your cooperative entered into an alliance with three other area electric cooperatives in order to provide additional services and value to the members of each participating cooperative.

This alliance, known as Southern Services, LLC., has since added two more cooperatives to its membership. Collectively the six cooperative members of Southern Services provide

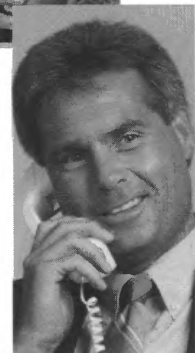
electric energy to some 72,000 homes, farms and businesses throughout Southern Illinois.

In addition to Monroe County Electric Cooperative, the other members of the alliance are: Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative at Dongola, Egyptian Electric Cooperative of Steeleville, Southeastern Electric Cooperative of Eldorado, Tri-County Electric Cooperative of Mt. Vernon, and Clinton County Electric Cooperative of Breese.

Monroe County Electric Cooperative, in conjunction with Southern Services, is now offering long distance phone service at rates that compare very favorably with other carriers.

This plan is simple and straight-forward, and there are NO CODES TO DIAL. The rate for all long distance calls within the State is 4.9 cents per minute, and for all calls out of State, the rate is 6.9 cents per minute. These rates apply 24 hours per day, seven days per week and there are no additional monthly fees or long term agreements. All calls are billed in six second increments, with an 18 second minimum charge.

The plan also offers the option of a personal toll free 800 number for no additional fee, and incoming calls to that number are billed at the same 4.9 and 6.9 cents noted



Southern Services, LLC

above. This is a great option for those of you who have kids in college or close family members living away from home.

The plan uses Qwest as its carrier and billing is provided by PowerNet Global, with a separate bill provided for all long distance service.

Applications were sent out in the January 2001 issue of Illinois Country Living and are also available at our cooperative office. For additional information or to enroll by phone you may call Toll free at 1-866-266-7531.

Rebates and incentive programs for members

Electric heat rebate

\$350 rebate from Monroe County Electric Co-Operative for new electric heat installations qualifying for cooperative's Electric Heat Rate 16.

Free water heater

Monroe County Electric Co-Operative will offer a free 50 or 65 gallon electric water heater to members who build new electric heated homes.

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Monroe County Electric Co-Operative offers a \$30 per kW rebate for total-electric heating systems that include an electric furnace, heat pump, baseboard or ceiling cable. The rebate also applies to other all-electric heating systems. Total-electric heat systems must be 5 kW or larger to be eligible for the program.

Water heater promotion

Purchase a Ruud Electric Water Heater from Monroe County Electric Co-Operative:

50 gallon	\$125 plus tax
65 gallon	\$150 plus tax

Features:

8- year warranty - Premium grade anode rod

R 20 insulation

Stainless steel lower heating element

Purchase an electric water heater from any other dealer and receive a \$75 rebate from Monroe County Electric Co-Operative. To receive rebate:

1. Furnish a sales slip with the brand name and model.
2. Install your water heater on cooperative lines. The rebate is subject to verification.

For more information regarding these programs, please call 939-7171.

Aren't you tired of lugging bottled water?

- From the shelf to the cart
- From the cart to the checkout
- From the checkout to the cart
- From the cart to the car
- From the car to the kitchen
- From the kitchen to the pantry

PureWater Filtration System only \$475 and only from Monroe County Electric Co-Operative.

6 months financing available

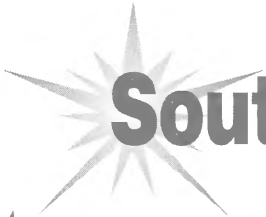


Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, Inc.

907 North Illinois Route 3, P.O. Box 128, Waterloo, Illinois 62298
(618) 939-7171 • Office hours: Monday through Friday 8 a.m. — 5 p.m. • 800-757-7433

Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, Inc.

Through



Southern Services, LLC

is now offering

Business and Residential

Long Distance Phone Service

Billed by PowerNet Global Communications

Utilizing the Quest Long Distance Network (The nation's 4th largest carrier)

4.9 cents 6.9 cents

All calls in Illinois All calls out of state



24 hours a day – 7 days a week – no codes to dial

- Free to join – No monthly fees – No monthly minimum
- No term agreements – Major carrier
- 800 Number 4.9 cents – 6.9 cents per minute – no fees
- Free calling cards 13.9 cents per minute (No surcharge)
- 6 second increment billing (18 second minimum)

Low overseas rates. Call the United Kingdom for just 12 cents per minute. (Rates may vary from country to country) No fees or service charge.

Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, Inc., in conjunction with Southern Services, LLC, is offering long distance telephone service through PowerNet Global Communications. This long distance service is one of the lowest-cost long distance services available. You can call anywhere in the State of Illinois for a low 4.9 cents per minute or anywhere out of state in the continental United States for 6.9 cents per minute. In addition, you can have your own personal 800 number to receive calls from family members or acquaintances. Incoming calls on your 800 number are billed at the same rates noted above. All rates are the same 24 hours a day-7 days a week. There are no monthly fees, no minimums, or long-term agreements.

For additional information or to enroll by phone call toll free: 1-866-266-7531
 Mail application to: Southern Services, LLC, P.O. Box 1478, Mt. Vernon, IL 62864
 Applications may be faxed toll free to 1-866-326-6753

DETACH HERE

Name _____ Social Security Number _____

Street _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone Numbers (_____) _____ - _____ (_____) _____ - _____

Other Services Desired: Toll Free 800 Number Travel Cards...Number of cards requested _____

*If 800 service is desired, enter the telephone number it should ring to (_____) _____ - _____
(existing 800 numbers may be transferred to this service...applicable forms are available upon request)

I hereby authorize PowerNet Global Communications, or its designator/agent, Southern Services, LLC, to transfer my long distance service. I agree to financial responsibility for all charges arising from all long distance services provided. The service requested will be provisioned only on the approval of credit for the application. A service charge may be assessed by the local telephone company when they make the carrier change.

Customer Signature _____ Date _____

Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, Inc.

SAVE HOT WATER, SAVE MONEY



Many people are shocked to learn that their water heater is one of the largest single energy users in their home. Typically, that big (usually) cylindrical thing sits quietly in a corner somewhere, heating water for dozens of household chores. While it's doing that, it's also using energy. On average, about 15-20 percent of the utility bill goes to heat water.

One way to keep costs down is to buy an energy-efficient water heater to start with. All major energy-using appliances on the market now have an Energy Efficiency label, and water heaters come in several different price ranges. Generally, the less expensive they are to buy, the more expensive they are to operate.

Before shopping, be sure to talk to the people at your electric co-op. Some co-ops may have a special price on electric water heaters. Some may offer a special "peak shaving" rate to encourage you to let them place a control on your water heater. Then, the co-op can shut it off for brief periods during times of high electricity usage.

Once you've got an energy-efficient water heater, there are some things you can do in your home to cut back on your use of hot water.

First, you need to check your temperature setting. If you're heating your water more than you need to, you're wasting money. Home economists tell us that 140-degree water is needed for proper sanitizing, and most detergents for automatic dishwashers won't

dissolve properly at temperatures cooler than that.

So check your water temperature as it comes out of the faucet, after you've let the water run for about five minutes. Then, you'll need to turn it higher or lower to reach the desired temperature.

Of course, if you don't need a new water heater, you're stuck with a dilemma: Do you replace the existing one anyway, which is expensive, or just go on using it, which is also expensive. The answer is yes and no. Yes, you go on using it. No, you don't use it expensively. If you have a water heater that's in good shape, you can still make it more efficient by adding insulation to the outside. You can buy kits at hardware stores, or just wrap batts of insulation around your heater, assembling everything as neatly as possible with duct tape. Be sure to leave a cutout for your thermostat control panel. That little job should save about 20 percent on your water heating expense.

While temperature control and insulation can help, there are even more ways to save. First, try to figure out ways to use less hot water.

For example, it helps to know where the water is used. Once you know that, you can try ways to use less of it. The average family, the experts tell us, uses hot water like this: 41 percent goes for baths and showers, 24 percent goes for laundry, 27 percent is used in the kitchen, and some eight percent is used for "other" purposes.

Since baths and showers account for the biggest usage, cutting back there will give the most savings. Flow reducers on showerheads will reduce the amount of water going through the showerhead, while still giving the feel of a good shower. Shorter showers will help, too.

Much of the water used in the kitchen goes for dishwashing, and cutting back there can help. If you have an electric dishwasher, you can save on water heating expenses by using that appliance wisely. Wait to run it until you have a full load. Don't run it with just the dishes from one meal in it.

The laundry room is a big hot water user, too. You can save by washing only full loads, by using water temperature only as hot as needed, and by using a cold rinse whenever possible.

If there's any chance at all that you may be replacing your water heater soon, contact your co-op first. They may have a bargain for you. And don't forget to ask them for further energy-saving tips. They may be able to help you save in other ways, too.

MONROE



Electric News

MONROE COUNTY ELECTRIC CO-OPERATIVE, INC.

WATERLOO, ILLINOIS

618-939-7171

800-757-7433

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Joseph J. Fellin

Across the President's desk

We have just completed our Fall Area Member Meetings. The meetings were held at the Hecker Community Center, Millstadt VFW, Eschy's in Maeystown and at the cooperative office in Waterloo. These area meetings give you, the members, an opportunity to meet with Co-Op management and staff in an informal setting. We attempt to bring you up to date on activities at the Co-Op and answer any questions you may have.

President/CEO Joe Fellin started the meeting with introductions of the staff and board members present.

Fellin then brought the members up to date on the progress of our new building. He announced that requests for proposals (RFP's) would be sent out on December 1, 2000. They hoped to accept a proposal by mid-January of 2001 and break ground by March 9, 2001. The Fountain Water District will extend service to and supply water to the new building.

On the sale of our existing property, Fellin reminded everyone that two lots have been sold and that it looked like two more should close before year's end. He also mentioned that litigation against the city of Waterloo continues.

He then announced that the loan buyout from Soyland Power was proceeding as planned. The payment of principal is on schedule and the loan would be paid off by June 30, 2002.

An update on Southern Services, L.L.C. then followed. Southern Services has added two more cooperatives to its membership; Tri-County Electric in Mt. Vernon and Clinton County Electric in Breese. Along with Monroe, they join South-Eastern Illinois, Southern Illinois and Egyptian Electric Cooperatives. The L.L.C. is now offering a long distance telephone service to the members of the six distribution cooperatives. It is also looking into providing propane gas service, through an equity ownership, as well as marketing fuel cells.

The groups were shown a video tape on the planned

improvements for Southern Illinois Power Cooperative (SIPC) in Marion. The following was covered in the video.

Starting in early 2001, SIPC will begin a plan to invest \$200 million into increasing their generating capacity by 36% and also reduce emissions by 75% to help meet clean air standards. SIPC's plant burns primarily southern Illinois coal. These improvements should add 30 years of productivity to their plant.

They plan to replace three of their existing boilers with one high tech coal fired unit. They will also add two natural gas powered combustion units that will be used primarily as "peaking" units.

SIPC will receive a \$1 million grant from the Clean Coal Review Board for its efforts to implement cleaner and more efficient burning of southern Illinois coal.

These improvements will help to ensure adequate reliable and affordable energy to the six cooperatives for years to come.

Allan Masterson, Director of Member Services, reviewed current marketing programs the cooperative has available. He explained the cooperative's electric heat rate and rebates, Purewater purification systems, surge suppressor program and the cooperative's Verizon Wireless Cellular phone rate plan.

Masterson announced that there are openings for our 2001 Member Advisory Committee. Please call Allan if you or someone you know may be interested in serving on this committee. The committee meets four (4) times a year and a term consists of three (3) years. It provides the member with the opportunity to learn more about the cooperative and gives the member a chance to ask questions of the board, management and staff.

David Stephens, Superintendent of Operations, brought the groups up to date on the number of services they're putting in, major jobs that they're working on and continuing maintenance programs to improve quality and reliability of service.

All members in attendance received a 2001 Saturday Evening Post calendar. A drawing was held for five \$10 credits on the member's electric bill. Refreshments were served after the meetings.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, management and staff, we offer best wishes to the membership for the year 2001!

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Much of the water used in the kitchen goes for dishwashing, and cutting back there can help. If you have an electric dishwasher, you can save on water heating expenses by using that appliance wisely. Wait to run it until you have a full load. Don't run it with just the dishes from one meal in it.

The laundry room is a big hot water user, too. You can save by washing only full loads, by using water temperature only as hot as needed, and by using a cold rinse whenever possible.

If there's any chance at all that you may be replacing your water heater soon, contact your co-op first. They may have a bargain for you. And don't forget to ask them for further energy-saving tips. They may be able to help you save in other ways, too.

MONROE



Electric News

MONROE COUNTY
ELECTRIC
CO-OPERATIVE, INC.

WATERLOO, ILLINOIS
618-939-7171
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A Touchstone Energy Cooperative 



Joseph J. Fellin

Across the President's desk

We have just completed our Fall Area Member Meetings. The meetings were held at the Hecker Community Center, Millstadt VFW, Eschy's in Maestown and at the cooperative office in Waterloo. These area meetings give you, the members, an opportunity to meet with Co-Op management and staff in an informal setting. We attempt to bring you up to date on activities at the Co-Op and answer any questions you may have.

President/CEO Joe Fellin started the meeting with introductions of the staff and board members present.

Fellin then brought the members up to date on the progress of our new building. He announced that requests for proposals (RFP's) would be sent out on December 1, 2000. They hoped to accept a proposal by mid-January of 2001 and break ground by March 9, 2001. The Fountain Water District will extend service to and supply water to the new building.

On the sale of our existing property, Fellin reminded everyone that two lots have been sold and that it looked like two more should close before year's end. He also mentioned that litigation against the city of Waterloo continues.

He then announced that the loan buyout from Soyland Power was proceeding as planned. The payment of principal is on schedule and the loan would be paid off by June 30, 2002.

An update on Southern Services, L.L.C. then followed. Southern Services has added two more cooperatives to its membership; Tri-County Electric in Mt. Vernon and Clinton County Electric in Breese. Along with Monroe, they join South-Eastern Illinois, Southern Illinois and Egyptian Electric Cooperatives. The L.L.C. is now offering a long distance telephone service to the members of the six distribution cooperatives. It is also looking into providing propane gas service, through an equity ownership, as well as marketing fuel cells.

The groups were shown a video tape on the planned

improvements for Southern Illinois Power Cooperative (SIPC) in Marion. The following was covered in the video.

Starting in early 2001, SIPC will begin a plan to invest \$200 million into increasing their generating capacity by 36% and also reduce emissions by 75% to help meet clean air standards. SIPC's plant burns primarily southern Illinois coal. These improvements should add 30 years of productivity to their plant.

They plan to replace three of their existing boilers with one high tech coal fired unit. They will also add two natural gas powered combustion units that will be used primarily as "peaking" units.

SIPC will receive a \$1 million grant from the Clean Coal Review Board for its efforts to implement cleaner and more efficient burning of southern Illinois coal.

These improvements will help to ensure adequate reliable and affordable energy to the six cooperatives for years to come.

Allan Masterson, Director of Member Services, reviewed current marketing programs the cooperative has available. He explained the cooperative's electric heat rate and rebates, Purewater purification systems, surge suppressor program and the cooperative's Verizon Wireless Cellular phone rate plan.

Masterson announced that there are openings for our 2001 Member Advisory Committee. Please call Allan if you or someone you know may be interested in serving on this committee. The committee meets four (4) times a year and a term consists of three (3) years. It provides the member with the opportunity to learn more about the cooperative and gives the member a chance to ask questions of the board, management and staff.

David Stephens, Superintendent of Operations, brought the groups up to date on the number of services they're putting in, major jobs that they're working on and continuing maintenance programs to improve quality and reliability of service.

All members in attendance received a 2001 Saturday Evening Post calendar. A drawing was held for five \$10 credits on the member's electric bill. Refreshments were served after the meetings.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, management and staff, we offer best wishes to the membership for the year 2001!