

MONROE



Electric News

MONROE COUNTY
ELECTRIC
CO-OPERATIVE, INC.

WATERLOO, ILLINOIS

(618) 939-7171 A Touchstone Energy Cooperative 

(800) 757-7433

31

open membership

MONROE COUNTY
ELECTRIC CO-OP.

Voluntary and open membership • Voluntary and open membership



Alan W. Wattles

Across the President's desk

Electric Co-ops Rise to the Occasion in Times of Great Need

As the new year begins, our electric cooperative colleagues in the South are still figuring the toll of Hurricane Katrina's devastating blow to the Gulf Coast. During that horrendous time, we witnessed Mother Nature at its worst—and human nature at its best.

Nowhere was the spirit of giving, sacrifice, and cooperation more evident than in the community of electric cooperatives that responded to virtually unprecedented destruction.

They demonstrated what cooperatives are capable of doing during times of great need—offering assistance where it is needed, not only near their own communities but to communities hundreds of miles away. Co-op crews were on the ground in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama in only the time it took to drive there, bringing food, water, equipment, and hope.

Never mind that diesel prices skyrocketed in the days following the hurricane or that the crews headed into unfamiliar territory with few available hotel rooms, no phones, and short supplies of food, fuel, and fresh water.

This wasn't the first time electric co-ops rose to the occasion in a time of great need. Through floods,



tornadoes, wildfires, and ice storms, we've demonstrated time and time again that we have more resources than even the biggest power companies when it comes to recovering from disasters.

Electric cooperatives' standard engineering design plays an important role in recovery efforts, but our greatest resource is the dedicated people who trudge through waste-deep water to repair the lines or prepare meals for days on end, and those who keep the office going, often in the midst of great personal loss.

Our cooperative mission energizes us during trying times. We show that the cooperative spirit cannot be dimmed; it shines brightly even in the face of darkness and despair, and for that, we are truly thankful.

Nominating Committee Named Meeting set for Feb. 1st

A committee on nominations has been appointed and will meet at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 1st, 2006, at the Monroe County Electric Co-Operative 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 66th Annual Meeting of Members will be held Monday, March 27, 2006, at the Hecker Community Center, Hecker, Illinois.

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

District 1
Larry A. Haas 7565 Haas Hills Lane Belleville, IL 62223
District 2
Larry W. Kraft 4957 Quirin Rd Smithton, IL 62285
District 9
Richard W. Liefer 2817 Ames Road Red Bud, IL 62278

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 2006 Nominating Committee.

2006 NOMINATING COMMITTEE

District 1 - Larry Haas

Lyle Haas • 7233 State Route 163, Millstadt, IL. 62260
Jim Kostelac • 8501 Concordia Church Rd., Belleville, IL. 62223
Karen Orsa • 3545 Bridge Ln., Millstadt, IL. 62260
Erwin Hofstetter, Alternate • 8019 Triple Lakes Rd., Dupo, IL. 62239

District 2 - Larry Kraft

Denis Capone • 4767 Douglas Rd., Millstadt, IL. 62260
Walter Beil • 3501 Dori Lane, P.O. Box 23, Millstadt, IL. 62260
Melvin Veit • 6400 Bohleysville Rd., Millstadt, IL. 62260
Gerold Quirin, Alternate • 4922 Quirin Rd., Smithton, IL. 62285

District 9 - Richard Liefer

Mike Henry • 2114 Ames Rd., Red Bud, IL. 62278
Rick Stenzel • 3410 Ames Rd., P. O. Box 167, Red Bud, IL. 62278
Denis VanBuren • 3200 Ames Rd., Red Bud, IL. 62278
Robert Heller, Alternate • 5880 VV Rd., Prairie du Rocher, IL. 62277

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."

New Columbia Substation is On-line

After two years of planning and construction, the new substation just southwest of the city of Columbia is on-line and serving members in that area, which includes the Pines subdivision.

Prior to the new substation being built, the load around Columbia was fed mainly from the Fountain substation, which is located off Bluff road just south of Fountain. With steady residential load growth in that area, the cooperative recognized the need for an additional substation.

The substation contains a 5,000 kva transformer

that takes the high voltage coming off the transmission line (rated at 34,500 volts) and steps it down to 7,200 volts. That voltage travels down our distribution lines to members' homes and businesses. The individual transformers at each account then step down the voltage again to 120/240 volts, which can be used then by the member.

The last phase of construction included the addition of the AMR (Automatic Meter Reading) and SCADA (load monitoring) systems.

High School Juniors:

Win a trip to Washington, D.C.!!!

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 students 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. A current member of the Illinois General Assembly, State Representative Art Tenhouse, is a past member 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.

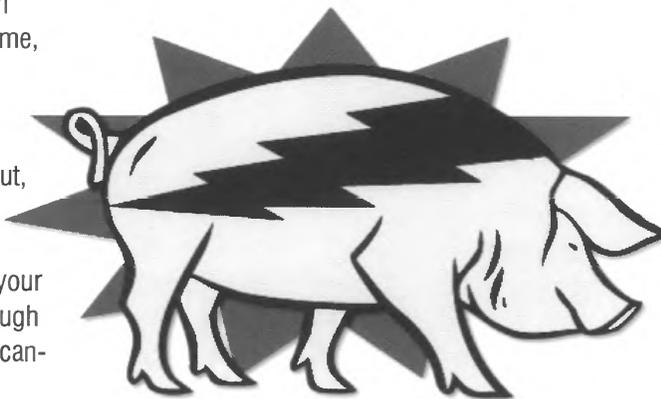
Last year, **Heather Nast from Valmeyer and Chris Preston from Freeburg** attended and had a great learning experience.

For more information, contact the cooperative office at 939-7171 or (800) 757-7433.

Are Energy Hogs Lurking in Your Home?

Energy Hogs are villainous creatures that feed on wasted energy. Don't let your home be their home, too. Prevent Energy Hogs this winter.

- **Insulate your house.** Insulation traps warm air inside so you don't have to turn up the heat. In the summer it keeps the cool air in and warm air out, reducing the amount of energy it takes to cool your home.
- **Close the damper.** Fireplaces add warmth to your home, but when not in use hot air escapes up through the chimney. By closing the damper, Energy Hogs cannot get in.
- **Caulk or weather-strip windows.** Windows are one of the easiest places to lose warm or cool air and energy. Check for cracks or loose panes and repair them. Make sure you can't feel a cool breeze around your windows.



These helpful hints, along with other energy conservation tips, can be found on the Energy Hog Buster Web site at www.energyhog.org. There's fun stuff for kids, too!

Use Caution With Space Heaters and Supplemental Heating Equipment

Falling temperatures and rising heating costs have many members looking at ways to lower home-heating bills. Safe Electricity urges extreme caution for those planning to use electric space heaters to help warm homes this winter.

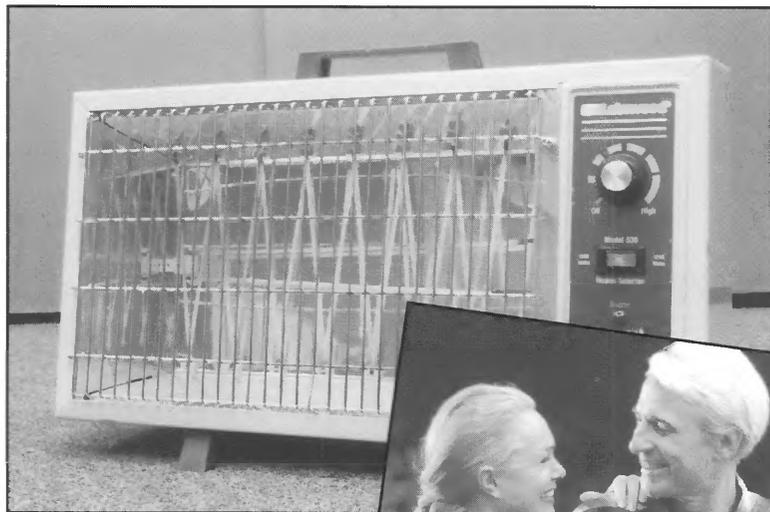
Approximately one-third of all house fires nationwide occur during the cold, home-heating season of December, January, and February. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), the major cause of these winter fires can be attributed to faulty and improper use and maintenance of supplemental heating equipment, such as space heaters.

"Portable heaters can help take the chill from areas of your home, but are very dangerous if used improperly," says Molly Hall, Safe Electricity Director. "Stay warm and safe, and give space heaters space – at least three feet from anything that can burn, including little fingers!"

Some cities have banned the use of many types of portable space heaters. Before purchasing or using any type of space heater, check with your local fire department to find out if it is legal in your community.

Safe Electricity offers the following precautions when using electric space heaters:

- Purchase only space heaters that have been safety tested and rated. Make sure the unit is equipped with automatic shut-off features and heating element guards. Read and follow all of the manufacturer's instructions for operation and care.



- Before use, check to make sure the heater is in good condition, and have all problems professionally repaired.

- Place heater out of high-traffic areas and on a level, hard, non-flammable floor surface - NOT on carpets, furniture, or countertops.

- Remember to keep space heaters at least three feet from all flammable items such as draperies, blankets, and sofas.

- Do not overload circuits. Don't use extension cords or multiple plugs with a space heater, and make sure the unit is not plugged into the same circuit as other electric appliances.

- Never leave space heaters unattended. Turn off your space heater and unplug it before leaving the room or going to bed.

"Remember, never allow children or pets near an electric heater," warns Hall. "Accidental contact could result in serious shock or burns."

Many people also use electric blankets to keep warm during

cold winter nights. Before plugging in electric blankets, check for any damage and inspect cord for frays, cracks, or cuts. Electric blankets should not be tucked under the mattress and nothing should be placed on top of the blanket while it's in use, including comforters and bedspreads. Also, pets should never be allowed to sleep on the electric blanket.

Safe Electricity also reminds everyone to make sure smoke alarms in your home are installed and working properly.

For more electrical safety information, visit the SafeElectricity.org Web site. Safe Electricity is an electrical safety public awareness program created and supported by a coalition of several dozen organizations, including the University of Illinois, rural electric cooperatives and investor-owned electric utilities, and other entities dedicated to promoting electric safety.

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Across the President's desk

How the Cooperative Difference Affects Your Rates

At Monroe County Electric Co-operative (MCEC), the people who receive electricity are not just customers, they are members of our cooperative. Members enjoy certain rights that customers don't have with other electric providers. For instance, as a member of MCEC, you can choose to run for a board seat, or if you don't want to actually run for a seat, you can attend our fall member meetings and our annual meeting and hear the business of your cooperative. Because you can vote in the annual election for the board candidates of your choice, our board is composed of people who live and work in the very territory that MCEC serves.

Many people, however, don't understand the various ways their membership in a cooperative affects their rates. At MCEC, our rates are based on two main components – the actual cost of the wholesale power we buy from the company that generates electricity, and the cost for us to get that power to you. Our power provider, Southern Illinois Power Cooperative (SIPC), a cooperative operated like us, sets wholesale power costs. Several board members of

MCEC have seats on SIPC's board of directors. As a cooperative, SIPC works hard to keep rates low while guaranteeing a stable supply of electricity.

The second component – the cost for us to get power to you – is all other operational costs, including the cost for poles and lines, maintenance of trucks and buildings, employee wages and benefits, and the costs associated with maintaining records, like the printing and mailing of bills.

One of the biggest advantages of being served by a cooperative is that we work only for you; we don't have stockholders expecting a big quarterly dividend. We are a not-for-profit enterprise, which means we're working only to provide you with economical, reliable service. We do collect some money, which is figured into your rates, that is used for capital improvements. It helps us to build many of the expensive improvements we are required to provide. Any money collected in excess of those required funds is allocated to each customer account as patronage capital. Patronage capital, or capital credits as they are often called, represents your investment

in the cooperative and all its assets. While capital credits are not returned every year, the board of directors that you elect considers at least once a year whether or not we can return some of these investment dollars to our members.

So, when figuring our overall rates, customers need to consider patronage capital in the quotient. Returning capital credits to members is a practice unique to the cooperative form of business and represents one of the cooperative principles – members' economic participation. And perhaps best of all, the benefits of this economic participation accrues to our community.



SIPC works hard to keep rates low while guaranteeing a stable supply of electricity.

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For more information, contact the cooperative office at 939-7171 or (800) 757-7433.

Better ideas for your home

New construction guidelines booklet updated

New materials and techniques for building a comfortable, energy-efficient home are included in the new Certified Comfort Home manual now available from the Illinois Electric Cooperatives.

This booklet, first written in 1995, offers advice on many details of construction, as well as broad guidelines on issues such as insulation levels and high-efficiency heating systems. The new edition includes recommendations for spray-on cellulose insulation in walls, airtight recessed light fixtures, and windows with invisible low-e film between the panes.

Alternative construction techniques such as structural insulated



panels (SIP) and insulated concrete forms are also recognized for their high efficiency and strength.

The manual shows the proven construction practices that cooperatives have seen used around the state to build energy efficient homes that are also comfortable. The booklet provides general information as well as detailed instructions on installing items from soffits to vapor barriers and even wall stud placement.

The 16-page Certified Comfort Home manual is offered free of charge to cooperative members and area contractors. You can request a copy by writing our office, or by calling. You may also drop us an e-mail also be the contact for questions regarding electric build-ins or upgrades at your property.

Be Prepared for Safe Winter Travel

According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, 25 percent of winter deaths can be attributed to people being caught out in a storm. The National Weather Service reports that many of these winter deaths occur when people attempt to leave their vehicles during a storm to walk to safety.

To stay safe, stranded drivers should stay with the car, tie a piece of colored cloth to the car's antenna, and keep the car running while using the heater 10 minutes out of each hour. People should remember to keep their interior lights on while the engine is running and be sure the exhaust pipe is clear of snow and ice. Crack the windows slightly to allow in fresh air and avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. To prevent hy-

pothemia and frostbite bundle up in woolens or a blanket. If these aren't available, move your arms and legs constantly to keep the blood flowing.

If travel is necessary in stormy weather, it's best to inform someone of the travel route, destination, and expected arrival time. Travelers should remember to keep their gas tanks near full to avoid ice in the tank and fuel lines and keep a disaster supply kit in the car.



National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Winter Pet Safety

Our furry friends need some extra care in the chilly winter season, so keep these tips in mind for a healthy pet:

■ Don't keep your pets outside for very long. They can get frostbite and hypothermia just like us.

■ If you have an outdoors dog provide him extra food and a shelter with bedding. He will need more calories to produce body heat and to have a healthy warm coat.

■ It is a good idea to bang on your hood or honk your horn before you start your car in the morning. Outdoor cats and other animals will crawl up near the engine for warmth and shelter. The moving parts from the started engine can cause harm to animals hidden under the hood.

■ Keep your eye out for antifreeze puddles. It tastes good to pets, but is deadly. A tablespoon can kill a cat and a half of a cup can be fatal to a 25-pound dog, according to National Humane Education Society.

■ Wipe off your pet's paws when coming inside. Rock salt can be abrasive to an animal's paws and burn the pet's mouth if they lick their paws.

Source: National Humane Education Society; City of Lynn police Department; Town of Richmond Hill; Fayetteville Animal Shelter.



Winter Travel Survival Kit

- ❄️ Flashlight and extra batteries
- ❄️ Blankets or sleeping bags
- ❄️ Booster cables
- ❄️ Fire extinguisher (5lb., A-B-C type)
- ❄️ First aid kit and manual
- ❄️ Bottled water and non-perishable high-energy foods, such as granola bars, raisins, and peanut butter.
- ❄️ Compass and road maps
- ❄️ Shovel
- ❄️ Tire repair kit and pump
- ❄️ Flares
- ❄️ Extra clothing to keep dry
- ❄️ Sack of sand or cat litter (for tire traction)
- ❄️ Tow rope
- ❄️ Knife

Sources: American Red Cross; National Weather Service; National Safety Council



Our PROMISE to YOU

Our Touchstone Energy® electric cooperative is founded and run on one promise: Everything is done for the members. Period. For more information about Touchstone Energy, log on to www.touchstoneenergy.coop.



Touchstone Energy®
The power of human connections

Helping the Sun Heat Your Home in Winter

Every home can benefit from free solar energy in the winter. The first step to taking advantage of this solar heat is to understand where the sun moves around your home. In summer, the sun rises in the east or even a little north of east. It rises high overhead and heats your home's east walls, its roof, and then its west walls. It sets in the west or northwest. In winter, the sun takes a low arc across the sky, moving from the southeast to the southwest. Most of the sun's winter heat falls on the south-facing walls of your home.

The key features for harvesting solar heat are your windows. If you replace your windows, select the glass according to which way the window faces. Most newer windows have insulated glass, which means that they are double-pane windows.



This is good in both winter and summer. Many of these double-pane windows also have glass that is coated with a very thin and almost invisible layer of reflective metal. This low-e coating reduces radiant heat loss from rooms through the window. The new types of spectrally selective glass, like low-e2 and Sun-gate II, are an excellent choice for east and west-facing windows be-

cause they also block solar heat in summer. But don't use a spectrally selective glass on the south-facing side if you want solar heat in winter. Standard low-e glass is a better choice for the south-facing windows, but clear double-pane glass is the best choice.

If you have trees or bushes on the south side of your home, be sure they don't block your winter sun. Observe the pattern of shadows on your home in both winter and summer. Remember that the shade cast by tall trees helps block that high summer sun, and this helps keep your home cool. But low-hanging bushes or trees may be blocking your winter sun, just when you need it the most. Prune these lower branches to let the sun enter your windows in winter.

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Please plan to attend the
68th ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS

Monday, March 27, 2006

to be held at the Hecker Community Center
in Hecker, Illinois



5:00 p.m.	Registration begins Meal serving begins (fried chicken, au gratin potatoes, green beans, cookie) Health fair and business expo begins
5:30 p.m.	Entertainment provided by Duane Grapperhaus
7:00 p.m.	Official Business Meeting begins
8:00 p.m. (or after business meeting)	Speakers for the evening: Monroe County Sheriff Dan Kelley St. Clair County Sheriff Mearl Justus
8:30 p.m. (or after speakers)	Attendance prize winners announced



Verizon Day Set for March 10th

A Verizon Wireless representative will be at your cooperative office on Friday, March 10 from 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. The representative will be here to answer your questions and will have several models of phones on hand that the members can look at. If you're not able to be here at that time and would like to talk to the repre-

sentative, you can 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 phones to the membership.

Planning to dig – call us

Spring is always a good time to start new projects; landscaping, fences, new homes, and many other projects that have been in the planning stages through the winter months are now ready for actual work to begin. If your project requires digging or disturbing the earth, make sure you call Monroe County Electric Cooperative and JULIE at least two working days before you begin.

When digging, please remember the actual lines could be as much as one to two feet on either side of the marks and special care should be taken as you dig near these areas. If by chance you should nick the insulation of a cable, please call the Cooperative immediately so we can have an employee inspect the damage. If the cable is covered up without repair, the damage could be sufficient to allow moisture to penetrate and eventually cause the cable to fail.

A call to JULIE at (800) 892-0123 will make sure that other utilities, such as telephone, cable TV, and water, are notified of your plans. You will need your name, phone number, county, township or town, closest town and distance, township section number, excavation site address, nearest cross road, and the type of work you will be performing. The JULIE representative will give you an authorization number that you will want to write down and keep until you project is complete.

Digging without calling to have underground facilities located can be both dangerous and expensive. Our underground power-lines have as high as 7,200 volts and some natural gas lines have extremely high



Be responsible and work safely – call before you dig.

Monroe County Electric Cooperative –

939-7171 or (800) 757-7433

J.U.L.I.E. (800) 892-0123



pressures. As telecommunications becomes increasingly important to all of us, there is more and more expensive fiber-optic cable being placed in rural areas. Should you dig through one of our cables without calling for a locate, our policy is to bill for the damages.

Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, Inc.

6132 State Rt. 3, P.O. Box 128, Waterloo, Illinois 62298
(618) 939-7171

Office hours: Monday through Friday 8 a.m. — 4:30 p.m. • (800) 757-7433

Lower Your Federal Tax and Energy Bill at the Same Time

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 signed by President Bush on August 8, 2005, provides federal tax credits of up to \$500 for Monroe County Electric Co-Operative members who make certain energy efficient upgrades to their homes. Additional benefits of participating in the program will include lower home energy bills, increased indoor comfort and reduced air pollution.

What is a tax credit?

A tax credit is a claim on your federal income tax form at the end of the year. The credit increases the tax refund you receive or decreases the amount of taxes you have to pay. A tax credit is more valuable than a similar size tax deduction. A tax credit reduces your federal income tax by 100 percent of the amount of credit.

Who is eligible for the tax credits?

Anyone who installs the eligible improvements in or on their principal residence in the United States.

What energy-efficient home improvements are eligible?

- **Insulation, exterior doors or pigmented metal roofs:** 10 percent of the total cost, up to \$500. Duct sealing and weather stripping or foam sealants may also qualify for the credit, depending on the IRS rules.
- **Central air conditioners, heat pumps or water heaters:** up to \$300 towards the full purchase price.
- **Furnaces or boilers:** up to \$150 towards the full purchase price, and/or \$50 for a furnace with an efficient air-circulating fan.
- **Exterior windows (including skylights):** 10 percent of the total cost, up to \$200.

What are the equipment specifications needed for the tax credit?

- **Windows, doors and insulation** must meet the requirements of the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) a model energy code for buildings. In some cases this may be higher than the Energy Star code.
- **Metal roofs** must have pigmented coatings that meet Energy Star requirements.
- **Heating and cooling equipment** must meet stringent efficiency standards and not all Energy Star products will qualify. **Central air conditioners** must have a seasonal energy efficiency ratio (SEER) minimum of 15 and an energy efficiency ratio (EER) minimum of 12.5. **Electric heat pumps** must be 15 SEER and 13

EER with a heating seasonal performance factor (HSPF) of at least 9. **Geothermal heat pumps** must meet current Energy Star criteria. For a closed-loop system, a 14.1 EER and a coefficient of performance (COP) of at least 3.3. In addition the geothermal heat pumps must include a desuperheater, which helps heat water or an integrated water heating system. **Natural gas, propane or oil burning water heaters** must have an energy factor (EF) of at least 0.80. Only some tankless water heaters meet this standard.

When are the tax credits available?

The home improvement tax credits apply for improvements "placed in service" from January 1, 2006, through December 31, 2007. "Placed in service" means installed not purchased.

For more information, contact Monroe County Electric at 939-7171 or 800-757-7433 or e-mail us at mcec@htc.net.

Monroe County Electric Co-Operative is your connection to powerful solutions and a Touchstone Energy cooperative.

Sheriff Dan Kelley and Sheriff Mearl Justus to Speak at Meeting

Rural crime prevention will be the topic covered by our two guest speakers. Monroe County Sheriff Dan Kelley and St. Clair County Sheriff Mearl Justus will speak at this year's meeting.

Sheriff Kelley has been in law enforcement since 1982. He has a bachelor's degree in urban and community affairs and a master's degree in public administration. He serves on the board of directors for the Southwestern Illinois Law Enforcement Commission and on the advisory board of Southwestern Illinois College (SWIC).

Sheriff Mearl Justus has been in law enforcement for more than 50 years, the last 23 years as sheriff of St. Clair County. He holds a BA in administration of criminal justice and an MA in administration of justice.

Both Sheriff Kelley and Sheriff Justus are seasoned law enforcement officers. They bring a wealth of experience in crime prevention to our meeting.

Trees Are Natural Energy Savers

Want to save energy and increase your home's value? Plant a tree. A properly planted tree can save you energy dollars, provide beauty, as well as attract birds and wildlife to your yard.

Deciduous trees planted on the south and west sides of your home provide shade that helps lower your energy bills in the summer and still let the sun's light through to help heat your home in the winter. And shading an outdoor air conditioning unit can increase its efficiency.

Evergreen trees planted on the north and northwest side of the house, block bitter, winter winds.

Don't plant a tree too close to your house or electric lines. You don't want to have to trim or cut down your tree later because it has grown up to become a hazard.

If you would like more information contact Monroe County Electric Co-Operative or visit www.arborday.org, www.eren.doe.gov/erec.factsheets or call a landscape expert. For a list of local landscaping experts you can contact the Illinois Nurserymen's Association at (217) 525-6222.



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Rising Power Costs

Monroe County Electric Co-Operative is seeing increasing costs for the wholesale power it purchases to provide electric for its members. There are several reasons we are seeing increases from Southern Illinois Power Cooperative, as they are having increases in the costs for fuel; coal, carbon, natural gas and diesel.

Many of you have experienced increases in the price of fuel at gas stations. Fuel prices for electricity generation has gone up also. It doesn't matter where you are, energy prices are increasing nationwide.

Factors causing the increases to power costs?

- The price for wholesale power on the spot market is 30-40 percent more than compared to last year at this time.
- Natural gas that was \$2.00 in 2002 traded at nearly \$15.00 in December of 2005 and is currently in the \$8.00 - \$9.00 range.
- The transmission system, nationwide, is becoming more congested everyday. It is like trying to move four lanes of traffic on two lanes. Power congestion on the existing transmission system is driving up power costs.
- Economic growth in developing nations such as China and India is increasing the demand for energy worldwide and driving up prices.
- Environmental regulations have mandated the reduction of smoke stack emissions. This requires billions of dollars to be spent installing pollution control devices on coal plants nationwide - something SIPC did recently. Clean air and water comes at a cost.

What does this mean to SIPC?

- SIPC has seen carbon prices increase 77 percent since 2003. Carbon is a coal waste product also known as coal fines and is burned as an alternative to higher-priced coal.
- Coal prices have increased 70 percent since 2003.
- SIPC's cost to purchase electricity to supplement its generation or when a unit is down for maintenance, has increased 52 percent.
- The cost of natural gas to run SIPC's peaking generators has increased to the extent that these units are run only when required by the market and market power is extremely costly when it is necessary due to transmission constraints.
- As a result of all this, SIPC has increased rates through a rate adjustment as well as increasing our power cost adder. Since January 2003, the wholesale cost of power to MCEC has risen 29 percent.

What does this mean to MCEC and its members?

- MCEC is making every effort to control rates to our members. We have operated as efficiently as possible in order to absorb as much of the wholesale power cost increase as possible.
- The MCEC Board of Directors is conducting a rate study to see the effects of the increased power cost to the cooperative's bottom line. Once the board reviews the study, they will make recommendations for the future.
- MCEC continues to look for ways to reduce rates while maintaining the high level of service and reliability you expect.

Rising cost of power has not only affected SIPC and MCEC, it is also happening with other utilities. Illinois, along with a few other states, capped rates for investor-owned utilities (IOUs) for a period of time. The mandated rate freeze for the IOUs expires December 31, 2006. At that time, we expect AmerenIP customers to see large rate increases also.

Please rest assured your board of directors is very involved in the decision making process and are keeping the interest of the membership foremost in their minds as we work hard to provide you with reliable, cost-effective electricity.

New Employee

Early this year, your cooperative hired a new Journeyman Lineman. Jay Krump, 46, joined Monroe County Electric on January 23. Jay is single and a life-long resident of Waterloo, having graduated from Gibault High School in 1978.

He has worked as a Journeyman Lineman for the past 13 years. His electrical background started as an employee of Don's Electric in Waterloo as an electrician, where he worked for five years. Prior to coming to the cooperative, Jay worked for the city of Waterloo as an electric lineman. He is trained in a wide variety of electric areas as well as electric distribution systems.

Jay just celebrated his 20th year on the Waterloo Fire Department and is currently a Captain. His father, Bob Krump, is a well-known former city official—having served as mayor of Waterloo for a



total of eight years.

Jay has a son, Andrew, 16, and a daughter, Audrey, 13. His hobbies include hunting, fishing and woodworking.

"I look forward to serving the membership at Monroe County Electric," says Jay. "I admire the cooperative's princi-

ples that put 'quality of service' to the membership first."

President/CEO Alan W. Wattles says, "Jay's experience and background will be a real asset for us. We're excited to have Jay on our team and we welcome him to our cooperative."

Stay Safe During Spring Planting Season

Many farm workers are killed each year when their farm equipment makes contact with overhead power lines. These tragic accidents are preventable. Before heading back into the fields, Monroe County Electric and Safe Electricity urge farm workers to review farm activities and work practices that take place around power lines.

"Make sure everyone who works on the farm knows the location of power lines and keeps farm equipment at least 10 feet away from them," says Molly Hall, Director of Safe Electricity. "Keep in mind, the minimum 10 foot distance is a 360-degree rule – below, to the side, and above lines. It may take a little more time, but ensuring proper clearance can save lives."

Today's larger farms require transporting tractors and equipment to fields several miles away. Before transit, avoid raising the arms of planters, cultivators, or truck beds near power lines. Many tractors are now equipped with radios and communications systems, and have antennas extending from the cab to 15 feet above the ground that could make contact with power lines.

Some other equipment safety considerations:

- Always lower portable augers or elevators to their lowest possible level – under 14 feet – before moving or transporting; use care when raising them.
- When moving large equipment or high loads near a power line, always use a spotter, or someone to help make certain that contact is not made with a line.
- Never attempt to raise or move a power line to clear a path!

"It's also important for operators of farm equipment or vehicles to know what to do if the vehicle

comes in contact with a power line," Hall says. "It's almost always best to stay in the cab and call for help. Warn others who may be nearby to stay away and wait until the electric utility arrives to make sure power to the line is cut off."

"If the power line is energized and you step outside, your body becomes the path and electrocution is the result," Bob Aherin, University of Illinois Agricultural Safety Specialist says. "Even if a power line has landed on the ground, there is still the potential for the area nearby to be energized. Stay inside the vehicle unless there's fire or imminent risk of fire."

In that case, the proper action is to jump – not step with both feet hitting the ground at the same time. Do not allow any part of your body to touch the equipment and the ground at the same time. Continue to shuffle or hop to safety, keeping both feet together as you leave the area.

Once you get away from the equipment, never attempt to get back on or even touch the equipment.

Farmers may want to consider moving or burying power lines around buildings or busy pathways where many farm activities take place. If planning a new out building or farm structure, contact Monroe County Electric for information on minimum safe clearances from overhead and underground power lines.

For more information visit www.SafeElectricity.org.

"Make sure everyone who works on the farm knows the location of power lines and keeps farm equipment at least 10 feet away from them."

Set It and Leave It

This may seem like the old saying about closing the barn doors after the cows are out, as winter is basically behind us, but since we've run across this situation several times this winter, we felt it important to discuss it now in hopes it might help some members next winter. The issue is, "Why is setting the thermostat up and down with a heat pump a bad thing?"

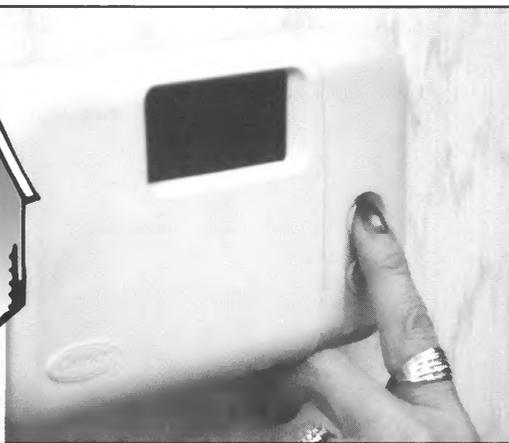
The answer lies in the fact that, with a heat pump, you essentially have two heating systems - one that is extremely efficient (the heat pump) and one that is so-so (the back-up or auxiliary electric heat strips). The object is to get all of the heat you can out of the most efficient system.

Since a heat pump is also your air-conditioning system, the unit must be sized to the cooling loads of summer. Contrary to what some believe, the cooling BTUs needed in the summer are much less than the heating BTUs needed in the winter. The unit cannot be oversized to handle the winter heating needs, as this would create dehumidification problems in the summer. In winter, there is an auxiliary heating system (the electric heat strips) to help the heat pump during the coldest parts of the season.

The thermostat is what decides which heating system should be operating. If the thermostat senses that heat is needed in the room, contacts within the thermostat turn the heat pump on. If it's extremely cold out and the heat pump cannot keep up, the thermostat senses this and causes the auxiliary heat strips to come on.



If you have a heat pump, whether air-air or geothermal, old or new, set the thermostat at a comfortable temperature and leave it.



Some members turn their thermostat down at night to save on energy. When you turn the thermostat up in the morning, it doesn't realize that you've done this intentionally. What it sees is that it's now set at, say 72 degrees, and it's actually 68 degrees in the house, so it thinks the heat pump must not be able to keep up. The thermostat brings on the auxiliary heat strips to help bring the temperature up to what you've selected.

So, instead of the heat pump providing heat at 240 percent (or higher) efficiency, the auxiliary heat strips do it at 100 percent. And since everything in the house is now cold from the temperature being set back at night, the unit has to run longer and more frequently until everything is back up to room temperature.

If you have a heat pump, whether air-air or geothermal, old or new, set the thermostat at a comfortable temperature and leave it. By doing so, you'll get all of the efficiency from your heat pump that you can.

Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, Inc.

6132 State Rt. 3, P.O. Box 128, Waterloo, Illinois 62298
(618) 939-7171

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Do You Take Your Electricity For Granted?

Do you always expect a light to turn on with a flip a switch? Do you expect your stove burners to get hot when you turn them on? Do you expect your television set or computer to come on at the press of a button? As your local electric cooperative we make taking electricity for granted easier. You can count on clean, reliable electricity to keep you warm, fed, and entertained.

Brought to you by
Monroe County Electric Co-Operative



MONROE COUNTY ELECTRIC CO-OPERATIVE

APPLICATION
AUTOMATIC PAYMENT PLAN

AUTHORIZATION FOR DIRECT CREDIT/DEBIT CARD PAYMENT

_____ MasterCard _____ Visa _____ Discover
Credit Card # _____
Expiration Date _____ Phone # _____
Name-Please Print _____
Co-Op Billing Acct.# _____
Address-Please Print _____
Signature _____ Date _____

AUTHORIZATION FOR DIRECT CHECKING/SAVINGS PAYMENT

I authorize the financial institution named below to initiate entries to my checking/savings account. This authority will remain in effect until I notify you in writing to cancel it in such time as to afford the financial institution a reasonable opportunity to act on it.

(Name of Financial Institution) (Branch)

(City) (State) (Zip Code)

(Signature) (Date)

(Name-Please Print) (Co-Op Billing Acct. #)

(Address-Please Print)
Bank Account # _____ Checking _____ Savings _____
Financial Institution Routing Number _____

(between these symbols []: on bottom left of check)

****PLEASE STAPLE VOIDED CHECK TO THIS FORM****

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Alan W. Wattles

Across the President's desk

Highlights of 68th Annual Meeting

Members of your cooperative learned about changes to the co-op during the organization's 68th annual meeting on Monday, March 27, in Hecker.

President/CEO Alan Wattles announced a small rate increase to start with May usage, which will show on members' July bills. The average increase for members will be \$4 per month, which will show up on bills as a higher facility charge.

Wattles explained that although the co-op expected wholesale power costs to increase by 16 percent over a four-year period to pay for capacity and environmental improvements made to its power supplier's plant, an increase of 70 percent in fuel costs since 2003 was unexpected. In total, the cost for the co-op to buy power from its wholesale power supplier, Southern Illinois Power Cooperative



President/CEO Alan Wattles congratulates re-elected directors Larry Kraft and Richard Liefer.

(SIPC), has increased 27.5 percent since 2002.

With continued growth from MCEC and the other co-ops served by SIPC, along with several unplanned plant outages during the year, SIPC was also forced to buy power on the open market during peak high-price times. Some of these costs had to be passed on to MCEC.

Due to these increases and open market costs, MCEC's wholesale rates increased more than planned and a rate increase is now necessary.

Wattles told members that despite these increases in costs and a volatile market, the co-op is in good financial position and plans to return capital credits again this year. Last year, capital credits for the year 1980 and 10 percent of 2005 margins were returned, for a total of \$184,287. Capital credits are the margins the co-op makes after meeting all of the year's financial obligations. Because MCEC is a co-op, margins are allocated to members based on their usage each year. When the board of directors determines the co-op can financially afford to return these margins, capital credit checks are issued.

Board Chairman Terry Grommet told members of the co-op's new outage service, Cooperative Response Center, which can handle a large volume of calls simultaneously. "They have a proven record of handling outage calls effectively and efficiently," said Grommet. "Right now our service consists of one person with one



phone line. This new system should alleviate most busy signals during outages."

He explained that the co-op is also working on a long-term plan to build business parks on some of its land surrounding the co-op headquarters. "This endeavor would improve our load factor, helping to stabilize our rates, while creating jobs for our local citizenry and increasing the tax base for our schools," Grommet said.

He also reminded members of the co-ops continued dedication to its community and the environment through the use of soy oil in the co-op's new transformers. "We are one of the first electric utilities to commit to this strategy," said Grommet. Soy oil is safer, environmentally friendly, and helps local farmers find one more use for their products.

He told members that the co-op would not begin providing water. "We are disappointed with the results of our negotiations with Fountain Water District and the Village of Maeystown, but we know we did all we could," Grommet said. The co-op will, however, soon create a sewer district. The Monroe County Environmental Management organization will be a non-profit, wholly-owned subsidiary of MCEC. Any profits made after the initial investment is repaid will be paid back to the members of MCEC by increasing patronage. Construction will begin soon on a wastewater treatment plant and the first phases of individual sewer lines. This will cover membership south of Waterloo. Once success is reached there, the co-op will look into providing sewer service to other areas.

"Electricity is and always will be our core business," reminded Grommet. "Every action and decision by your board and management is based on pragmatic and prudent principles. And in the end, it all has to help you, the member of MCEC."

During the meeting, Larry Haas of Belleville, Larry Kraft of Smithton and Richard Liefer of Red Bud were re-elected to the co-op's board of directors.



Major Wind Storm Causes Widespread Damage



Line crews starting repair on three transmission poles along Rte.3, just south of the cooperative office.

What looked like a minor storm system on radar turned out to be a major headache for hundreds of members, as well as the cooperative.

The multi-state storm system that passed through our area on Sunday afternoon, April 2, broke off more than 20 electric poles in your cooperative's service area, including three transmission poles just south of the cooperative on Rte. 3. Those three poles cut power to four electric substations, amounting to more than 2,500 member accounts. The storm also cut power to the electric cooperative and our backup generator switched on.

Cooperative line crews worked from about 5:00 p.m. Sunday afternoon through the night and restored power to the last customer mid-Monday afternoon. The three transmission poles were replaced and service to

three of the four substations was restored around midnight on Sunday night.

Line crews spent the rest of the week doing cleanup work for the accounts where they had to build temporary lines to get power restored to the members.

Key office personnel also worked through the night on Sunday taking outage calls and coordinating electric service restoration.

In areas just north of the cooperative, news reports said a tornado touched down in the Fairview Heights area, causing major damage to several retail stores.

Winds in our area were reported to be up to 70 miles per hour.

As of Monday morning, it was reported that Ameren Electric still had more than 55,000 customers out of service.

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May is National Electrical Safety Month



Plug-in to Electrical Safety

By Stacy Slatton, ICL Intern

It's a normal night in this family's home: Mom is cooking dinner with a countertop grill in the kitchen, Dad is working on an e-mail in his office, their daughter is in her room listening to her stereo and their son is playing video games in the living room. What do all these different activities have in common? They all use electricity.

Many people may not realize how much electricity is actually used in everyday life. May is deemed National Electrical Safety Month because of electricity's importance in our lives. We need to make safety checks, not only in May, but year around, to ensure that our homes are protected from electrical hazards.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, electrical failures cause more than 40,000 fires, 325 deaths and 1,350 injuries each year. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that thousands of injuries from electric shocks and burns occur each year, with one death every 25 hours. Billions of dollars in personal property damage also occurs as a result of these mishaps.

You can easily avoid these disasters if you do routine safety checks of the electrical areas in your home. The Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) has compiled a checklist to help you evaluate your home's electrical safety and make changes if needed.

Outlets and Plugs

- Check for outlets that have loose-fitting plugs, which can overheat.
- Never remove the ground pin (the third prong) to make it fit a two-conductor outlet.
- Never force a plug into an outlet if it doesn't fit.
- Avoid overloading outlets with too many appliances.
- Replace any missing or broken wall plates.
- Make sure there are safety covers on all unused outlets that are accessible to children.
- Check for any hot or discolored outlet wallplates; this may indicate dangerous heat buildup.

Light Bulbs

- Check the wattage of all bulbs in the home to ensure they are the correct wattage for the receptacle, and replace any that are higher than recommended.
- Make sure bulbs are screwed in securely—loose bulbs may overheat.

Power and Extension Cords

- Ensure all cords are not frayed or cracked.
- Cords should never be nailed or stapled to the wall, baseboard or another object.
- Do not place cords in high traffic areas or under carpets, rugs or furniture.
- Extension cords should only be used temporarily.
- Ensure extension cords and electrical products are listed by an independent testing facility such as Underwriters Laboratories Inc.

Circuit Breakers and Fuses

- Circuit breakers and fuses should be the correct size and rating for their circuit.
- Always replace a fuse with one of the same size.
- Create a circuit map that clearly identifies all outlets, fixtures and major appliances.

GFCIs and AFCIs

- Ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) and arc fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs) should be tested monthly and after every major electrical storm.

For more electrical safety information contact Monroe County Electric Co-Operative or visit ESFI online at www.esfi.org.

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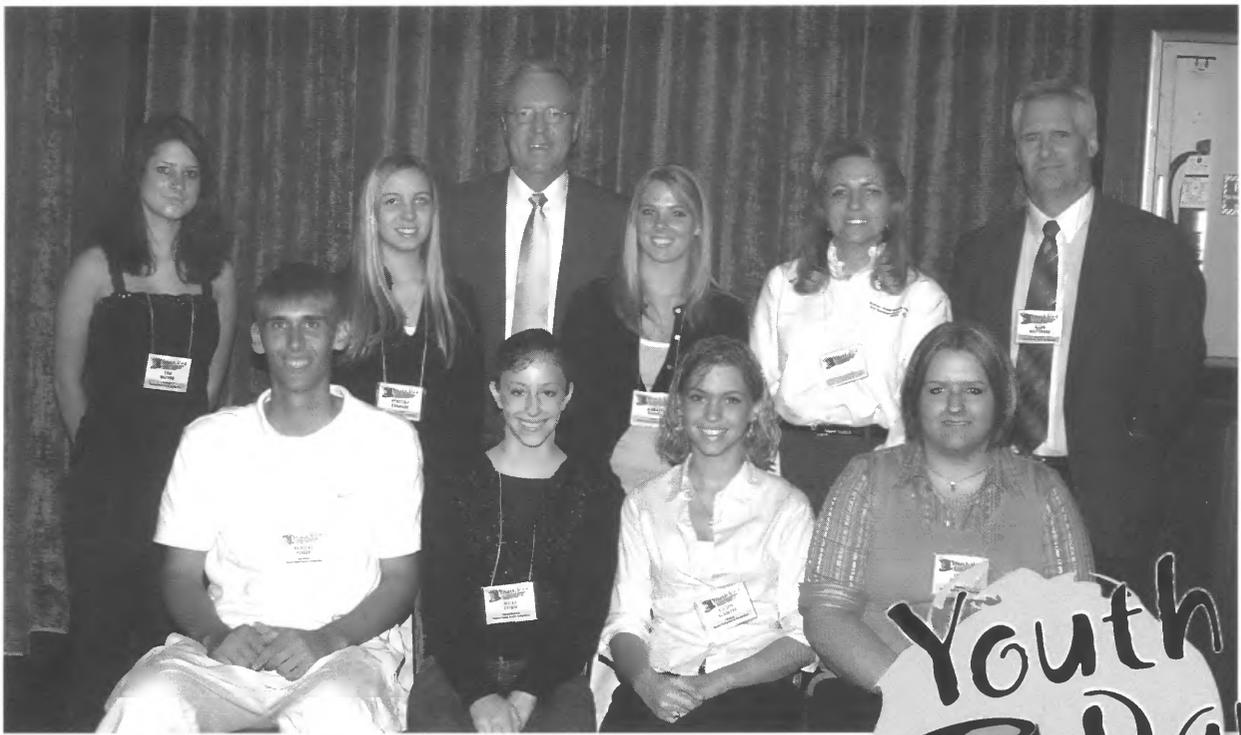
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Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 



Alan W. Wattles

Across the President's desk



Representative Reitz met with seven students representing Monroe County Electric Co-Operative during the Illinois Electric and Telephone Cooperatives' Youth Day on Wednesday, April 5, in Springfield. Students had an opportunity to view state government in action, tour the State Capitol, Illinois Supreme Court, Old State Capital and the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum. Front row from left are Nicholas Parker of New Athens, Malea Grimm of Gibault-Waterloo, Allison Schaefer of Freeburg and Emelie Schwarze of Valmeyer. Back row are Enid Watkins of Freeburg, Kymberly Ruhmann of New Athens, Rep. Reitz, Jennifer Redohl of Valmeyer and chaperones Cindy Myrick and Allan Masterson.

The day was sponsored by the Illinois electric and telephone co-ops and is designed to introduce young rural leaders to state government.

New Employee

Shirley Reinhold of rural Waterloo was hired as Member Records Clerk and began work on March 13 of this year.

Originally from South County St. Louis in an area know as "The Hill," Shirley moved here and married Ken Reinhold, who is from Waterloo, some 25 years ago.

Shirley graduated from Mehlville Senior High School. She then worked for Tabor Plastics in St. Louis for about six years.

After marrying Ken, she worked for Christian Board of Publications as a Marketing Database Administrator. She was out of the workforce for about three years before joining your cooperative on a part-time basis.

During that three-year hiatus, Shirley was busy with her passion - showing dogs at shows across the coun-



try. She and Ken own, breed and show Great Danes. Shirley also shows other owners' dogs, including Mastiffs, Chinese Cresteds and Chihuahuas.

Shirley and Ken have two grown children: Michelle, 31, and Dane, 22. She also has two grandchildren by Michelle; a boy, Devin, 2, and a girl, Ellisa, 6.

Shirley, who is a cooperative member, says "I look forward to working with the membership here at the cooperative. So far, the employees and the

public have been very nice to work with."

President/CEO Alan Wattles said, "We welcome Shirley to the cooperative. I think she'll do a great job as our new Member Records Clerk and provide help where it's needed."

Welcome Shirley!



- Never climb trees near power lines. Even if the power lines aren't touching the tree, they could touch when more weight is added to the branch.
- Fly kites and model airplanes in large open areas like a park or a field, safely away from trees and overhead power lines. If a kite gets stuck in a tree that's near power lines, don't climb up to get it. Contact your electric utility for assistance.
- Never climb a utility pole or tower.
- Don't play on or around pad-mounted electrical equipment.
- Never go into an electric substation for any reason - even on a dare. Electric substations contain high-voltage equipment, which can kill you. Never rescue a pet or retrieve a ball or toy that goes inside. Call your electric utility instead.

Sunny summer days beckon the child in us all to head outdoors to play. Before you start summertime activities, Safe Electricity and Monroe County Electric Co-Operative recommend that families review and stress to children to follow simple electrical safety rules for safe outdoor play.

"Go over these rules with your children. And set a good example by following safety rules yourself and installing safety equipment such as GFCI outlets," says Director of Member Services Allan Masterson.

When designing an outdoor play area for your children, do not install playground equipment or swimming pools underneath or near power lines. Protect all family members from serious shock and injuries by installing and using outdoor outlets with ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCI). Use portable GFCIs for outdoor outlets that don't have them. Keep electrical appliances at least 10 feet away from pools, ponds, and wet surfaces.

For more information on electrical safety, and on-line games and activities that teach kids to safely use and play around electricity, visit www.SafeElectricity.org.

Stay Safe When Lightning Strikes

Lightning causes more storm-related deaths annually in the United States than tornadoes or hurricanes, and causes about \$5-billion in economic losses each year.

During National Lightning Safety Awareness Week in June, Monroe County Electric Co-Operative and Safe Electricity offer safety tips and precautions recommended by the National Weather Service to avoid injury and damage during thunderstorms and lightning activity.

Under the '30-30 rule', if you are outside when a storm approaches and you see lightning, count the time until you hear thunder. If you count 30 seconds or less, seek proper shelter. Wait at least 30 minutes after the last observed lightning or thunder before leaving shelter.

Stay Inside

"If thunderstorms and lightning are approaching, the safest location is indoors away from doors and windows," says Molly Hall, Director of the Safe Electricity program.

- Use only cordless or cell phones to make emergency calls.
- Turn off and unplug appliances well before a storm nears – never during.
- Stay away from electrical outlets, appliances, computers, power tools, and TV sets. Take off headsets and stop playing video games.
- Avoid water and contact with piping, including sinks, baths, and faucets. Don't wash dishes, shower, or bathe during a thunderstorm. Also avoid washers and dryers since they not only connect with the plumbing and electrical systems, but also contain an electrical path from the outside through the dryer vent.

- Do not lie on the concrete floor of a garage as it likely contains a wire mesh.
- Basements typically are a safe place to go during thunderstorms, but avoid concrete walls that may contain metal rebar.

If You're Caught Outdoors

"If you're in an open area outside, tingling skin or crackling sounds could signal that lightning is about to strike," warns Hall. "Drop down into a crouching position and make yourself as small as possible - feet together and hands over your ears - with minimal contact with the ground."

- Move to a safer location such as vehicle with a solid, metal roof. Close the windows and avoid contact with electrical conducting paths, such as the steering wheel, ignition, gear shifter, or radio.
- Avoid water, high ground and open spaces. Do not seek shelter under tall, solitary trees; canopies; small picnic or rain shelters; or in any open-frame vehicles such as jeeps, convertibles, golf carts, tractors or mowers.
- Do not stand near power, light, or flag poles, machinery, fences, gates, metal bleachers, or even other people. Spread out at least 20 feet apart from each other. Move to low ground and seek cover in clumps of bushes, or trees of uniform height, such as a forest.

Additional lightning facts and safety tips can be found at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Web site at www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov. Also visit www.SafeElectricity.org for more electrical safety information.

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*Remember
Father's
Day
June 18.*

What is a Touchstone Energy® Cooperative?

Hopefully you've seen these words before and recognize that Monroe Electric Co-Operative is a Touchstone Energy Cooperative. But what is a Touchstone Energy Cooperative and how does it affect you and your cooperative?

Several years ago, leaders in the electric cooperatives recognized there were many challenges and changes on the horizon, including deregulation of the industry. In response, many of the cooperatives across the nation joined together and formed an alliance called Touchstone Energy.

One of the objectives of Touchstone Energy is to build a national relationship brand ID. A relationship brand focuses on the relationship between the organization and the customer (member) rather than the particular attributes of the product. Think of it this way. When you see the John Deere logo, I'm sure thoughts come to mind. For many, it might be a vision of quality or even success. You probably didn't think of the horsepower of a particular product, but you did have some feelings or expectations. We want to do the same through Touchstone Energy. The relationship we want to build with you, the member, is one of trust and loyalty. Touchstone Energy Cooperatives want to develop and build this relationship by providing service to our members based on four core values—*accountability, integrity, commitment to community and technology.*

It's one thing to talk about these values and another to genuinely live up to them. Our employees provide service to you based on these values. We make management decisions based on the same values. In other words, we want to truly live up to your expectations.

In fact, the reason the name "Touchstone" was chosen was because it reflects this same idea. A touchstone, as defined by Webster's Dictionary, is a test or measurement of purity or genuineness. In the days of the gold rush, it was hard to distinguish between gold and fool's gold. Miners panning for gold would carry a special stone with them that they would rub their find across. Depending on the mark the nugget left, they knew whether they had found gold or fool's gold. That special stone was called their touchstone.

We hope you have seen our Touchstone Energy ads on television, on the radio or in Illinois Country Living magazine. Our goal with these ads is to communicate to you what you have a right to expect from a Touchstone Energy Cooperative and how we try to meet those expectations in our day-to-day operations. We also want you to know how we differ from an investor-owned utility.

Being a Touchstone Energy Cooperative is not about an ad campaign. It is about earning your trust and loyalty. It is also about listening to you and striving to find ways to meet your needs and improve your quality of life.



Because Mike's dad is one of the owners of his electric co-op, there are new lights at the baseball field.

Only your local electric co-op makes every customer an owner of the business. Unlike other electric utilities, your co-op exists to make sure your needs are always met, not to make a profit. And since every electric co-op is locally owned and operated, your co-op is always there with you, reinvesting in your community. That's why in an electric co-op, the people have the power.



Touchstone Energy®
The power of human connections

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Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 



Alan W. Wattles

Across the President's desk

Guest Editorial by Michael E.C. Gery,
Carolina Country Editor

Energy Conservation Is Back In Style

It looks like energy conservation is back in style. There's nothing like rising fuel prices to make us think harder about when and how we use energy.

The hurricane season has taken its toll on some of the nation's systems for reaching, refining and transporting our oil and gas supplies. In the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, TV news shows carried images of vehicles lined up at gas stations and plastic bags on pump handles.

Demand for petroleum products continues to rise against a supply that sometimes cannot meet it entirely. So we have seen prices rise at the gas pump, which affects any goods and services whose delivery relies on transportation by cars and trucks, trains and planes, even fishing boats. All of us also are seeing prices rise for the fuels that run appliances and systems in our homes, farms and businesses.

These dynamics naturally cause us to adjust and manage our personal use of energy as best we can.

But energy conservation never went out of style in our business. Not a month goes by when this publication doesn't print something on how to conserve energy: tips for watching and controlling the operation of heat pumps and water heaters, how to plug energy

leaks in homes, how to judge the efficiency of appliances, how to build or renovate buildings that require minimal energy consumption.

As the price of energy fluctuates, and as the technology of appliances and vehicles changes accordingly, electric co-ops will continue to pay attention to smart energy use.

Why? It just makes sense. It makes sense to consumer-members, considering that you own the utility that supplies your electric power. It's in your interest to make sure your own plans—and by extension those of the co-op—include conservative ways of using electricity and all other forms of energy you pay for.

Touchstone Energy co-ops, individually and with state and national partners, have been involved for many years in supporting research and testing technology designed to conserve energy and enhance service reliability.

Whether it's larger customers, who are always looking for ways to improve energy management, or the residential member who wants advice on the smartest, most efficient appliances, we offer services that can help you use energy wisely.

Some of us remember when the nation's highway speed limit was lowered to 55 mph. (I'm trying to think if I can remember that.) Others may also remember the "oil embargo" of the 1970s and the 45-mpg VW Rabbit diesel automobile, the rising popularity of wood-burning stoves and furnaces, and President Carter's plea to turn the thermostat down a few degrees in winter and up a few degrees in summer.

We're not likely to see a return to those specific events and trends, but we are likely to see a stronger emphasis on conserving energy, not only in our own consumption practices, but also in how industry designs and manufactures vehicles, buildings, community infrastructure and appliances. Such a trend can only benefit everyone.

Changes In Air-Source Heat Pumps

For many years, Monroe County Electric Co-Operative has shared with our members the benefits for geothermal heating and cooling. However, we realize that for various reasons, geothermal may not be the best choice for everyone. Many homeowners do not have the space for horizontal loops or the soil condition for the vertical wells. Some homeowners may not want to invest in a geothermal system, as they may not be living in their current home long term. Whatever the reason for not choosing geothermal, there are other types of electric heating and cooling systems on the market today. One type that has undergone big improvements is the air-source heat pump.

Basically, an air-source heat pump pulls its heat indoors from the outdoor air in the winter and from the indoor air in the summer. Like a refrigerator, a refrigerant, such as Freon-22, flows continuously through pipes, back and forth from the outdoor coils. The direction it flows depends on whether it's heating or cooling. For more detailed information, check out the Web site, www.howstuffworks.com.

The efficiency and performance of today's air-source heat pumps are one-and-a-half to two times greater than those available 30 years ago. Today's air-source units are much quieter than their predecessors, some even boasting they are as quiet as a household refrigerator.

Many companies are developing a new type of coolant, as a replacement of Freon-22. The Clean Air Act of

1990 ruled that this type of coolant can no longer be placed in HCFC-based air conditioners and heat pumps after 2010. It will be completely banned from production by 2020. Until then, prices of Freon-22 will probably rise due to decreased production.

When selecting an air-source heat pump, look for the energy efficiency ratings. This compares the heat pump's heating and cooling efficiency performance rating to other makes and models. Also, look for the HSPF (Heating Seasonal Performance Factor) which rates the efficiency of the compressor and the electric-resistance elements. The most efficient pumps have an HSPF of between 8 and 10. Look for the SEER (Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio), which rates the heat pumps cooling efficiency. Efficient units have a SEER between 14 and 18. In 2006, a new standard for central heat pumps will take effect requiring heat pumps to meet a minimum of 13 SEER and 7.7 HSPF. Many new heat pumps exceed these ratings, but using these numbers is a good place to start.

When considering air-source systems, don't forget the incentives offered by Monroe County Electric Co-Operative. We offer rebates and a reduced rate of 5 cents per kWh for usage to heat during the months October through May. For more specific information, contact the MCEC office.

Sources: www.eer.energy.gov and
www.howstuffworks.com.



Office Closing
Our office will be closed
Tuesday, July 4 for
Independence Day

**Visit our booth
at the Monroe
County Fair**

July 23 - July 30



**Monroe County Electric
Co-Operative, Inc.**

6132 State Rt. 3, P.O. Box 128, Waterloo, Illinois 62298
618-939-7171

Office hours: Monday through Friday 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. • 800-757-7433

Will You Beat The Heat?

Improve summer efficiency and safety

Energy use and costs typically rise as the mercury rises. Use these energy- and money-saving measures so you and your home can better weather the summer heat and humidity.

Air Conditioning

A substantial portion of total residential energy costs is spent cooling homes. Reduce energy costs and ready the air conditioner with a cleaning and tune-up. Clean or change filters monthly during the cooling season. An efficiently running cooling system will save dollars. If you're purchasing a new unit, check the efficiency rating, or SEER. The higher the SEER number the more efficient the air conditioner. For greater operating efficiency, install unit in a shady area, and keep free of plant overgrowth and debris.

Windows

Most of summer heat buildup in homes comes through windows. Simply closing curtains, blinds, and shades can reduce this heat gain by up to 40 percent, and save big dollars in cooling costs. Installing awnings or shutters over windows exposed to direct sunlight can reduce indoor heat gain by up to 70 percent. Outdoor landscaping that includes shade trees and insulating foundation plants can also reduce energy costs.

Attics

Ventilate the attic and check insulation. Adequately sized vents and/or an attic fan can help keep hot air from building up. If your attic has less than 6 to 8 inches of insulation, consider adding more. Proper attic insulation can save up to 30 percent of your cooling bill. Be sure the insulation doesn't block vents or cover exhaust fans.

Fans

Another inexpensive way to keep cool and reduce air conditioning costs is to use ceiling and oscillating fans to create a "wind chill" effect. The moving air makes the temperature feel cooler, and allows a higher air conditioner thermostat setting while maintaining cooling comfort. For each 1-degree increase in the thermostat setting, cooling costs can be trimmed by about 3 percent

Keeping Cool

Follow these operating tips for greater energy efficiency and reduction in air conditioning costs:

- Install a timer or programmable thermostat to raise and lower the temperature automatically. Leave it on a higher temperature while you're away, and set it to cool the house half an hour before you return home.
- Turn off unnecessary lights and television sets you're not watching. Don't leave computers on when not in use.
- Make sure heat-producing appliances like televisions and lamps are away from the thermostat. They will raise the temperature at the thermostat and cause the air conditioner to run when it is not needed.
- Plan to do hot work—washing and drying clothes, cooking and baking—during cooler morning and evening hours.
- Keep your kitchen cooler by cooking in a microwave oven, or grill outdoors.

For more information and tips to help cut costs and improve home safety, visit www.SafeElectricity.org.



What Do 4th Of July And Electric Cooperatives Have In Common?

When Benjamin Franklin signed the Declaration of Independence, he is credited with saying, "We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately."

No wonder Franklin was also the founder of the first successful cooperative formed in the United States. He organized the Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insurance of Houses from Loss by Fire in 1752.

The principles behind the Declaration of Independence that form the basis of American democracy are also the beliefs that form the basis of cooperatives.

A cooperative is owned and democratically controlled by the people who use its services. Each member-owner has one vote regardless of their equity in the company; that is, wealthy members cannot buy more control and everyone has an equal say. This is in contrast to investor-owned businesses where only share-

holders have a vote in how the business is run; and even among shareholders, some have more votes than others depending on their shares of stock.

The Declaration of Independence also declared the equality of rights of its citizens and that people had the right to organize to secure their futures when their rights were infringed upon.

At the time the Declaration was written, democracy was a pretty untested idea — but the founders of our country were determined to make it work.

So when you celebrate the 4th of July with your families and friends this year, think about those principles that inspired our Founding Fathers. They also inspired the founders of rural electric cooperatives, who were determined to provide reliable, affordable power to secure the futures of their rural communities.

Planning To Dig?

IT'S THE LAW – CALL JULIE

Planning to dig or disturb the earth? IT'S THE LAW – CALL JULIE toll free at 800-892-0123 at least **TWO** working days prior to breaking ground. The call and the service are free to those planning to dig. Recent legislation provides for a significant penalty program to be enforced through the Illinois Commerce Commission.



When requesting a JULIE locate, you will need to provide name, telephone number, county, township or town, closest town and distance, section number, excavation site address, nearest crossroad and the type of work being per-



formed. You will need to keep the dig number and other information you receive from the operator until the work is completed. Each request is in effect for 14 days. It is

the responsibility of the person or excavator performing the work to call JULIE.

The location of Monroe County Electric's underground power cables will be marked with either red flags or red spray paint. It is the responsibility of the owner to inform the excavator of any underground power cables that are **NOT** owned by the cooperative.

Want to learn more about JULIE, check out the Web site at www.illinois1call.com.

Be responsible and work safely — call JULIE at 800-892-0123 before you dig.

REMEMBER - IT'S THE LAW!

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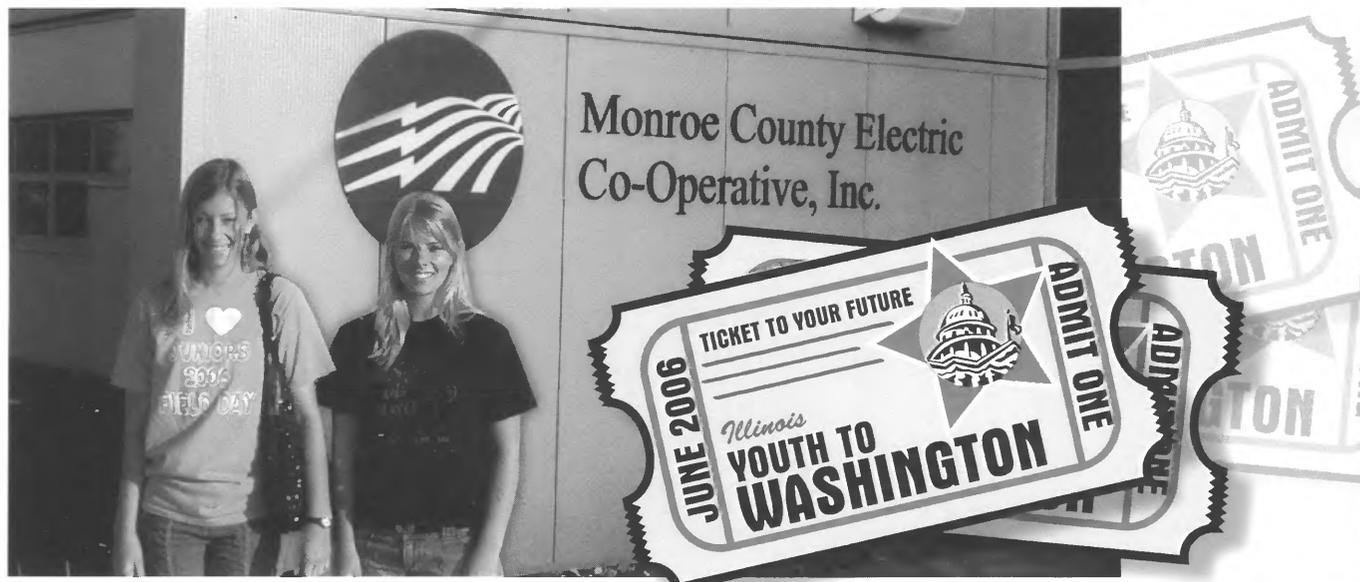
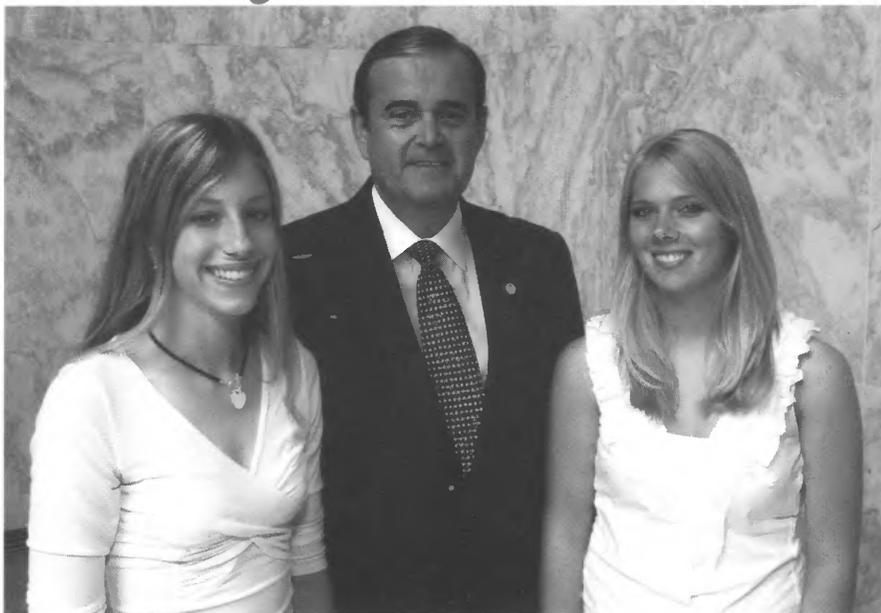
Students Tour Washington, D.C.

Jennifer Redohl, daughter of Scott and Anita Redohl of Valmeyer and Malea Grimm, daughter of John and Ruth Grimm of Waterloo, represented Monroe County Electric Co-Operative June 9 - 16 in 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.

Jennifer Redohl and Malea Grimm were the winners of our "Youth to Washington" essay contest. Sons or daughters of cooperative employees or directors are not eligible to enter the essay contest but can attend by paying their own way for the trip.

The students met with Congressman Jerry Costello on Capitol Hill and were among 63 rural Illinois youth leaders selected for the trip. In addition to the Capitol, students also visited the Smithsonian Museums, Arlington

National Cemetery, the National Cathedral, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, the World War II Memorial, the Native American Indian Museum and a number of other historical sites.



Weather Radios (Pre-Programmed) – \$60 plus tax



After a spring full of high windstorms, members are on the lookout for unstable weather conditions. Something as simple as a weather/alert radio can be a life-saving device for you and your loved ones.

As an added service, Monroe County Electric is now handling a high-quality weather radio for sale to members. These are the most up-to-date technology

weather/alert radios available. The radios are preprogrammed for Monroe County Electric service territory, thus eliminating the need to program this life-saving device. When you receive the radio, all you have to do is plug it in.

If you want to expand the alert area, the radio can be reprogrammed for the area you want included in any alerts.

The radios are available at the Monroe County Electric Cooperative office at 6132 State Route 3, just south of Waterloo.

Operate Computers Efficiently

If you have a home computer, your family may spend hours a day doing homework, checking e-mail or surfing the Web. Although computer equipment uses less electrical energy than many other home appliances, there are a few things you can do to reduce your computer's electrical consumption to a minimum.

Most types of computers use similar amounts of electricity, but monitors vary in their consumption depending on their size, with small screens using less. Compare the consumption figures of competing equipment when you purchase your next computer equipment and be sure to look for the Energy Star® logo as you shop because this is your assurance that your computer will use the minimum power necessary.

Follow these tips to reduce the energy consumption and operating cost of your computer equipment:

- Activate your computer's sleep setting. This shuts down your computer and monitor after any period of inactivity. This is the single most important step you can take to reduce consumption since most equipment



uses almost no power during sleep.

- If your printer doesn't automatically sleep between jobs, shut it off manually when you are not using it.
- Do not print any more documents that you need to since printers use electricity, paper and ink or toner. A computer can save a lot of time and energy if you use it efficiently. Try reading documents on screen and saving them to electronic files instead of printing and filing unimportant documents.
- If you need to send documents to someone, send an e-mail. It's quicker, it saves energy and doesn't require postage.
- For more information on energy saving computer equipment, visit www.energystar.gov.

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Kid Friendly and Energy Smart

by Laura Camper



lose the door You're letting all the heat out!" "Turn off the lights when you leave the room!" "Turn off the TV if you're not going to watch it!" "Don't hold the refrigerator door open!" And so the battle between kids and parents about wasted energy continues.

It's time to try a different approach – conservation education.

There are lots of resources on the Internet for parents to teach their kids how to save energy and why it is important.

With the Department of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, take a field trip to Dr. E's Energy Lab at www.eere.energy.gov/kids/ and a funky, monkey scientist in a lab coat and glasses will lead kids through his lab. They can learn about renewable energy sources like wind, solar, and geothermal energy.

They can also learn about saving energy. Besides reading some energy saving tips, kids can follow a link to Energy Hog, to play a game that teaches them how to spot energy hogs in their own home and how to fix them.

In Roofus' Solar and Efficient Neighborhood at www.eere.energy.gov/roofus/, also by the Department of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, kids can take a tour of Roofus' energy efficient home and neighborhood. Roofus, a very smart retriever donning a baseball cap and sunglasses, gives the kids tips on how they can make their own home more energy efficient. Roofus also gives kids some solar projects that they can build, including a solar pizza box oven and a sundial.

The Energy Kids Page at www.eia.doe.gov/kids/, by the Energy Information Administration, is written for junior high or high school students. Energy Ant, sporting a red turtleneck and looking like he



stepped out of an Archie comic, leads students through the different activities and information sections.

Under Fun & Games they can take field trips to energy related sights from a Kerr McGee drilling sight to the National Renewable Energy Laboratory to the National Atomic Museum. All tours feature color photos and informational stories about each of the sights. There are also crossword puzzles and word searches for the kids to do and a coloring book for younger kids.

Under Energy History, kids can learn about famous people who contributed to energy knowledge and the history of energy and its use - people like Benjamin Franklin, Albert Einstein, and Henry Ford to name a few. There are also pages for Energy Facts and for Classroom Activities for ages 5 through 18.

To explain why conservation is important, have your kids visit www.epa.gov/kids/, the Environmental Protection Agency Web site. The Web site explains global warming

and the greenhouse effect in terms that kids of all ages can understand and the Ozone is explained in an online comic book. The Web site also explains how people and their use of resources have changed the earth.

The EPA also has a Web site aimed at high school students at www.epa.gov/highschool/. This Web site is a gold mine for students. It has links to Web sites on environmental topics organized by the headings of Air, Water, Waste and Recycling, Conservation, and Ecosystems. Each link has a short description of the information available on that site.

In addition, the Web site lists environmental careers, internships, and scholarships for those students interested in pursuing an education in environmental science.

So, instead of barking orders at your kids, have them visit some of these Web sites. They can learn, on their own, the importance of saving energy and hopefully, start some good habits that will last a lifetime.

What is Mine and What is the Co-op's?

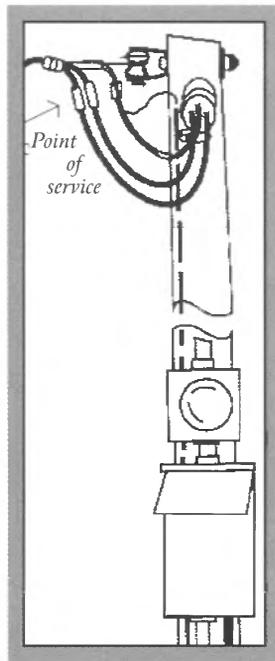
A lot of times a member may be surprised when he hears that the cooperative will not make a repair to part of his service equipment or wire. Sometimes it is hard to see a clear distinction between what is the cooperative's responsibility and what is the member's.

A loose interpretation is that the cooperative is responsible for everything before the meter and the member for everything after the meter. For a residential location this is a reasonable representation. However, a better description would be the service point where the cooperative's equipment meets the member's equipment.

Below are a few examples.

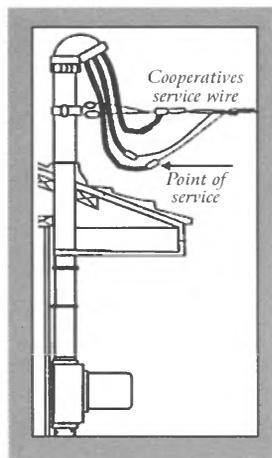
■ Your meter is on a pole near your home

The cooperative is responsible for the meter and the connection at the top of the pole. The member is responsible for the meter box, meter loop, the wire running up the pole and the service wire running from the pole to the house. The cooperative will provide a pole and meter loop specifications if requested. Members should have a qualified electrician build a meter loop for them. (Diagram shows the meter loop and meter box on the pole.)



■ Your meter is attached to your home

When a meter box and loop are on a member's house, the wire to the meter loop is the cooperative's responsibility, but the socket is not. A mast needs to be set up before service can be connected. (Diagram shows where the service point is.)



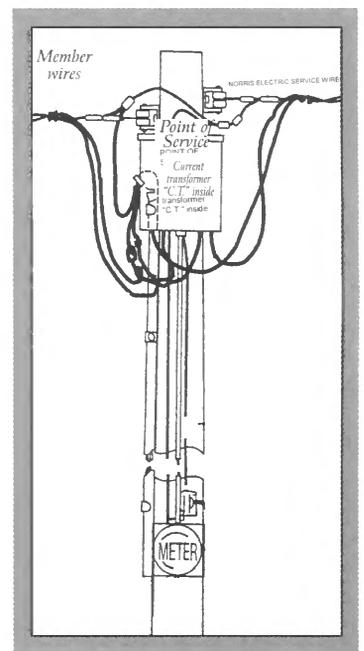
■ Your meter connects from your home to a pad mounted transformer

The co-op is responsible for the pad mounted transformer and the underground line running to the meter. We can connect a temporary service 15 feet from the transformer but the meter loop needs to be installed on the house before permanent service can be connected.

■ Your meter connects to a current transformer

With a current transformer (CT) rated meter, the electric current is measured by passing the service wire through a CT, which then sends a ratio of this current to the meter. The cooperative is responsible for the wire until it connects to or passes through the member's equipment.

Source: Norris Electric Cooperative



If you are still unsure of what is your responsibility and what is the cooperative's, just give us a call at 618-939-7171.

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Your Touchstone Energy Partner 

Member Appreciation Day Saturday, Oct. 7

The membership of Monroe County Electric Co-Operative is invited out to a "Member Appreciation Day" at the cooperative office on Saturday, Oct. 7, from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.

The cooperative would like to thank its membership for its support. We've seen many changes over the past several years and we appreciate our members' patience and cooperation through it all.

The "Member Appreciation Day" will offer our members a chance to tour the new cooperative office if they haven't done so yet.

Refreshments available will include hot dogs, chips, cookies, soda and bottled water.

We will again this year have free bucket truck rides with photos taken. This was a very popular attraction last year.

Members who have young children are encouraged to come out as well. We will have several items for the younger generation, which will include:

- Moonwalker setup for bouncing fun for the children
- Helium balloons will be given out
- Child Identification Kits will be distributed and prints taken if desired
- Face and miniature pumpkin painting

We will also have attendance gifts for each membership that visits.

So come on out on Oct. 7, and have a hot dog and say "Hi" at our "Membership Appreciation Day."



Do Phantom Loads Haunt Your Home?

Many devices in your home consume electricity even when they appear to be off. These phantom energy wasters include instant-on TVs, microwave clocks, VCR displays, telephones, and computer peripherals. Phantom, or standby loads, add up to a huge waste of electricity in the United States that costs consumers more than a billion dollars per year and many billions of kilowatt-hours. The total phantom load in most American homes varies from 1.5 to 4 kilowatt-hours per day, or several dollars per month for most families.

One way you can eliminate phantom loads like TVs, stereos, VCRs, and computer externals like printers is by plugging them into a plug strip that is equipped with its own power switch. Simply switch the power strip on and off when you need to use the appliance. For appliances that have remote controls, this

method will disable the unit's remote control until you turn the power on, though it will operate normally after you turn the power on. Note also that any appliance that has a cube-shaped transformer on the end of its cord is creating a phantom load. That's why these transformers feel warm even when the device is off.

In July of 2001, President Bush signed an executive order directing

federal agencies to buy appliances that consume less than one watt of standby power. In doing so, the federal government hopes to stimulate manufacturers to produce appliances with minimal phantom loads. Consumers can benefit from these low-consumption appliances by always looking for the ENERGY STAR® label when buying appliances.

Typical Phantom Loads in U.S. Households

How Many	Type of Appliance	Phantom Load (Watts)	Consumption (Watt-hours per day)
1	Instant-on TV	28	672
1	Video Cassette Recorder	14	336
1	Microwave Oven with Clock	8	192
2	Wall Cube Power Supply	5	240
1	Stereo with Remote Control	8	192
1	Stove with Electronic Ignition	14	336
	Total	77	1968 watt hours (1.9 kilowatt hours)

Courtesy of Home Power Magazine www.homepower.com.



Kim Yearian wins DVD/VCR player at fair

Kim Yearian, left, is presented with her new DVD/VCR player by Allan Masterson, right, Director of Member Services.



OFFICE CLOSED

THE COOPERATIVE OFFICE WILL BE
CLOSED MONDAY, SEPT. 4
IN OBSERVANCE OF LABOR DAY.

Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, Inc.

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Recognize Farm Electrical Hazards

During the rush of harvest, or everyday hurry to beat a storm cloud, it's easy to make a mistake with heavy farm equipment. That split second mistake could cost someone you love his or her life. Operating farm equipment near energized power lines can be especially dangerous. Take a few minutes to review the following safety tips with your family and employees.

Four common on-farm electrical risks are listed below to get your discussion started. The first hazard is associated with overhead power lines, while the others describe unsafe wiring inside buildings.



Don't make this mistake. Stay clear of guy wires. Accidentally hitting guy wires weakens the support for utility poles. Know the height of all equipment and stay at least 10 feet away from overhead lines. Never attempt to raise or move a downed power line.

1. Raising Tall Equipment Into Overhead Lines

Everyone on the farm needs to understand that overhead power lines are not insulated. Each year, dozens of people are killed or permanently injured as tall farm equipment accidentally touches a line. Of particular concern are grain augers, hay stackers, combines, fold-up cultivators, tractor front loaders, and portable irrigation pipe.

Consider the location of power lines on your farm, particularly those that cross heavily traveled areas or pathways to fields. Make sure everyone understands that these areas are potential hazards, and knows the clearance height of tall equipment.

2. Trees, Buildings, and Hay Stacks Near Power Lines

Children, in particular, are at greater risk if they are in a tree, on a roof, or on stacks of hay located under power lines. Show children these potential danger areas to avoid.

For storing hay and lumber or any material, find other areas away from overhead lines. In fact, it is best not to use the 10-foot area around any power line as a travel route or storage area.

3. Undersized and Worn Extension Cords

The circuits in homes and farm buildings are protected from overheating by a fuse or circuit breaker. But an extension cord has no protection. If an undersized cord is asked to carry more current than its wire size can handle, there's nothing to keep the wires from overheating and possibly starting a fire.

Replace any light duty extension cords that serve multiple appliances, or have worn or brittle insulation. Avoid running cords under rugs, because this traps in heat and adds to the risk of fire.

4. Deteriorated Wiring in Farm Buildings

Special wiring materials and methods are needed in agricultural buildings, particularly those housing livestock and poultry. Moisture, dust, and corrosive vapors from animal manure can cause conventional wiring (used in homes) to prematurely deteriorate. Inadequate wiring increases the risk of a fire. At the very least, the result could be a power outage. This can interrupt ventilation fans in confined poultry or swine buildings, causing devastating losses.

Keep yourself and your loved ones safe by recognizing those situations that invite an electrical accident. Even though electricity is our safest form of energy, it must be understood and respected. Most accidents are preventable, it just takes a few minutes of family education and discussion.

Source: National Food and Energy Council. www.nfec.org.



Back to school is a time for new beginnings

The beginning of a new school year is a good time to talk with your children about ways to make the following year fun, safe and successful. By planning ahead and establishing guidelines, you can help reduce your child's anxieties about starting the new school term.

■ Bedtime routine

Establish a bedtime and the best time to get up in the morning. Allow time for breakfast as well as a cushion for unexpected surprises. Prepare for the next day before going to bed each night. Lay out clothes, including socks and shoes, backpack, including books, supplies, workbooks, completed homework assignments, signed notes to be returned to the teacher, and lunch money (or have a prepared sack lunch in the refrigerator). If the child is participating in after-school activities, make sure to pack any necessary items for those events.

■ Central calendar

Include children's and parent's schedules on a central calendar. If you have a home computer, you can enter the week's activities on the calendar within your e-mail system, and print copies for each fam-

ily member. Or buy your child a simple pocket calendar with a phone section, that he/she can carry to school. Encourage him/her to keep the calendar updated with project deadlines. This helps to form good planning skills. Include contact and emergency phone numbers.

■ Communication

Keep communication open with your child and with teachers. Talk with your child about their day, know who his/her friends are and if there are any problems with school work or relationships. Introduce yourself to teachers and stay in touch. Call or send notes occasionally to let the teacher know you are interested in knowing the child's progress. Be involved in your child's school and studies.

■ Safety

Talk to your child about safety when boarding and unloading the school bus. If your child will be alone after school, set strict rules about reporting in when he/she gets home, taking phone calls, answering the door, having friends over and cooking. Before allowing your child to be alone after school, give serious consideration to other alternatives.

■ Talk about avoiding temptations

Talk to your child about drugs, drinking, smoking and other temptations. Set clear rules and discuss in advance the consequences of breaking them.

■ Study habits and homework

Provide books, supplies and a special place for studying. Establish a routine time for study/homework, such as right after he/she gets home from school or immediately following dinner.

■ Overcoming school stress

Here are some ways to help your child overcome school stress:

1. Have realistic expectations.
2. Teach some simple relaxation techniques.
3. Identify their learning style and ways to learn information.
4. Provide nutritious meals.
5. Be consistent about bedtimes.
6. Cut down on chaos at home by preparing the night before.
7. Don't over-commit the child with too many extra activities.
8. Spend time having fun.
9. Help them prepare for tests and manage time wisely.
10. Be available to listen.

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Your Touchstone Energy Partner 



Alan W. Wattles

Across the President's desk

Many Americans do business with a cooperative everyday. They exist in almost every industry from energy to news reporting to healthcare. Co-op's are a huge part of the economy here in the United States and serve more than 120 million members, or four in 10 Americans.

While cooperatives may resemble most companies in some ways, they are very different in others. One of the most important differences is that co-op's are not driven by profit. For-profit companies aim to return a profit to their shareholders. After all, these shareholders have invested their money in the business.

A co-op's mission, on the other hand, is meeting its members' needs for goods or services. Electric co-op's are part of this tradition of doing business, one that has a long history going back to 1752 when Ben Franklin started the first cooperative in Philadelphia.

A cooperative, however, is still going to see its operating costs rise when the price of doing business goes

The Co-op Way Keeps Rising Electricity Rates in Check

up. There's no better example of this than right now when the cost of fuel to run power plants is at a record high. We work everyday to achieve operating efficiencies as we face these cost increases. We will work with you to make sure you have the information and help you need to use energy wisely. But if we find it necessary to pass along power supply increases, you can trust that the decision was based on keeping the business financially strong on behalf of all members. We are not driven by the profit motive to make money for outside investors.

At a time when Americans' electric bills are going up around the country—in some places by as much as 40 percent—the co-op way of doing business is an important way to keep costs manageable.

We are not profit-driven and we don't have to impress Wall Street every quarter. Rather, we are service-driven and operate at cost. You can bank on the cooperative difference.



Many Americans do business with a cooperative everyday. They exist in almost every industry from energy to news reporting to healthcare.



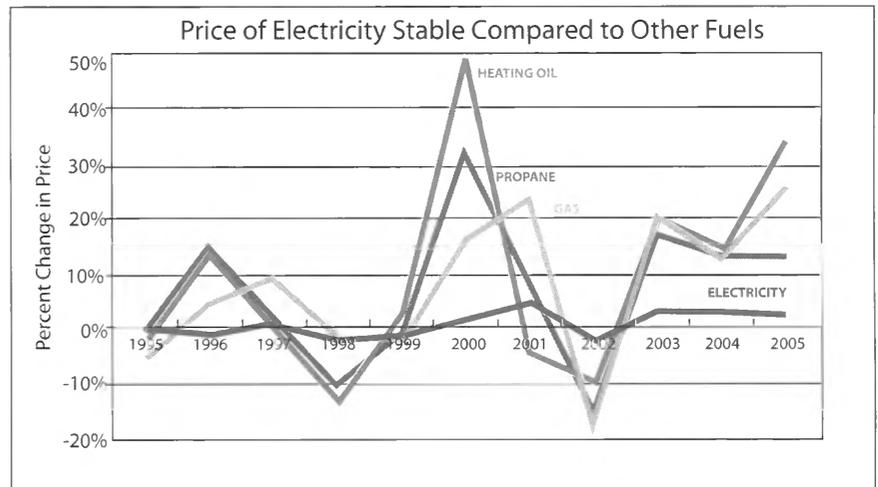
Electric Price Stability

Throughout the last decade, the price of electricity for residential use has been the most stable when compared to the swings of heating oil, propane and natural gas, according to data compiled in this chart by the NRECA Strategic Analysis Unit.

The chart shows that those fuels, vulnerable to shifts in the market and infrastructure, saw surging prices in 2000-2001, followed by steep declines in 2002.

For example, the average price of heating oil in 1999 was 87 cents and in a single year soared to \$1.31. The story was similar for propane, which climbed nearly 33 percent between: 1999-2000. It then fell dramatically until 2002 and has been steadily increasing by about 13 percent since then. Meanwhile, electricity prices have remained stable, increasing on average just over one percent per year.

Source: NRECA Strategic Analysis



The price of electricity has remained stable while the price of other heating fuels has been volatile.

Source: Energy Information Administration, 2005 preliminary data

Avoid Harvest Accidents

Prevent tragic accidents by reviewing the following practices with all who work around power lines:

- Know the location of power lines and keep farm equipment at least 10 feet away from them.
- Always lower portable augers or elevators to their lowest possible level - under 14 feet - before moving or transporting; use care when raising them.
- When moving large equipment or high loads near a power line, always use a spotter, or someone to help make certain that contact is not made with a line.
- Be aware of increased height when loading and transporting larger modern tractors with higher antennas.
- Never attempt to raise or move a power line to clear a path!

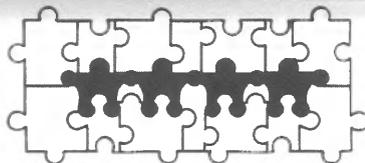


- Don't use metal poles when breaking up bridged grain inside and around bins.
 - As in any outdoor work, be careful not to raise any equipment such as ladders, poles, or rods into power lines. Remember, non-metallic materials such as lumber, tree limbs, tires, ropes, and hay will conduct electricity depending on dampness and dust and dirt contamination.
 - Use qualified electricians for work on drying equipment and other farm electrical systems.
- Source: www.safeelectricity.org

NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH



COOPERATIVES



Businesses People Trust

**Cooperatives are
owned by the
members
they serve.**

by *Laura Camper,*
Intern, Illinois Country Living

October is National Co-op Month, a time to celebrate the cooperative way of doing business. Cooperatives are formed to benefit the people who are served by them. Cooperatives are owned by the members, so the priority becomes the service of the members, not profit.

Because the members own the company, they have a voice in how the company is run. They elect the board of directors, the guiding body of the cooperative, and they are invited to meetings to hear the important issues and news related to the co-op. The co-op also sends members newsletters and other communication to keep them informed.

Member-owned also means locally-owned, so co-ops have a vested interest in the communities they serve. If members have questions or concerns, they can contact the cooperative locally to voice their opinions. And co-op employees are often very active in their communities.

Did you know that...?

- Ben Franklin formed the first successful cooperative in 1752.
- Toad Lane in England is considered the birthplace of the modern cooperative because many of the principles that guide cooperatives were formed there in 1844.

- Cooperatives are guided by seven internationally recognized principles: voluntary and open membership; democratic member control; member economic participation; autonomy and independence; education, training, and information; cooperation among cooperatives; and concern for the communities they serve.

- Cooperatives are formed by producers to sell their products, by

workers who own and operate the company they work for, by consumers who use a service or product, and by small business owners and municipalities to share purchases of goods and services in order to increase their purchasing power.

- Electric cooperatives provide electric service to the member-owners at the cost of service. The members share any profit either through investment in the company or by credit to the member-owners.

- Electric cooperatives own 2.4 million miles or 43 percent of the nation's electric distribution lines and deliver 10 percent of the total kilowatt-hours in the United States annually.

- Electric cooperatives serve 12 percent of the population in the United States and employ 63,000 people.

- Land O Lakes, Ocean Spray, and Sunkist brands are all produced by cooperatives.

- Ace Hardware and True Value are owned and operated by cooperatives.

Thermostat Myths

Your home's thermostat controls how long your heating or cooling system operates. You can save energy and money by learning how this simple device operates.

■ One common myth is that the higher you set your thermostat when you return home, the faster your furnace will heat up your house. This is not true since most furnaces deliver heat at the same rate no matter how high the thermostat is set. So just set your thermostat at the temperature you would like and your furnace will heat your home as fast as it can.

■ Another myth concerns the efficiency of setting your thermostat down when you do not need heating or cooling, such as at night or when no one is home. This myth indicates that a furnace works harder than normal to heat your home back to a comfortable temperature after the thermostat has been set back, resulting in little or no

savings. This is not true and has been proven by years of research and field observations. The longer your house stays at a reduced temperature when heating – or at an increased temperature when cooling – the more energy and money you will save.

■ Your heating or cooling cost depends mostly on the temperature difference between indoors and outdoors. When you adjust your thermostat down in the winter – or up in the summer – you simply reduce this temperature difference. If you set your temperature back 10 to 15 degrees for eight

hours while you are asleep or at work, your energy savings can be 5 percent to 15 percent on your energy bill.

You can install a setback thermostat that automatically adjusts your home's temperature at pre-set times or you can achieve the same savings if you faithfully remember to change your thermostat whenever you leave home or go to bed.



Time to Reset Clocks and Change Smoke Alarm Batteries

You may be familiar with the yearly reminder to change your smoke alarm batteries when you set your clocks back to Central Standard Time. But there are several other steps to make sure your smoke detector is in good working order.

Taking the following steps after turning back your clocks on October 28 could help ensure your family's safety in the event of a fire:

- Replace smoke detectors that are more than 10 years old.
- Test smoke detectors to make sure alarms are working.
- A smoke detector alarm that goes off for no apparent reason could be reacting to dust buildup. Vacuum detectors periodically to remove cobwebs and dust.
- Change smoke detector batteries once a year.
- "Chirps" coming from a smoke detector mean batteries are running low.

Boo-tiful Lighting Safety Tips

Don't let electrical hazards haunt your house this Halloween. While decorating for fall festivities, Safe Electricity and Monroe County Electric Co-Operative advises checking electric lights and decorations for potential dangers that could cause fires and injuries.

Before decorating indoors or outside this fall, take a moment to review safety tips to avoid risk of electric shock or fire:

- Use only lights that have been safety tested and approved by Underwriters Laboratory (UL).
- Make sure extension cords are in good condition. Use only UL-approved cords rated to carry the electrical load you will connect to them.

- Keep all flammable materials away from lights.
- Don't staple or nail through light strings or electrical cords
- Do not attach cords or lights to metal objects.
- Outdoors, use only lights and cords rated for outdoor use.
- Cords should be plugged into outlets equipped with ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). Use a portable GFCI if your outdoor outlets don't have them.
- Always unplug lights before going to bed or leaving your home.

For more information, visit www.SafeElectricity.org.

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Your Touchstone Energy Partner 

Members Invited To Area Meetings

A set of local member meetings has been scheduled for two locations in the cooperative service territory during November. These meetings will give you an opportunity to learn about your cooperative and 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 2007 Saturday Evening Post Calendar. Ten \$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 postcard will be mailed with your bill to each member announcing the meeting locations. We hope that you can attend one of the two meetings listed below:



2006 Area Meetings - Dates and Locations

(Both meetings begin at 7:00 p.m.)

Tuesday, November 14	Millstadt VFW
Wednesday, November 15	Monroe County Electric Co-Operative Office

Board Director George Obernagel Earns NRECA's Credentialed Cooperative Director Certificate



George Obernagel of Waterloo, a director for Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, received the Credentialed Cooperative Director certificate from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

Obernagel was recognized September 13 at NRECA's Region V meeting in Springfield for his commitment to education and attainment of the certificate before an audience of more than 1,000 electric cooperative officials from Iowa, Wisconsin and Illinois.

Today's electric utility environment imposes new demands on electric cooperative directors, particularly increased knowledge of changes in the electric utility business, new governance skills and a working knowledge of the cooperative principles. Monroe Electric Co-Operative's Board of Directors has a commitment to work through NRECA to sharpen this body of knowledge for the benefit of their electric cooperative consumer-owners.

The NRECA Credentialed Cooperative Director program requires attendance and demonstrated understanding of the basic competencies contained in five core courses:

- ◆ Director Duties and Liabilities
- ◆ Understanding the Electric Business
- ◆ Board Roles and Relationships
- ◆ Strategic Planning
- ◆ Financial Decision Making

The NRECA Region V meeting is the second in a series of seven 2006 Regional Meetings convened by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. The meetings continue the association's grassroots policy-making process, which begins at the local co-op level and culminates at NRECA's Annual Meeting.

Students Encouraged To Apply For 2007 IEC Memorial Scholarships

Alan W. Wattles, President/CEO of Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, has announced that for the twelfth consecutive year the Illinois electric cooperatives will award five academic scholarships to high school seniors. The five scholarships are being awarded through the Illinois Electric Cooperative (IEC) Memorial Scholarship Program. Each of the scholarships will be worth \$1,250.

High school seniors pursuing a college education in the state of Illinois are eligible to participate in the program. Three of the five scholarships will be awarded to the child of an electric cooperative member. A fourth award will go to the child of an electric cooperative director or employee. A fifth scholarship will be reserved for use at a two-year Illinois community college. Deadline for applications to be returned to the cooperative is Jan. 1, 2007.

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

electric leaders through memorial gifts," said Wattles. "MCEC and the other Illinois electric 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.

Recent Copper Thefts Cause Death and Damage

A New Mexico man is found dead beneath a power pole in August. He was electrocuted while trying to cut copper wiring from a live transformer. A Dallas, Texas man loses his life and knocks out power to thousands in July when he cuts into a live power line. Similar accidents are reported in South Carolina, Kansas and other states. Since March, the Kentucky Public Service Commission has reported at least three electrocution deaths associated with theft of copper wire.

Across the country, increasing incidences of copper theft are met with rising fatalities and outages to thousands of people. With a 25 percent surge in these offenses over the past year, Safe Electricity urges you to be aware of the deadly risks and far-reaching consequences involved in copper theft.

“Stealing material from an electric substation or utility pole can cause not only serious injuries and death, but extensive outages, fires and explosions – consequences that impact innocent people,” says Molly Hall, Director of Safe Electricity. “The minimum damage that can occur is an outage, which may affect thousands of individuals.”

Copper in wire is appealing to thieves who seek to sell the metal for scrap. Burglars will go as far as climbing power poles, scaling fences and breaking into buildings to steal the precious metal. While this issue is not new, higher prices for the metal are causing thieves to become bolder and more inventive, resulting in more fatalities and public impacts than ever before.

Some thieves steal wire and air conditioner coils in the middle of the night from houses and businesses or while posing as construction workers during the day. Others tamper with railroad signaling wire that contains copper, interfering with railroad traffic. Many even go directly into electric substations and dodge extremely high voltage to steal the metal.

Perhaps one of the scariest instances took place at a house in Peoria, Illinois on July 13th. Thieves stole copper piping off a water heater in the basement and the house filled up with gas. There was an explosion that knocked the house several inches off its foundation. The house was demolished the same day.

“These deaths and damages are completely unnecessary, and they could happen anywhere,” adds Hall. “People must be aware of this kind of theft and that tampering with electric power facilities can result in extremely dangerous situations. Always alert your utility provider when you see or suspect suspicious activity.”

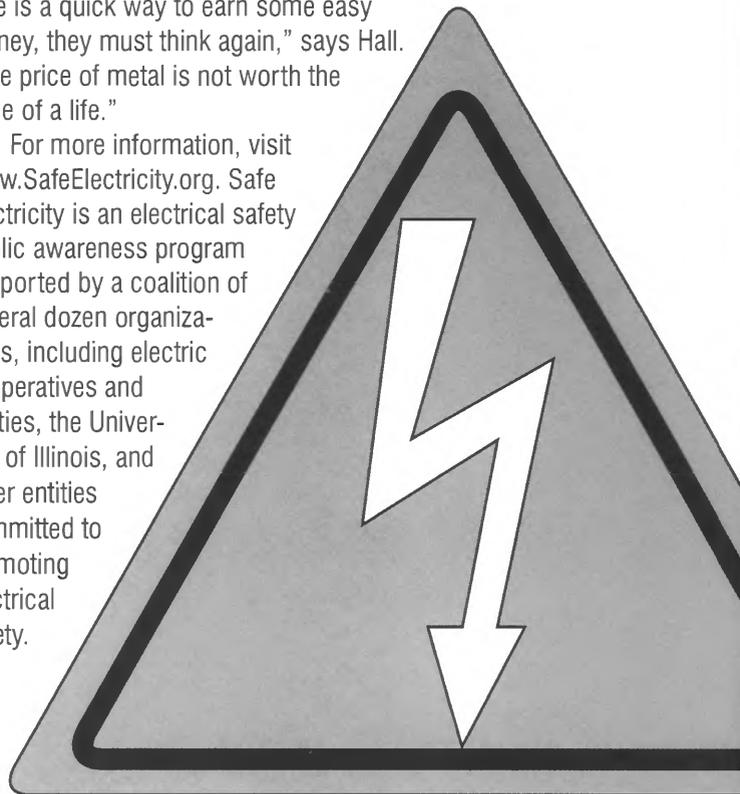
Safe Electricity offers these tips to help safeguard against electrical dangers and prevent copper theft:

- ◆ Never enter or touch equipment inside a substation; stay away from power lines and anything touching a power line.
- ◆ If you notice anything unusual with electric facilities, such as an open substation gate, open equipment, hanging wire, etc. contact your electric utility immediately.
- ◆ If you see anyone around electric substations or electric facilities other than utility personnel or contractors, call the police.
- ◆ Install motion-sensor lights on the outside of your house and business to deter possible thieves.
- ◆ Store tools and wire cutters in a secure location, and never leave them out while away.
- ◆ If you work in construction, do not leave any wires unattended or leave loose wire at the job site, especially overnight. Consider hiring a night security guard.
- ◆ Help spread the word about the deadly consequences that can result from trying to steal copper.

Copper theft is not harmless. Dealing with any metal and electricity is a dangerous combination, especially when it is done without permission or training, and places the thief and others in danger.

“If someone thinks that stealing electric wire is a quick way to earn some easy money, they must think again,” says Hall. “The price of metal is not worth the price of a life.”

For more information, visit www.SafeElectricity.org. Safe Electricity is an electrical safety public awareness program supported by a coalition of several dozen organizations, including electric cooperatives and utilities, the University of Illinois, and other entities committed to promoting electrical safety.



Tankless Electric Water Heaters...The Untold Story

There has been a lot of buzz about tankless (instantaneous) water heaters lately. In fact, we receive so many inquiries about them at the cooperative that we decided to investigate the validity and value of the product and report our findings to the membership.

Modern tankless water heaters incorporate computer chips, an array of sensors and high-powered inputs. It can be a complicated device with special demand requirements before installation. They are about the size of a briefcase, and the water is heated very rapidly as it flows through a heat-exchange coil, only when the hot water tap is open. Tankless water heaters are sized by flow rate as measured in gallons per minute (GPM). The required size is determined from your highest demand for hot water at any one time. Since most families often require several hot water appliances to operate at the same time, this can be a problem. If you seek to run the dishwasher or washing machine while showering, it may not be possible. If you have more than one shower in operation, it may be a



problem.

Water quality is an important issue with tankless heaters. Unless your water is very pure, very few users can expect longevity with this product. Because of the extreme high temperature required to heat the water during the short trip through the heat exchange unit, many minerals precipitate out of the water and deposit on the coils of the unit, shortening its life. This applies to both gas and electric units. Most warranties are voided if water hardness is too high. You may also need to have your water analyzed for carbon dioxide, chlorides, copper, iron, and more. Read the warranty to be sure before you buy.

Electrical wiring and service load is another consideration with a tankless water heater. Family sized models require 240 volts and up to 150 amps capacity to operate. This may require an extensive wiring upgrade in your home. These units are not do-it-yourself installations and definitely not fix-it yourself products. That is precisely why you don't see them sold in the local hardware stores or Wal-Mart. Most tankless

units are only sold and serviced by "factory-trained" technicians who carry 60+ page troubleshooting manuals and numerous meters and thermometers with them due to the sensors and electronics onboard. The suggested retail price of a tankless system ranges from \$600 to \$1,100 depending upon size. Warranties also vary greatly.

Tankless water heaters do offer some advantages in that they are compact, and quite effective in point of use applications. However, their use as the central source of hot water in a residence should be carefully considered. While tankless water heaters may offer some modest energy cost savings over storage water heaters, those minimal gains are at the expense of higher purchase and installation costs, higher maintenance costs, and the potential need for lifestyle changes to accommodate the limited flow rate output of tankless units. Research aside, Monroe County Electric Co-Operative will continue to sell traditional storage tank hot water heaters in a variety of energy efficiency ratings, warranty programs, and price ranges to meet the needs of our membership.



Thanksgiving brings visions of turkey, dressing and pumpkin pie, all under the warm glow of electric lights.

Your local electric cooperative is proud to be a part of all of your holiday festivities.

Have a safe and blessed Thanksgiving.

OFFICE CLOSING

Our office will be closed Friday, Nov. 10 for Veteran's Day and Thursday and Friday, November 23 and 24 for Thanksgiving.

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Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 



Season's Greetings

from the directors and
employees of Monroe
County Electric

DIRECTORS

Walter Amann	Larry Kraft
Terry Grommet	Richard Liefer
Larry Haas	Ross Mueller
Joel Harres	George Obernagel
Manlee Knobloch	

EMPLOYEES

Alan Wattles, <i>President/CEO</i>	Jay Krump
Craig Bayer	Allan Masterson
Debra Bergman	Cindy Myrick
Ronald Birkner	Shirley Reinhold
Stephen Candler	Ronald Rusteberg
Chris Deterding	Linda Schmidt
Steven Drennan	Ronald Schultheis
Randy Ellner	Judith Scowden
Gary Gilbert	Shawn Segobiano
Robert Gross	Arlin Stechmesser
Keith Jones	David Stephens
Matthew Kish	Alisa Wood
Maurice Kleyer	

Heat Pump Improvements

The Arab oil embargo of the mid-1970s that created shortages in heating oil and natural gas (as well as gasoline) caused many homeowners and builders to search for alternatives to standard oil and gas furnaces. Many homeowners and builders looked to a system that was relatively new to the residential heating market, promised efficiency, and was not affected by oil shortages - the air-to-air heat pump.

Heat pumps promised increased efficiency and, since most electricity was generated by coal with a seemingly endless supply, heat pumps would not be affected by shortages. Installation of heat pumps grew rapidly in the 1970s and early 1980s in response to the energy crisis.

With natural gas prices having increased dramatically since 2003, homeowners and builders will most likely again turn to air-to-air heat pumps. The heat pump of today is more advanced than the heat pump of the 1970s and is even more energy efficient. Most heat pumps sold in the 1970s had a 6 to 8 Seasonal Energy Efficiency Rating (SEER). Today, a 10 SEER is the lowest efficiency that can be manufactured and beginning next year, a 13 SEER will be the lowest. High efficiency heat pumps with SEERs of 19 are now available.

■ Better Than Ever Efficiency

The improved efficiency is due to several innovations. Scroll compressors are commonly used as they have fewer moving parts, are quieter, and are more efficient than standard reciprocating compressors. Two-speed Scroll compressors are even becoming more commonplace. During mild temperatures, whether in heating or cooling modes, these units run on low speed, more closely matching the output to the needs of the home. This reduces energy consumption and unit start-ups, lengthening the life of the equipment.

ECM (Electronic Controlled Motors) fan motors are also becoming commonplace. ECM motors are variable speed, direct current (DC) motors that allow fan speed to be matched to the heating or cooling output, increasing homeowner comfort and energy efficiency. Some manufacturers use ECM fans to control the delivered air temperature. If the temperature falls below a desired level, the fan slows down, allowing the air temperature to increase.

A recent innovation in heat pump refrigerant was driven by environmental constraints, not by the need for increased performance. To reduce the level of ozone depleting HCFCs, the United States signed the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone in 1987. This agreement required a phase-out of HCFCs by 65 percent by 2010, 99.5 percent by 2020 and 100 percent by 2030. R-22, the refrigerant most commonly used in air-conditioners

and heat pumps is an HCFC. In 1991, Honeywell (then known as AlliedSignal) introduced a product that has become known as R-410A. The first air-conditioners using this new refrigerant were introduced in 1995 by the Carrier Corporation. Today, R-410A is the most commonly used replacement for R-22.

R-410A refrigerant has several advantages over R-22. It is more environmentally friendly and more effective at capturing heat and then releasing it, reducing the amount of refrigerant needed. It operates under higher pressures than its predecessor, so it cannot be substituted in older R-22 units. Higher pressures also mean higher air temperatures and increased comfort for the home owners.

Geothermal heat pumps still offer the highest efficiency and comfort of all heating and cooling systems and Monroe County Electric Co-Operative firmly supports their use. For those members who are not willing or are unable to make the increased investment, or who do not intend to live at the residence long enough to recoup the investment in a geothermal heat pump, air-to-air heat pumps offer a viable alternative.



■ Proper Installation is the Key to Efficiency

If it is time to replace your air-conditioner or current heating system, consider an environmentally safe and efficient heat pump. To ensure your heat pump provides the comfort and efficiency you expect, follow these installation tips:

1. Make sure your duct system is properly sized and replace it if necessary. Improperly sized or designed ductwork drastically affects the comfort and performance of your heat pump.
2. As heat pumps have a slightly cooler air temperature compared to conventional furnaces, make sure your home is properly insulated. Heat pumps should not be installed in drafty, leaky, un-insulated homes.
3. If you are used to the high temperatures of wood burners, understand that a heat pump is designed to keep the entire home at a constant temperature level. With wood burners, the farthest parts of the home are generally cool while those near the wood burner are very warm. If a wood burner has been in the room you spend most of your time in, you will most likely feel cool with the more even temperatures throughout the home.

The heat pump has been unfairly blamed for these improper installations in the past. Fortunately, times have changed. Homes are tighter and have more insulation, duct work is properly sized, installers are better trained, and heat pumps have improved.

Source: Egyptian Electric Cooperative

Christmas Trees For Sale:

The Waterloo Optimist Club will again be selling Christmas trees next to Diehl's Florist in Waterloo starting on Saturday, November 25. The Waterloo Optimist Club is an organization committed to raising money for the benefit of the youth of our community.

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



Reminder: Deadline For 2007 IEC Scholarship Applications Approaching

Five \$1,250 scholarships are being awarded through the Illinois Electric Cooperative (IEC) Memorial Scholarship Program to high school seniors. Deadlines for applications to be returned to Monroe County Electric Co-Operative is January 1, 2007. Individuals wanting to apply or needing further information should call the cooperative at 800-757-7433 or 939-7171 ext. 15 or contact your local guidance counselor.



Verizon Day Set for Friday, December 8th

A Verizon Wireless representative will be at your cooperative office on Friday, December 8 from 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. The representative will be here to answer your questions and will have several models of phones on hand that the members can look at. If you're not able to be here at that time and would like

to talk to the representative, you can 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 phones to the membership.

Monroe County Electric Cooperative Now Sells



MARATHON WATER HEATERS

Turn it on. Leave it on. For Good.

- Lifetime warranty
- Guaranteed not to leak
- Highest energy efficiency rating
- Easy to install

Marathon[®]
WATER HEATERS



Local Lineman Helps With Safety Training

Lineman Bob Gross of Red Bud was an instructor for a safety rubber gloving school October 17-21 at Lincoln Land Community College in Springfield.

The school taught proper rubber gloving

techniques, allowing line personnel to work on energized lines, and was hosted by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC) as part of an overall lineman training program. From left are Gross and AIEC Manager of Safety Roger Larkin.



Keep in Touch For the Holidays!

Monroe County Electric Cooperative offers long distance rates as low as 4.5¢* per minute. No monthly fees and no hidden charges. Now keeping in touch with family will be even easier on your wallet. Call today for details!

Call now to sign up!

1-888-507-5767

*Taxes and other regulatory charges not included. Domestic rates apply within the contiguous 48 states. Certain restrictions and early termination fees may apply. Please call for details. Services provided by TransWorld Network.



Monroe County Electric Co-Operative

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative 

Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, Inc.

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