



# Make Your Life Easier With Our Automatic Payment Plan

**W**ith our Automatic Payment Plan, you can pay your bill each month automatically from your checking or savings account.

## 5 ways automatic payment can help you:

1. It saves time – fewer checks to write.
2. It is convenient and timely – even if you're out of town.
3. It is always on time – no lost or misplaced statements help maintain good credit and avoid late charges.
4. It saves money – no postage or envelopes needed.
5. It's easy – it's easy to sign up for or cancel, just call us.

## How it works:

The Automatic Payment Plan is dependable, flexible, convenient, and easy. You authorize regularly scheduled payments to be made from your checking or savings account. Then, just sit back and relax. Your payments will be made automatically on the 10th day of each month, and proof of payment will appear on your statement. The amount withdrawn from your account will be the net amount due shown on your bill. The authority you give us to charge your account will remain in effect until you notify us in writing to terminate the authorization.

## Sign up Now!

To take advantage of this service, please fill out the application form included on page 16c of this newsletter.



*Schools are part of our electric co-op.*



**Menard Electric Cooperative**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

**MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com)**

# Make Things Easy!

## Sign up now to pay your bill automatically

**W**ith our Automatic Payment Plan you can have your electric bill automatically deducted from your checking or savings account on the 10th of each month. We will deduct the net amount shown on your bill, and proof of payment will appear on your monthly statement. No checks to write, stamps to buy or deadlines to worry about! Fill out the application below to make your life just a little easier!

Mail with a voided check to Menard Electric Cooperative, PO Box 200, Petersburg, IL 62675.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ SS# \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_ Map Location # \_\_\_\_\_

Bank Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Bank Account # \_\_\_\_\_

Checking acct. ☐ Savings acct. ☐

I, \_\_\_\_\_, authorize Menard Electric Cooperative to draw monthly bank drafts through the automatic plan (ACH) on the account shown above for the payment of my electric bill in full and any other services I authorize. I understand that I may discontinue my participation at any time by notifying Menard Electric Cooperative in writing. Both Menard Electric Cooperative and the bank may terminate this agreement with 10 days written notice. I understand that Menard Electric Cooperative reserves the right to limit participation in this program to customers whose accounts are in good standing. I understand that the amount of my bill each month will be drafted on the 10th or next business day after. I understand that if funds are not available in my account for the draft to clear, there will be a charge posted to my Menard Electric Cooperative account, for NSF, and I will still be required to make full payment before the due date of the bill.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# REBATES\$

## ■ Water Heater Rebates and Rate

**T**his water heater rebate program is available on a one-time basis to all members who agree to replace an existing fossil fuel fired

water heater with an electric water heater that has at least a 40-gallon capacity. If the new electric water heater is installed in a new structure or replaces a fossil fuel fired water heater you will receive a \$100 rebate. For the second new water heater you will receive \$75. If the new electric water heater replaces an existing electric water heater you will receive a \$75 rebate. To qualify for the rebate you must sign up for the cooperative's load management program. In addition to the

rebate above you will qualify for a 3 cent per kilowatt-hour rate reduction on kilowatt-hours used between 600 and 1,000 every month of the year. This could save you up to \$144 each year in addition to the rebate.

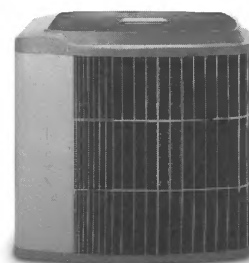


## ■ Geothermal Rebates & Rates

**T**he rebate is \$600 regardless of the size of the units installed. The unit can be installed in either a new or existing home. If you install a geothermal heating and cooling system you will also be eligible for your cooperative's geothermal rate, if you have an all electric home. Under this rate you will be billed 5 cents per kilowatt-hour for all kilowatt-hours used between 1,000 and 6,000 for the billing months of October through May each year.

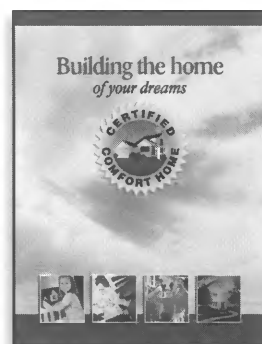
## ■ Heat Pump Rebates

**Y**our cooperative is offering a \$200 rebate regardless of the size of the unit installed.



## ■ Certified Comfort Home Rebate

**I**f you build a new home to the standards described in the Certified Comfort Home book you will receive a one-time \$100 rebate.



If you have any questions on these rebates give the cooperative a call at (800) 872-1203 or check out the cooperative's Web site at [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com).

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# Credit Card Convenience



**Y**our cooperative is accepting payment for electric accounts and other invoiced amounts by VISA or MasterCard. **The cooperative is charging a \$3.00 transaction processing fee to accept payment by VISA or MasterCard for amounts up to \$200. Payments more than \$200 will be charged a transaction fee of 3 percent of the payment amount.** You may either stop

in the office or you may authorize the cooperative to charge your monthly bill to your credit card by telephone or in writing. There are three ways to pay with your credit card:

1. You may come into the office.
2. You may call the cooperative and give your credit card number and expiration date of the card.
3. You may sign the authorization form below and we will charge your credit card as you like, either every month or just one time. If you are interested in the third option, please fill out the form below and return it to the office.



**Mail Application to: Menard Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 200, Petersburg, IL 62675**

## Menard Electric Cooperative — Credit Card Authorization

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Menard Electric Account No. \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

	YES	NO
Charge My Credit Card One Time Only	_____	_____
Charge My Credit Card Each Month	_____	_____
Type of Card ( Circle One )	VISA	MC
Credit Card No.	_____ - _____ - _____	
Expiration Date:	Month _____	Year _____
Cardholder's Name:	_____	

(Please Print)

*I acknowledge and agree to have the transaction processing fee charged to my VISA or MasterCard.*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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# What Causes High Meter Readings?

**Y**ou just took your monthly meter reading and you notice that it is significantly higher than the previous month's reading. What do you do? Your first inclination is to call Menard Electric and have your meter checked for accuracy. However, the meter is rarely the problem. Some of the potential causes for higher meter readings are:

■ **READING DATE:** Reading your meter on the same day each month is very important, but not always possible. Days of use may vary slightly from month to month, causing fluctuations in your bill.

■ **Lifestyle:** Your household size has increased or someone is spending more time at home. You have added a new swimming pool or hot tub. You have had "guests" stay for an extended period. You have taken up new hobbies that utilize power tools, ovens or other electrical appliances. You are using uninsulated buildings.

■ **Lighting, refrigeration, appliances and cooking:** Lighting, refrigeration, cooking and appliances account for 56 percent of the normal household energy use. You may be using the computer, entertainment center, stove, hair dryer, washing machine or clothes dryer more frequently, or your lighting use has increased. The location of refrigerators and freezers is very important. Never place a refrigerator or freezer in direct sunlight or in an unconditioned space such as a breezeway, garage or out-building. The refrigerator or freezer will have to work harder to overcome temperature fluctuations. Make sure that refrigerators and freezers have adequate ventilation.

■ **Equipment maintenance:** If your appliance is more than 15 years old, the efficiency of that

appliance may be decreasing significantly and requiring more energy. It is important to clean or replace your appliances' condensers, coils and filters regularly. You may need to replace the appliance itself. Many times, old electrical wiring will have loose connections resulting in increased electrical use and potential safety hazards.

■ **Seasons:** The additional heating or cooling load will cause an increase in electric use. Heating and cooling needs average around 44 percent of the normal household energy use. Using space heaters, fireplaces, livestock heaters or vehicle block heaters in the winter can dramatically increase your energy consumption. Running a dehumidifier or watering lawns, gardens and animals in the summer months will increase your energy use.

■ **Weather:** Lightning may have damaged the well pump, sump pump or appliances, increasing the running of the pumps or appliances. If underground wiring-insulation is damaged, an increase in electrical use may occur when the ground is saturated with moisture.

■ **Construction or remodeling activities:** Has there been any underground excavation recently? If you have underground wiring, the electrical wires may have been nicked resulting in a short. Room additions are often completed without proper sizing of HVAC equipment for additional heating and cooling loads.

Once you have located the source of your problem, you may need to call your electrician immediately. For further assistance in learning about appliances and their electrical use, call Menard Electric at 800-872-1203. We will be happy to assist you with your questions.

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# Rate Adjustment

## New rates for Rate 15 - "SL" Security Light Service and Rate "SL-1" Street Light Service effective in the January 2008 billing

The rate adjustment for security lights is the first change in this rate since the 1980s. It is attributable to material costs and energy costs. The electricity to operate your security light does not run through your meter, but is included in this flat monthly rate.

Security/Street Lighting	Current Monthly Rate	New Monthly Rate
175 Watt Mercury Vapor Lamp - 7200 Lumen	\$ 7.35	\$ 8.35
100 Watt High Pressure Sodium - 8500 Lumen	\$ 6.00	\$ 7.00
150 Watt High Pressure Sodium - 14,400 Lumen	\$11.75	\$12.75
250 Watt High Pressure Sodium - 24,700 Lumen	\$17.75	\$18.75
400 Watt High Pressure Sodium - 44,000 Lumen	\$26.50	\$27.50

Security/Street Light-Energy Only Service	Current Monthly Rate	New Monthly Rate
<b>Rate Per Light for Energy</b>		
Lamp Wattage: 0-100 Watts	\$ 5.00	\$ 6.00
Lamp Wattage: 101-150 Watts	\$ 7.50	\$ 8.50
Lamp Wattage: 151-250 Watts	\$12.50	\$13.50
Lamp Wattage: 251-400 Watts	\$20.00	\$21.00

## 71st Annual Meeting - June 7, 2008

The 71st annual meeting of your cooperative is scheduled for Saturday, June 7, 2008, at PORTA High School in Petersburg. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend. A free pork chop dinner will be served beginning at 5:00 p.m. and the business meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m.

As a cooperative, we are owned by those we serve. The annual meeting is your opportunity to participate in the operations of the cooperative by electing directors and voting on other issues that arise.

# BOARD MEETING REPORT

**Menard Electric Cooperative  
From the Board Room  
October 30, 2007**

The monthly Board Meeting of the Board of Directors of Menard Electric Cooperative was called to order by President Gary L. Martin at 6:00 p.m. at the headquarters of the Cooperative, 14300 State Highway 97, Petersburg, County of Menard and State of Illinois.

On roll call the following Directors were present: Jerry W. Brooks, Michael L. Carls, D. Jay Frye, Warren D. Goetsch, James G. Graff, Gary L. Martin, Roy H. Seaney and Steven L. Worner. Director Donald E. McMillan was absent. Also present was Manager Lynn A. Frasco and Attorney Charles K. Smith.

President Martin reviewed with the Board the Consensus Agenda. It was moved and seconded that the Consensus Agenda be approved. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco advised that it was time for the staff to present their proposed 2008 budget requests. Director McMillan entered the boardroom. Stuart Churchill, Director of Member Services, presented the Insurance Budget and the Member Services Budget. James Rechner, System Engineer, presented the Engineering Department Budget.

He also discussed the status of matters with regard to the Virginia well service, being a 3 phase line extension. He advised that the cooperative had submitted an estimate to the City of Virginia for the cost of the project. Representatives for the City of Virginia were requesting that the Board consider some reduction in the cost. Manager Frasco and James Rechner presented to the Board a review of the cost estimate. There was discussion about the fact that the cooperative would, in the future, be making improvements to a portion of the line. Manager Frasco advised that this was the largest line extension requested in cooperative history, totaling approximately 11 miles to serve the new well field, which would be serving various municipalities and rural areas.

It was moved by Director Graff and seconded by Director Goetsch that the Cooperative adjust the estimate by reducing the cost by the sum of \$69,527.00. It was moved by Director Worner that there be an amendment to the motion to provide for a revision of the Line Extension Policy so that cost estimates for a line extension would take into consideration and be reduced by future improvements to the line. Attorney Smith advised that the amendment was out of order in that there was a procedure for revising Cooperative Policies, which required a first and second reading. After discussion, Director Worner withdrew his motion to amend the motion. President Martin then called for a vote on the motion. The motion carried. There was then discussion about considering a revision to the Policy to be presented at next month's meeting, when a single phase line was being upgraded to a three phase line at the member's request, then Menard Electric would bear the costs of single phase improvements and such would be deducted from member expense for any line extension over and above such costs. It was the consensus of the Board that Management present a revised Line Extension Policy taking such into consideration.

Terry Entwistle, General Foreman, presented the Operations Department Budget. Wayne Jones, Office Manager, presented the General Office Budget and the Meter Reading Department Budget. Chris Hinton, Manager of Accounting and Information Systems, presented the Accounting Department Budget. Lynn Frasco presented the Manager Budget and the Directors Fees and Expenses Budget.

Manager Frasco presented the Manager's Report for the month of September 2007. He reviewed the Balance Sheet, Budget, as well as the Outage Summary and Safety Report. Under the Operations Report, Manager Frasco reviewed the work that had been done by cooperative crews for the month. He discussed a possible revision to the Cooperative Reconnect Policy. He discussed with the Board interpretation of the Cooperative Reconnect Policy.

He advised that Wayne Jones had questioned whether the cooperative intended to charge a member and collect facility charges after the member's service had been disconnected for non-payment. It was the consensus of the Board that the interpretation of the Policy should be such that the cooperative would not collect a facility charge for any time period after a member had been disconnected for nonpayment and prior to reconnection. Manager Frasco reported on his tour of the Central Illinois Energy Plant. He reviewed with the Board the credit to members in the East Bluff Subdivision in conformance with the Ameren rate relief formula. It was moved and seconded the Manager's Report be approved. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco presented the Financial Report for the month of September. Year to date margins were \$955,291 compared to \$1,127,753 a year earlier. Equity as of the end of September was 32.88% and the number of members served was 10,396 compared to 10,283 a year ago. Net Utility Plant at the end of September was \$32,150,392 compared to \$31,509,561 last year. The cooperative continues to meet the requirements of the RUS, FFB and NRUCFC.

Director Goetsch reported on AIEC activities and reviewed the 2007/2008 Continuing Education Program. Manager Frasco reviewed with the Board the NRECA National Survey results.

Director Carls reported on Prairie Power, Inc. He reviewed the Power Purchase Contract for 2009 to 2019 and the Contract with Dynergy. He advised that the cooperative had the right to choose how many megawatts the cooperative would commit to, out of the Dynergy Contract. There was no decision made by the Board, at the present time, with regard to the contract and Menard's participation therein. The Board decided to postpone viewing the Prairie State Power Plant Ground Breaking Video. Director Carls and Manager Frasco discussed the Revenue Deferral Plan for 2008. Manager Frasco recommended that the cooperative defer 12 mills/kWh deferred revenue in 2008 to offset 2009 through 2011 power purchases. It was moved and seconded that the Board adopt the Manager's recommendations and that the cooperative defer 12 mills/kWh deferred revenue in 2008 to offset 2009 through 2011 power purchases. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco reviewed with the Board the RUS 2007 System Ratings of Operations and Maintenance Programs and the correspondence received from RUS Representative, Aaron Johnson.

Manager Frasco presented an update on the status of matters with regard to the Wireless Internet Study. He distributed to the Board a proposed business plan and discussed the estimated cost for implementation of a Wireless Internet Program for cooperative members and discussed possible financing arrangements for the project. He reminded the Board that due to the monies being borrowed for the Prairie Power, Inc., any further borrowing for this project would require the approval of RUS prior thereto. It was the consensus of the Board to take no action at the present time with regard to the Wireless Internet Project.

Manager Frasco advised that the NRECA Annual Meeting was scheduled for February 25 - 27, 2008, in Anaheim, California and advised that he would need a firm count at next month's Board Meeting as to who planned to attend the Annual Meeting.

Manager Frasco presented the Capital Credit Estate Refunds Report.

President Martin advised that next month's regular Board Meeting is November 27, 2007, at 6:00 p.m.

Under other business, President Martin advised that the Menard Electric Christmas Party was scheduled for Saturday, December 1, 2007, at the Hill Prairie Winery in rural Oakford, Ill.

There being no further business to come before the Board, it was moved and seconded the meeting be adjourned. Motion carried.

**Board minutes also available on [menard.com](http://menard.com) about 30 days after the Meeting.**

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## Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

The LIHEAP program provides a one-time lump sum payment directly to the utility company on behalf of the customer. The payment is based upon the number of people in the household and the gross monthly income of everyone in that household. This process can take approximately 30 days once you have completed an application.

The LIHEAP program can help with natural gas,

electricity, propane, and heating oil. In some cases if the utility service is shut off the customer may be required to make a Good Faith payment to the utility company before LIHEAP can make any promise of payment.

You may be eligible for assistance if your household's combined income is at or below the following levels:

# of people living in the household:	Gross income for 30 days prior to application date:
1	\$1,276
2	\$1,711
3	\$2,146
4	\$2,501
5	\$3,016

Please call your local office for additional amounts.

If you think you are eligible to participate in the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). You may wish to contact an agent in your area.

### **CIEDC (Logan County)**

1800 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Lincoln, IL 62656  
(217) 732-2159  
Ext. 251

### **Decatur-Macon County Opportunity Corp.**

1122 E. Marietta St.  
Decatur, IL 62521  
(217) 428-2193

### **MCS Community Services**

Cass & Morgan County  
345 W. State St.  
Jacksonville, IL 62650  
(217) 243-9404  
(888) 288-4413

### **Sangamon County Dept. of Community Resources**

200 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St., Room 311  
Springfield, IL 62701  
(217) 535-3120

### **Tazewood Community Service, Inc.**

Tazewell County  
2005 S. Main St.  
Morton, IL 61550-1540  
(309) 266-9941

### **CIEDC (Mason County)**

532 S. Schrader  
Havana, IL 62644  
(309) 543-2594

### **CIEDC (Menard County)**

809 Old Salem Rd.  
Petersburg, IL 62675  
(217) 632-3878

## Paying Your Electric Bill through a Financial Institution

If you pay your Menard Electric bill online through your financial institution, please include your Menard Electric Account No in the appropriate location on your financial institution's form.

This is the number in the upper right hand corner of the stub on the bottom of your electric bill.

It is in bold face type above the Map Location No. on your bill stub which you would normally return with your payment if you were to mail it to the office with a check. This number is important to us so we can make sure your payment is posted to your account.

Please Detach and Return Bottom Portion with Payment

**Please Remit Payment to:**  
Menard Electric Cooperative  
P.O. Box 200  
Petersburg, IL 62675-0200

REGULAR	XXXXXXXX
Map Location Number	02-104-001
Amount Due	
Due Date	

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# REBATES\$

## ■ Water Heater Rebates and Rate

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fired water heater with an electric water heater that has at least a 40-gallon capacity. If the new electric water heater is installed in a new structure or replaces a fossil fuel fired water heater you will receive a \$100 rebate. For the second new water heater you will receive \$75. If the new electric water heater replaces an existing electric water heater you will receive a \$75 rebate. To qualify for the rebate you must sign up for the cooperative's load management program. In

addition to the rebate above you will qualify for a 3 cent per kilowatt-hour rate reduction on kilowatt-hours used between 600 and 1,000 every month of the year. This could save you up to \$144 each year in addition to the rebate.

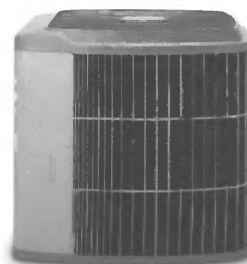


## ■ Geothermal Rebates & Rates

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## ■ Heat Pump Rebates

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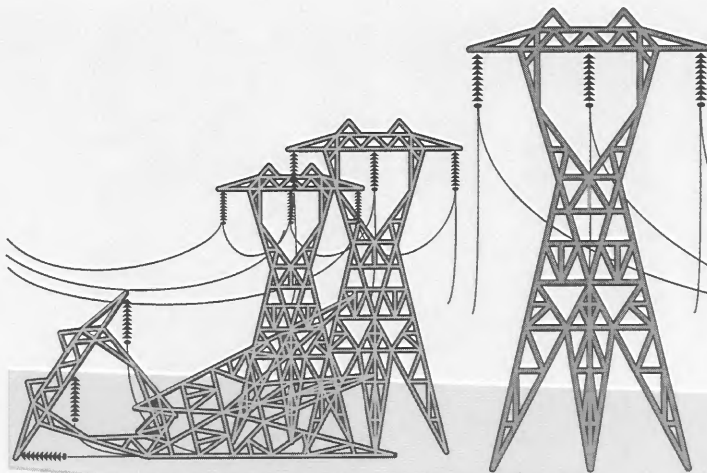
## ■ Certified Comfort Home Rebate

**I**f you build a new home to the standards described in the Certified Comfort Home book you will receive a onetime \$100 rebate.



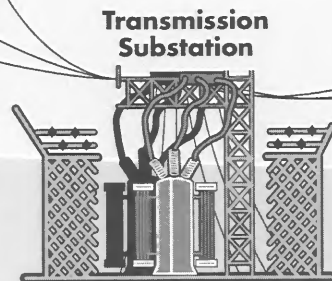
**If you have any questions on these rebates give the cooperative a call at (800) 872-1203 or check out the cooperative's Web site at [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com).**

# What happens

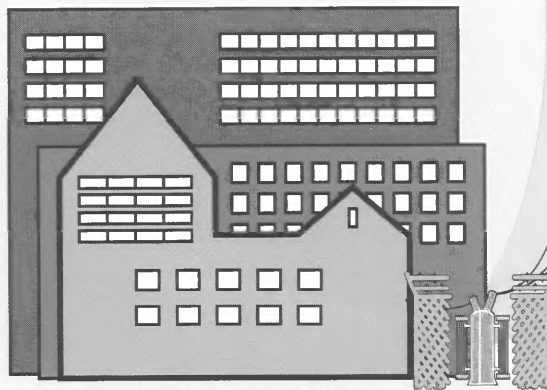


**High-Voltage Transmission Lines**

**1.** Transmission towers and lines that supply power to one or more transmission substations rarely fail. However, when damage does occur—usually due to high winds or ice buildup—these towers and lines must be repaired before other parts of the distribution system are inspected, because they serve thousands (or tens of thousands) of people.



**Transmission Substation**

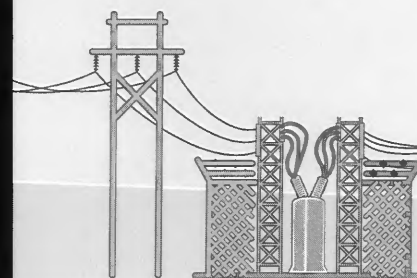


**Large Industrial User**

**R**estoring the power after a thunderstorm, tornado, ice storm or flood involves much more than just flipping a switch at a substation or pulling a tree off a downed power line. Highly trained workers from your rural electric cooperative, crews from neighboring co-ops and even specialists from the Illinois Association of Electric Cooperatives will work together around the clock to restore service in areas affected by severe weather.

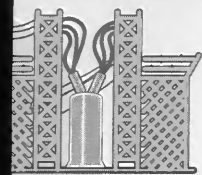
Shown here are the steps co-ops follow in restoring power. At each stage, the primary goal is getting the greatest number of co-op members back on line in the shortest time possible.

# What to do during a power outage?



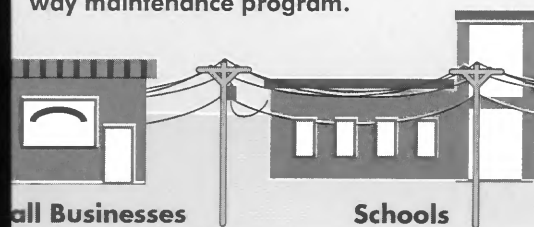
**Local Distribution Substation**

**2.** A co-op usually has several local distribution substations, each serving hundreds or thousands of co-op members. When a major outage takes place, these substations usually are checked first to see if the problem is in the transmission system to the substations or the substations themselves.



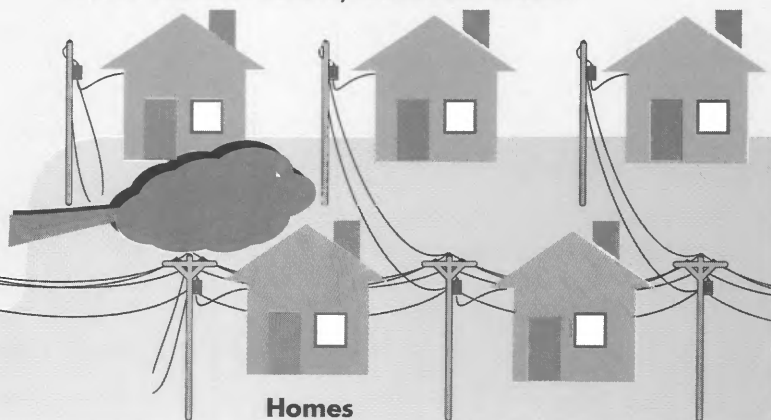
**Local Distribution Substation**

**3.** If the problem cannot be isolated at a local distribution substation, the next step is to check the distribution lines that carry power to groups of customers such as towns or housing developments. In Illinois, the largest cause of outages is fallen trees, which is why your co-op has an ongoing right-of-way maintenance program.



**Small Businesses**

**Schools**



**Homes**

**5.** Finally, isolated outages-caused, for example, by a damaged service line between a transformer and an individual home-are repaired. If you or a family member depend on life support, call your co-op before an outage occurs. Then your co-op can make every effort to prioritize power restoration to you-or can advise you to seek shelter elsewhere.



*Make sure you report any outage to your electric co-op. This will help line crews isolate the problem and repair it as soon as possible.*

**4.** Then, line crews work on outages that are more localized by inspecting the final supply lines-called tap lines-that carry power to utility poles or underground transformers outside small businesses, schools and homes.

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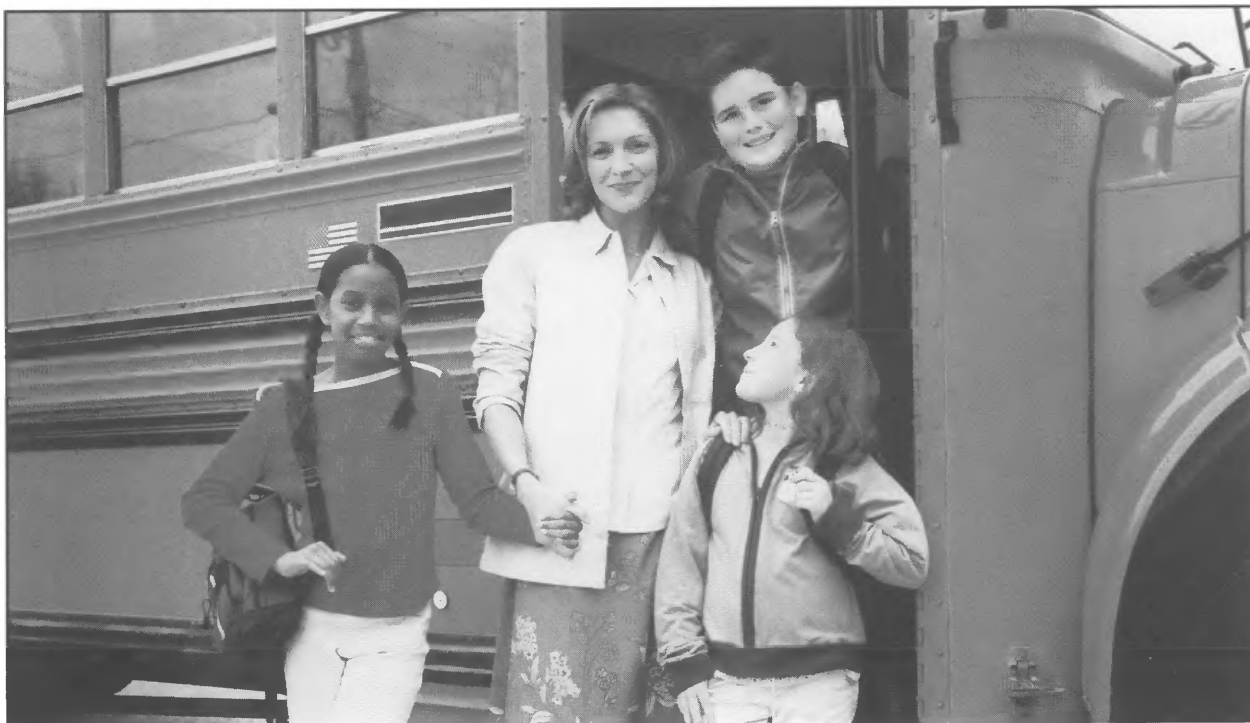
1. It saves time – fewer checks to write.
2. It is convenient and timely – even if you're out of town.
3. It is always on time – no lost or misplaced statements help maintain good credit and avoid late charges.
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Mail with a voided check to Menard Electric Cooperative, PO Box 200, Petersburg, IL 62675.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ SS# \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_ Map Location # \_\_\_\_\_

Bank Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Bank Account # \_\_\_\_\_

Checking acct. ☐

Savings acct. ☐

I, \_\_\_\_\_, authorize Menard Electric Cooperative to draw monthly bank drafts through the automatic plan (ACH) on the account shown above for the payment of my electric bill in full and any other services I authorize. I understand that I may discontinue my participation at any time by notifying Menard Electric Cooperative in writing. Both Menard Electric Cooperative and the bank may terminate this agreement with 10 days written notice. I understand that Menard Electric Cooperative reserves the right to limit participation in this program to customers whose accounts are in good standing. I understand that the amount of my bill each month will be drafted on the 10th or next business day after. I understand that if funds are not available in my account for the draft to clear, there will be a charge posted to my Menard Electric Cooperative account, for NSF, and I will still be required to make full payment before the due date of the bill.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# BOARD MEETING REPORT

**Menard Electric Cooperative  
From the Board Room  
November 27, 2007**

The monthly Board Meeting of the Board of Directors of Menard Electric Cooperative was called to order by President Gary L. Martin at 6:00 p.m. at the headquarters of the Cooperative, 14300 State Highway 97, Petersburg, County of Menard and State of Illinois.

On roll call the following Directors were present: Jerry W. Brooks, Michael L. Carls, Warren D. Goetsch, James G. Graff, Gary L. Martin, Donald E. McMillan, Roy H. Seaney and Steven L. Worner. Director D. Jay Frye was absent. Also present was Manager Lynn A. Frasco and Attorney Charles K. Smith.

In the absence of Secretary Frye, President Martin appointed Director Graff as acting Secretary.

Manager Frasco presented the Manager's Report for the month of October 2007. He reviewed the Balance Sheet, Budget, as well as the Outage Summary and Safety Report. Under the Operations Report, Manager Frasco reported on the status of work done by the cooperative crews for the month. He reported on the number of members who were using the automated payment plan. He advised that 280 cooperative members were using e-billing payment. He reported that the IRS 2008 mileage rate would be 50.5 cents. Manager Frasco advised that the staff was putting the finishing touches on a new disconnect letter for members who had TWACS collars. He presented a summary of the Ameren rate proposal for rates proposed in Ameren's current retail rate case before the Illinois Commerce Commission. It was moved and seconded the Manager's Report be approved as presented. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco presented the Financial Report for the month of October. Year to date margins were \$1,103,192 compared to \$1,061,894 a year earlier. Equity as of the end of October was 32.61% and the number of members served was 10,416 compared to 10,296 a year ago. Net Utility Plant at the end of September was \$32,174,357 compared to \$31,507,842 last year. The cooperative continues to meet the requirements of the RUS, FFB and NRUCFC.

Director Goetsch reported on AIEC Activities and advised that there was a cooperative Government and Finance Course scheduled for February 12, 2008.

Director Carls reported on Prairie Power, Inc. He discussed with the Board the Dynege Contract. After discussion, it was his recommendation that Menard purchase seven megawatts of the Dynege Contract. It was moved and seconded that the Cooperative purchase seven megawatts of the Dynege Contract. Motion carried. Manager Frasco reviewed with the Board the Second Amendment to Transmission Service Agreement. It was moved and seconded that the Second Amendment be approved as presented. Motion carried. He also reviewed the Second Amendment to the Wholesale Power Contract. It was moved and seconded that the Amendment be approved. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco presented a review of the Preliminary 2008 Budget. He advised that the Final Budget would be for consideration at next month's Board Meeting. There was also discussion with regard to the Power Cost Adjustment, which

presently is 2 mils. It was Manager Frasco's recommendation that the cooperative retain the 2 mils power cost adjustment for the coming year. It was moved and seconded that the Manager's recommendations be adopted and the cooperative retain the 2 mils power cost adjustment for 2008. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco reviewed with the Board proposed revisions to the Line Extension Policy - Single Phase to Three Phase Conversion, for first reading. After discussion, it was moved and seconded that the Policy, as revised, be moved for second reading, for consideration at next month's Board Meeting. There was also discussion as to whether or not the revised Policy, once adopted, should then be retroactive. It was the consensus of the Board to give this further consideration.

Manager Frasco advised that the NRECA Annual Meeting was scheduled for February 25 - 27, 2008, in Anaheim, California, and discussed who would be attending the Annual Meeting.

Manager Frasco presented the Capital Credit Estate Refunds Report.

President Martin advised that next month's Board Meeting was scheduled for December 18, 2007, at 6:00 p.m.

Under other business, President Martin reminded the Board that the Christmas Party was scheduled for Saturday, December 1, 2007, at the Hill Prairie Winery, Oakford, Illinois.

There being no further business to come before the Board, it was moved and seconded the Meeting be adjourned. Motion carried.

Board minutes also available on [menard.com](http://menard.com) about 30 days after the Meeting.

**MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com)**

# MENARD



# Menard Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

14300 State Hwy 97 • P.O. BOX 200 • PETERSBURG, ILLINOIS 62675 • 1-800-872-1203 • 217-632-7746

**<http://www.menard.com>**

## Students: Win A Trip To Washington, D.C.!

**M**enard Electric Cooperative will sponsor two outstanding high school junior or senior students on the trip of a lifetime this June. The Youth to Washington Tour, sponsored by the electric and telephone cooperatives in Illinois and across the United States, sends groups of young people to Washington, D.C. each year.

During a full week in the nation's Capital, these students get an up-close look at democracy in action and get to meet with their Congressional delegation and staff. Past participants will tell you it is the trip of a lifetime. It's an experience they never will forget, full of fun, new friends, non-stop touring and yes, they actually learn something too. Most come back with an even deeper respect for our country, our form of government and their opportunities.

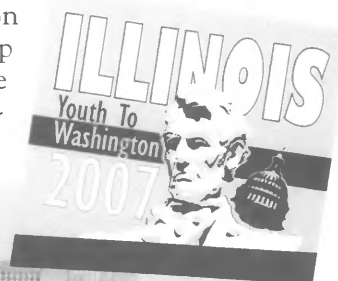
Since 1957, hundreds of future leaders have been introduced to government and the legislative process through this program. Many alumni of the

program have gone on to leadership positions in our communities and government. Two former longtime Illinois State Representatives, Tom Ryder and Art Tenhouse, were past Youth to Washington Tour participants.

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, visit historical places and meet Illinois Congressmen, Senators and their staffs.

Last year, Jared Hayward of Williamsville and Jenna Tucker of Havana attended and had a great learning experience.

For more information about this year's trip June 13-20, contact the cooperative office at 632-7746.



**MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m.—4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com)**

# How Many Lights Does it Take to Change the World?



**I**t can be easier than you think to make a difference in your home and your community. In fact, it can be as easy as changing a lightbulb. What types of lightbulbs you use can affect the temperature, ambiance and mood, as well as your household's bottom line.

One dollar in every five you spend on electricity goes to pay for lighting, making it one of the easiest areas in your home to save energy. That's about \$200 a year you're spending to light your home! Energy Star-qualified lightbulbs are cost effective because they can last more than seven years, compared to about 11 months for an incandescent bulb—that's eight times longer.

A compact fluorescent lamp screws into a regular lightbulb socket but has a longer life and uses less electricity...and there's no loss in lighting quality with compact fluorescents, either. Energy-efficient lightbulbs with the Energy Star seal offer the same warm, bright light you've always known. You can even find lightbulbs that simulate daylight, to give the rooms in your home a natural look.

Traditional incandescent bulbs generate 10 percent light and 90 percent heat. Because Energy Star-qualified lightbulbs run cooler, they make your home more comfortable.

When you choose an Energy Star-qualified lightbulb, you are making a difference for the environ-

ment by reducing air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. As a matter of fact, if every household in the United States

changed just one incandescent lightbulb to an Energy Star-qualified bulb, the combined efforts would save more than 5.6 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity—that's enough to light all the households in Washington, D.C. for almost 11 years. Also, the same action would prevent 8.9 billion tons of carbon dioxide gas from going into the air. A comparable fact would be like removing 780,000 cars from U.S. roads end to end, stretching from Atlanta to Los Angeles.

People across the country are joining the U.S. Department of Energy, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Housing and Urban Development by pledging to switch one lightbulb at home to an Energy Star-qualified bulb. Last year, 70,000 people signed Energy Star's Change a Light, Change the World Pledge, saving more than 23 million kWh of energy and preventing over 18,500 tons of greenhouse emissions. This year, the goal is to get half a million people to take the pledge. For more information, visit [www.energystar.gov/changealight](http://www.energystar.gov/changealight).

**How many light bulbs does it take to change the world? You can help with just one.**

**MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com)**

**Make Things Easy!**  
Sign up now to pay your bill automatically

**W**ith our Automatic Payment Plan you can have your electric bill automatically deducted from your checking or savings account on the 10th of each month. We will deduct the net amount shown on your bill, and proof of payment will appear on your monthly statement. No checks to write, stamps to buy or deadlines to worry about! Fill out the application below to make your life just a little easier!

Mail with a voided check to Menard Electric Cooperative, PO Box 200, Petersburg, IL 62675.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ SS# \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_ Map Location # \_\_\_\_\_

Bank Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Bank Account # \_\_\_\_\_

Checking acct. ☐ Savings acct. ☐

I, \_\_\_\_\_, authorize Menard Electric Cooperative to draw monthly bank drafts through the automatic plan (ACH) on the account shown above for the payment of my electric bill in full and any other services I authorize. I understand that I may discontinue my participation at any time by notifying Menard Electric Cooperative in writing. Both Menard Electric Cooperative and the bank may terminate this agreement with 10 days written notice. I understand that Menard Electric Cooperative reserves the right to limit participation in this program to customers whose accounts are in good standing. I understand that the amount of my bill each month will be drafted on the 10th or next business day after. I understand that if funds are not available in my account for the draft to clear, there will be a charge posted to my Menard Electric Cooperative account, for NSF, and I will still be required to make full payment before the due date of the bill.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## USED VEHICLE Sale

**1998 Chevrolet  
Fleetside Pickup  
V-6 and 5 Speed  
Transmission, A/C  
with 119,000 Miles.**

Please submit bids by the close of business, Friday, March 28, 2008. The bids will be opened at 4:30 p.m. on this date.

## Annual Meeting June 7, 2008

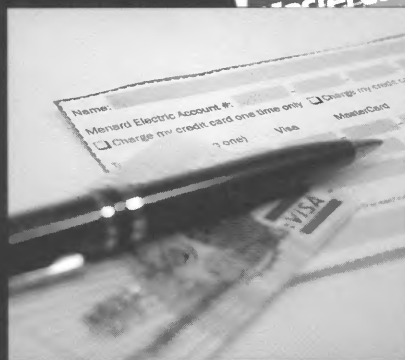
**M**ark your calendar for the 70th annual meeting of Menard Electric Cooperative Saturday, June 7, 2008, at PORTA High School in Petersburg. The free pork chop dinner begins at 5:00 p.m. and the business meeting starts at 6:30 p.m.

We're owned by you, our members, and this annual meeting is your chance to participate directly in the operations of your cooperative by electing directors and voting on other issues.

Directors will be elected this year from districts 3, 7 and 8. The incumbents in these districts are Michael Carls, James Graff and Warren Goetsch, respectively. Petitions for candidates must be submitted to the cooperative's office by April 23, 2008. Petitions are available at the cooperative's office.

# Pay With Your Credit Card

**We accept Visa and MasterCard payments! You can pay your electric bill by credit card for one time only or for automatic payment each month!**



## 3 easy ways to pay by credit card:

- 1) Come into the office**
- 2) Call our office at 632-7746 with your credit card number and expiration date**
- 3) Sign the form below and mail it in—you can choose to pay one month or every month**



**A \$3 transaction processing fee will be charged for amounts up to \$200. Amounts over \$200 will be charged a transaction fee of 3% of payment amount.**

**Mail to: Menard Electric Cooperative, PO Box 200, Petersburg, IL 62675**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Menard Electric Account #: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Charge my credit card one time only ☐ Charge my credit card each month

Type of card (circle one)      Visa      MasterCard

Credit Card #: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date:    Month      Year

Cardholder's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

(please print)

*I acknowledge and agree to have the transaction processing fee charged to my Visa or MasterCard.*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com)**

# REBATES\$

## ■ Water Heater Rebates and Rate

**T**his water heater rebate program is available on a one-time basis to all members who agree to replace an existing fossil fuel fired water heater with an electric water heater that

has at least a 40-gallon capacity. If the new electric water heater is installed in a new structure or replaces a fossil fuel fired water heater you will receive a \$100 rebate. For the second new water heater you will receive \$75. If the new electric water heater replaces an existing electric water heater you will receive a \$75 rebate. To qualify for the rebate you must sign up for the cooperative's load management program. In addition

to the rebate above you will qualify for a 3 cent per kilowatt-hour rate reduction on kilowatt-hours used between 600 and 1,000 every month of the year. This could save you up to \$144 each year in addition to the rebate.

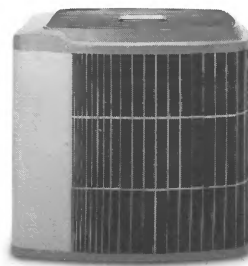


## ■ Geothermal Rebates & Rates

**T**he rebate is \$600. The unit(s) can be installed in either a new or existing home. If you install a geothermal heating and cooling system you will also be eligible for your cooperative's geothermal rate, if you have an all electric home. Under this rate you will be billed 5 cents per kilowatt-hour for all kilowatt-hours used between 1,000 and 6,000 for the billing months of October through May each year.

## ■ Heat Pump Rebates

**Y**our cooperative is offering a \$200 rebate regardless of the size of the unit installed.



## ■ Certified Comfort Home Rebate

**I**f you build a new home to the standards described in the Certified Comfort Home book you will receive a onetime \$100 rebate.



If you have any questions on these rebates give the cooperative a call at (800) 872-1203 or check out the cooperative's Web site at [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com).

## Generator Use

These tips will keep your family and linemen safe

**M**any rely on backup electric generators for emergency power when the electricity goes out. If you are considering purchasing a backup generator, Safe Electricity and Menard Electric want you to know and take proper safety steps before operating an electric generator in your home or business.

Properly connecting the generator into the system is the next critical step for safe and effective use. A licensed professional should install a permanent, standby electric generator.

A permit may be required for installation. Consider consulting a qualified electrician to be sure electrical grounding requirements, circuit overload protections, and local codes are met.

An electric generator wired directly into a building's electrical system must have a transfer safety switch to prevent electricity from traveling back through the power lines, or what's known as "back feed."

"Our linemen work around the clock in bad weather to restore your power during an outage. Improper use of generators can make that work unsafe and the electricity flowing through lines that we think are safe can seriously injure or kill those linemen," warns Lynn Frasco, General Manager.

Follow these tips for safe use of portable generators used to power essential electrical equipment during outages. Keep this list posted by your generator.

- Read and follow all manufacturer operating instructions
- Make sure the generator is properly grounded
- Never plug a portable electric generator into a wall outlet or connect directly to a home's wiring. This can energize

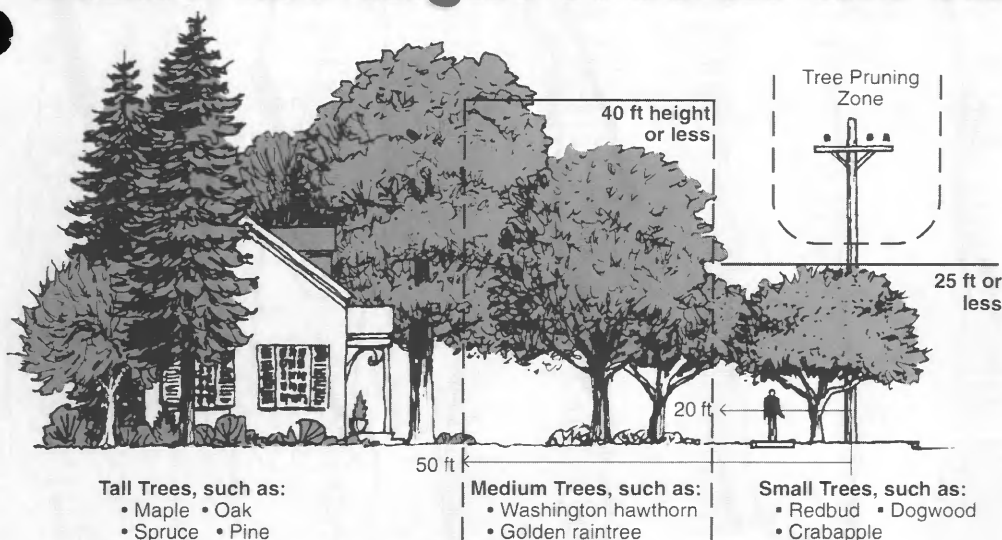


utility power lines and injure you or others working nearby. Electrical back feed also can damage the generator and home electrical equipment.

- Don't overload the generator and plug in more appliances than the generator is rated to handle.
- Use only safety-tested, shop-type electrical cords designed and rated for heavier, outdoor use to connect appliances. Many generators are equipped with twist-lock connects to reduce the chance of accidental disconnections due to vibrations.
- Always keep the generator outside in a dry, protected area, away from windows or air intakes where deadly exhaust fumes can enter living spaces. Equip homes with Carbon Monoxide (CO) alarms with battery backup.
- Turn off generator and allow to cool before refueling
- Before shutting down a generator, turn off and unplug all appliances and equipment being powered by the generator.

For additional electrical generator and safety information, visit [www.SafeElectricity.org](http://www.SafeElectricity.org).

# Plant the Right Tree in the Right Place



If you have overhead power lines around your home, take these three zones into consideration when planting trees. Trees that are too tall can grow into power lines, possibly causing outages and blinks. Use these tips as a rule of thumb at the time when you plant your trees. Trees are costly, and the less trimming the co-op will have to do, the happier you'll be.

- **The Low Zone**—Trees that won't grow taller than 25 feet can be planted directly below and 20 feet to either side of power lines.
- **The Medium Zone**—Trees that grow up to 40 feet can be planted 20 to 50 feet from power lines.
- **The Tall Zone**—All other trees should be planted at least 50 feet from power lines. There is little likelihood at this distance that wind or ice would cause limbs to interfere with power lines. Visit [www.arborday.org](http://www.arborday.org) for more illustrations.

## Choosing the Right Tree and the Right Spot for Energy Efficiency

The U.S. Department of Energy says that trees planted in the right places can save up to 25 percent of your household energy consumption for heating and cooling. Landscaping your home correctly should provide enough energy savings to return the investment in less than eight years.

### In the Summer

The air temperature under a yard's shade tree can be 25 degrees cooler than that of the nearby street. You can block a great deal of solar heat invading your home in the summer but still let the heat warm your home in the winter by planting deciduous trees. Trees with high leaves and branches should be planted to the south of your home to shade your roof from the hottest part of the day. Trees that have lower branches can be planted to the west to shade your home from the low afternoon sun.

A 6-8 foot tree planted near your home will begin shading windows its first year. It could shade your roof in as little as five years. And remember, shading your air conditioner can increase its efficiency by up to 10 percent.

### In the Winter

Blocking cold winter winds will help reduce your heating costs. Evergreen trees and shrubs planted to the north and northwest make good windbreaks. You'll want to plant trees and shrubs together to provide a consistent wind block from the ground to the treetops. For greatest savings, plant windbreaks two to five times the mature height of other trees in your yard.

Be careful not to plant evergreens close to the south side of your home. This could block winter sunlight and prevent its warmth from entering your home.

Shrubs, bushes and vines planted next to your home can also help insulate your home in winter and summer. Leave at least one foot between full-grown plants and your home's outer wall.

Source: The U.S. Department of Energy - Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy at [www.eere.energy.gov](http://www.eere.energy.gov).

# BOARD MEETING REPORT

**Menard Electric Cooperative  
From the Board Room  
December 18, 2007**

The monthly Board Meeting of the Board of Directors of Menard Electric Cooperative was called to order by President Gary L. Martin at 6:00 p.m. at the headquarters of the Cooperative, 14300 State Highway 97, Petersburg, County of Menard and State of Illinois.

On roll call the following Directors were present: Jerry W. Brooks, Michael L. Carls, D. Jay Frye, Warren D. Goetsch, James G. Graff, Gary L. Martin, Donald E. McMillan, Roy H. Seanev and Steven L. Worner. Also present was System Engineer James Rechner, Director of Member Services Stuart W. Churchill, AIEC Representative John Freitag, Manager Lynn A. Frasco and Attorney Charles K. Smith.

President Martin reviewed with the Board the Consensus Agenda. It was moved and seconded that the Consensus Agenda be approved. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco introduced John Freitag from AIEC, who presented to the Board the AIEC Menard Electric 2007 Member Survey Results.

The Board reviewed, for second reading, the revisions to the Line Extension Policy with regard to single phase to three phase. It was moved and seconded that the Policy, as revised, be adopted. Motion carried. There was then discussion about whether to make the revised Policy retroactive. Manager Frasco advised that making the Policy retroactive would involve one Member. It was moved and seconded that the Policy be amended to be made retroactive, so as to allow for reimbursement for one Member with regard to costs related to extension under the terms of the old Line Extension Policy. The vote was four in favor and four against. President Martin voted in favor of the Motion, so the Motion carried.

Manager Frasco reviewed with the Board a new Policy entitled Distribution Line Design Criteria Policy for first reading. After review of the Policy, it was the consensus of the Board to move the Policy to second reading for approval at next month's Board Meeting.

Manager Frasco presented the Manager's Report for the month of November 2007. He reviewed the Balance Sheet, Budget, as well as the Outage Summary and Safety Report. Under the Operations Report, Manager Frasco reported that there were two proposed Wind Farms in the cooperative service territory, one in the Jacksonville area and one in the Tallula area. He advised that they would be 150 megawatts Wind Farms, possibly to be in service by October 2010.

Manager Frasco advised that he had received a letter from AT&T notifying that after July 2008, they would no longer support the cooperative's SBC phone system. He advised that the cooperative would be looking at different systems. Manager Frasco reported on the annual lunch with the Cooperative Meter Readers and advised that they had been given a demonstration of the TWACs system. He also discussed a proposed Severance Package with the Meter Readers and a schedule for conversion of the System entirely to the TWAC System throughout the Cooperative Service Area.

Manager Frasco advised that he and Judy would be

having lunch for all of the employees the following day. He reported that he had given all employees information with regard the premium increase for the Blue Cross/Blue Shield High Deductible Plan. He reported that there were improvements to the Plan and most employees would now be seeing a savings as a result of the changes to the Plan. Manager Frasco reviewed new irrigations and reported that there was a higher percentage of diesel conversions. He reported that Future Gen had selected Mattoon as the Site of its Plant. He advised that the Central Illinois Energy had filed bankruptcy. He reported on the December ice storm and its cost and affect on the Cooperative system. It was moved and seconded the Manager's Report be approved as presented. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco presented the Financial Report for the Month of November. Year to date margins were \$1,058,965 compared to \$1,205,239 a year earlier. Equity as of the end of November was 32.90% and the number of members served was 10,418 compared to 10,296 a year ago. Net Utility Plant at the end of November was \$32,821,902 compared to \$31,583,098 last year. The cooperative continues to meet the requirements of the RUS, FFB and NRUCFC.

Director Goetsch reported that the next AIEC Meeting was Thursday, so he had no Report.

Director Carls advised that there was no Board Meeting Report on Prairie Power, Inc.

The Board again reviewed the proposed Menard Electric 2008 Budget. After review, it was moved and seconded the Budget be approved as presented. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco presented a Resolution Authorizing the Amendment with regard to the Restatement Security (RS) and 401K Pension Plan. It was moved and seconded that the amendment be adopted.

Manager Frasco advised that on completion of the 2007 Inventory, there was an adjustment to the inventory in the amount of -\$3,967.99. It was moved and seconded that the adjustment to the Inventory be made. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco recommended to the Board that the Board continue the Sick Leave Bonus Program for 2008. It was moved and seconded that the Cooperative continue its Sick Leave Bonus Program for 2008. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco discussed with the Board who would be attending the NRECA Annual Meeting scheduled for February 24 - 27, 2008, in Anaheim, California.

Manager Frasco presented the Capital Credit Estate Refunds Report.

President Martin advised the next Board Meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, January 22, 2008, at 6:00 p.m.

Under other business, Manager Frasco discussed the Prairie Power, Inc. Annual Meeting scheduled for March 12, 2008, at the Northfield Center, Springfield, Illinois.

There being no further business to come before the Board, it was moved and seconded the meeting be adjourned. Motion carried.

Board minutes also available on [menard.com](http://menard.com) about 30 days after the Meeting.

**MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com)**



# ANNOUNCING

## Annual Meeting June 7, 2008

**M**ark your calendar for the 71st annual meeting of Menard Electric Cooperative Saturday, June 7, 2008, at PORTA High School in Petersburg. The free pork chop dinner begins at 5:00 p.m. and the business meeting starts at 6:30 p.m.

We're owned by you, our members, and this annual meeting is your chance to participate directly in the operations of your cooperative by electing directors and voting on other issues.

Directors will be elected this year from districts 3, 7 and 8. The incumbents in these districts are Michael Carls, district 3, and Warren Goetsch, district 8. James Graff, district 7, has announced his retirement from the board after serving more than 35 years. If you are a member who resides around the Middletown area and have an interest in being a board of director, please contact the cooperative office to obtain more details. Petitions for candidates must be submitted to the cooperative's office by April 23, 2008. Petitions are available at the cooperative's office.



**MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com)**

# REBATES\$

## ■ Water Heater Rebates and Rate

This water heater rebate program is available on a **one-time** basis to all members who agree to replace an existing fossil fuel fired water heater with an



electric water heater that has at least a 40-gallon capacity. If the new electric water heater is installed in a new structure or replaces a fossil fuel fired water heater you will receive a \$100 rebate. For the second new water heater you will receive \$75. If the new electric water heater replaces an existing electric water heater you will receive a \$75 rebate. To qualify for the rebate you must sign up for the cooperative's load management program. In

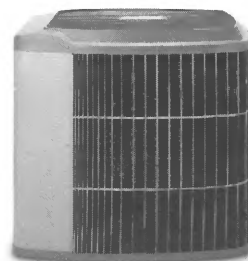
addition to the rebate above you will qualify for a 3 cent per kilowatt-hour rate reduction on kilowatt-hours used between 600 and 1,000 every month of the year. This could save you up to \$144 each year in addition to the rebate.

## ■ Geothermal Rebates & Rates

The rebate is \$600 regardless of the size or number of the units installed. The unit can be installed in either a new or existing home. If you install a geothermal heating and cooling system you will also be eligible for your cooperative's geothermal rate, if you have an all electric home. Under this rate you will be billed 5 cents per kilowatt-hour for all kilowatt-hours used between 1,000 and 6,000 for the billing months of October through May each year.

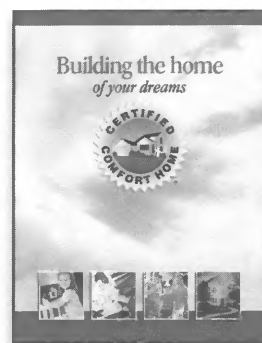
## ■ Heat Pump Rebates

Your cooperative is offering a \$200 rebate regardless of the size of the unit installed.



## ■ Certified Comfort Home Rebate

If you build a new home to the standards described in the Certified Comfort Home book you will receive a onetime \$100 rebate.



If you have any questions on these rebates give the cooperative a call at (800) 872-1203 or check out the cooperative's Web site at [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com).

## Make Your Life Easier With Our Automatic Payment Plan

**W**ith our Automatic Payment Plan, you can pay your bill each month automatically from your checking or savings account.

### 5 ways automatic payment can help you:

1. It saves time – fewer checks to write.
2. It is convenient and timely – even if you're out of town.
3. It is always on time – no lost or misplaced statements help maintain good credit and avoid late charges.
4. It saves money – no postage or envelopes needed.
5. It's easy – it's easy to sign up for or cancel, just call us.

### How it works:

The Automatic Payment Plan is dependable, flexible, convenient, and easy. You authorize regularly scheduled payments to be made from your checking or savings account. Then, just sit back and relax. Your payments will be made automatically on the 10th day of each month, and proof of payment will appear on your statement. The amount withdrawn from your account will be the net amount due shown on your bill. The authority you give us to charge your account will remain in effect until you notify us in writing to terminate the authorization.

### Sign up Now!

To take advantage of this service, please fill out the application form included on page 16g of this newsletter.

## Paying Your Electric Bill through a Financial Institution

**I**f you pay your Menard Electric bill online through your financial institution, please include your Menard Electric Account No. in the appropriate location on your financial institution's form.

This is the number in the upper right hand corner of the stub on the bottom of your electric bill. It

is in **bold face type** above the Map Location No. on your bill stub which you would normally return with your payment if you were to mail it to the office with a check. This number is important to us so we can make sure your payment is posted to your account.

### Please Detach and Return Bottom Portion with Payment

**Please Remit Payment to:**  
Menard Electric Cooperative  
P.O. Box 200  
Petersburg, IL 62675-0200

REGULAR	XXXXXXXX
Map Location Number	02-104-001
Amount Due	
Due Date	

**Make Things Easy!**  
**Sign up now to pay your bill automatically**

**W**ith our Automatic Payment Plan you can have your electric bill automatically deducted from your checking or savings account on the 10th of each month. We will deduct the net amount shown on your bill, and proof of payment will appear on your monthly statement. No checks to write, stamps to buy or deadlines to worry about! Fill out the application below to make your life just a little easier!

Mail with a voided check to Menard Electric Cooperative, PO Box 200, Petersburg, IL 62675.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ SS# \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_ Map Location # \_\_\_\_\_

Bank Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Bank Account # \_\_\_\_\_

Checking acct. ☐

Savings acct. ☐

I, \_\_\_\_\_, authorize Menard Electric Cooperative to draw monthly bank drafts through the automatic plan (ACH) on the account shown above for the payment of my electric bill in full and any other services I authorize. I understand that I may discontinue my participation at any time by notifying Menard Electric Cooperative in writing. Both Menard Electric Cooperative and the bank may terminate this agreement with 10 days written notice. I understand that Menard Electric Cooperative reserves the right to limit participation in this program to customers whose accounts are in good standing. I understand that the amount of my bill each month will be drafted on the 10th or next business day after. I understand that if funds are not available in my account for the draft to clear, there will be a charge posted to my Menard Electric Cooperative account, for NSF, and I will still be required to make full payment before the due date of the bill.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

The LIHEAP program provides a one-time lump sum payment directly to the utility company on behalf of the customer. The payment is based upon the number of people in the household and the gross monthly income of everyone in that household. This process can take approximately 30 days once you have completed an application.

The LIHEAP program can help with natural gas,

electricity, propane, and heating oil. In some cases if the utility service is shut off the customer may be required to make a Good Faith payment to the utility company before LIHEAP can make any promise of payment.

You may be eligible for assistance if your household's combined income is at or below the following levels:

# of people living in the household:	Gross income for 30 days prior to application date:
1	\$1,276
2	\$1,711
3	\$2,146
4	\$2,501
5	\$3,016

*Please call your local office for additional amounts.*

If you think you are eligible to participate in the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). You may wish to contact an agent in your area.

### **CIEDC (Logan County)**

1800 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Lincoln, IL 62656  
(217) 732-2159  
Ext. 251

### **Decatur-Macon County Opportunity Corp.**

1122 E. Marietta St.  
Decatur, IL 62521  
(217) 428-2193

### **MCS Community Services**

Cass & Morgan County  
345 W. State St.  
Jacksonville, IL 62650  
(217) 243-9404  
(888) 288-4413

### **Sangamon County Dept. of Community Resources**

200 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St., Room 311  
Springfield, IL 62701  
(217) 535-3120

### **Tazewood Community Service, Inc.**

Tazewell County  
2005 S. Main St.  
Morton, IL 61550-1540  
(309) 266-9941

### **CIEDC (Mason County)**

532 S. Schrader  
Havana, IL 62644  
(309) 543-2594

### **CIEDC (Menard County)**

809 Old Salem Rd.  
Petersburg, IL 62675  
(217) 632-3878



**Want to stay safe  
around power lines?  
Don't go near them.**

Your safety always comes first. If power ever goes out you can rest assured a trained co-op line technician is on the way to make things right. In turn, all we ask is for you to be alert and careful when working or playing outside. Keep all tools clear of overhead power lines – especially metal ladders. Don't touch our lines. Ever. The first rule of every do-it-yourselfer is to do it safely.



**Menard Electric Cooperative**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

**MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com)**

# Pay With Your Credit Card

**We accept Visa and MasterCard payments! You can pay your electric bill by credit card for one time only or for automatic payment each month!**



## 3 easy ways to pay by credit card:



- 1) Come into the office**
- 2) Call our office at 632-7746 with your credit card number and expiration date**
- 3) Sign the form below and mail it in—you can choose to pay one month or every month**

*A \$3 transaction processing fee will be charged for amounts up to \$200. Amounts over \$200 will be charged a transaction fee of 3% of payment amount.*

**Mail to: Menard Electric Cooperative, PO Box 200, Petersburg, IL 62675**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Menard Electric Account #: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Charge my credit card one time only ☐ Charge my credit card each month

Type of card (circle one)      Visa      MasterCard

Credit Card #: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: Month \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

Cardholder's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

(please print)

*I acknowledge and agree to have the transaction processing fee charged to my Visa or MasterCard.*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com)**

# BOARD MEETING REPORT

**Menard Electric Cooperative  
From the Board Room  
January 22, 2008**

The monthly Board Meeting of the Board of Directors of Menard Electric Cooperative was called to order by President Gary L. Martin at 6:00 p.m. at the headquarters of the Cooperative, 14300 State Highway 97, Petersburg, County of Menard and State of Illinois.

On roll call the following directors were present: Michael L. Carls, D. Jay Frye, Warren D. Goetsch, James G. Graff, Gary L. Martin, Donald E. McMillan, Roy H. Seaneay and Steven L. Worner. Director Jerry W. Brooks was absent. Also present were Manager Lynn A. Frasco and Attorney Charles K. Smith.

President Martin reviewed with the Board the Consensus Agenda. It was moved and seconded that the Consensus Agenda be approved. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco introduced AIEC General Counsel Norman Conrad and AIEC Vice-President of Governmental Affairs Don Wood, who made a presentation to the Board with regard to three proposed policies, being a Draft Net Metering Policy, a Supplemental LiHeap Assistance Policy and a Renewable Energy Resources and Coal Technology Program. Mr. Wood and Mr. Conrad reviewed in detail the terms and provisions of all three policies and the reasons why they were recommending that the Board consider adoption of the three policies. Mr. Wood and Mr. Conrad answered questions from the Board. After discussion, it was moved and seconded that the cooperative proceed with further study and investigation of the three proposed policies and then consider, after such further study and investigation, the adoption of the Net Metering Policy, LiHeap Assistance Policy and Renewable Energy Resources and Coal Technology Program. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco presented the Manager's Report for the month of December 2007. He reviewed the Balance Sheet, Budget, as well as the Outage Summary and Safety Report. Under the Operations Report, Manager Frasco reported on the status of irrigation construction and line extensions. He gave the Board an update on the Virginia Well Project and advised that construction of the nine miles of line by the cooperative was being pushed back by the City of Virginia. The City of Virginia had advised that the lines do not need to be energized until sometime in the summer of 2009.

Manager Frasco reviewed a letter that was being sent to Members of Lost Arrow Campground in Mason County. The letter advised that the cooperative was in the process of upgrading facilities in the area, which involved a major rebuild of the system and was all underground. He advised that as a result of the construction, some Lost Arrow Members were out of service for a period of time and that there had been complaints about members still receiving monthly facility charge bills. Manager Frasco advised that he was recommending that each member in the Lost Arrow Campground receive a one month credit of the \$24 monthly facility charge. After consideration by the Board, it was moved and seconded that the Manager be authorized to give to each Member of Lost Arrow Campground, a one month credit of the \$24 facility charge. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco discussed the status of matters with regard to the cooperative Meter Readers and advised that the cooperative was providing to each Meter Reader a table lamp, in recognition of their many years of service to the cooperative. He reminded the Board that the cooperative had decided to give each Meter

Reader three months severance pay due to the fact that the cooperative was converting to TWACs.

President Martin called the Board into Executive Session. President Martin reconvened the monthly Board Meeting. It was moved and seconded the Manager's Report be approved as presented. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco presented the Financial Report for the Month of December. Year to date margins were \$917,688 compared to \$1,018,239 a year earlier. Equity as of the end of December was 32.68% and the number of members served was 10,392 compared to 10,275 a year ago. Net Utility Plant at the end of December was \$33,071,151 compared to \$31,694,519 last year. The cooperative continues to meet the requirements of the RUS, FFB and NRUCFC.

Director Goetsch reported on AIEC Activities.

Director Carls reported on Prairie Power, Inc.

Manager Frasco discussed correspondence received from Attorney Jerry Tice with regard to the Petersburg Vet Clinic. He advised that the Vet Clinic was requesting that the cooperative allow a portion of its Radio Tower Site to be annexed to the City of Petersburg. This would then make the annexed portion of the cooperative property contiguous to the Vet Clinic, so that then the Vet Clinic site itself could be annexed to the City of Petersburg. The purpose was then to make it possible for the Vet Clinic to connect to the City Sewer System. The matter had been proposed and approved by the Board in 2005, but at that point in time, for some reason, the Vet Clinic had not proceeded with the annexation. It was moved and seconded that the annexation of the portion of the Radio Tower Site be approved, subject to Attorney Smith verifying that there would be no zoning problems for the cooperative as a result of the annexation. Motion carried.

The Board reviewed the Distribution Line Design Criteria Policy. It was moved and seconded the Policy be adopted. Motion carried.

President Martin advised that due to the absence of Director Brooks, there was no Annual Meeting Committee Meeting.

Director Seaneay presented the Report of the Capital Credit Committee. He advised that the committee was recommending that the cooperative do a general retirement of Capital Credits for the calendar year 2008 in the amount of \$240,000 and retirement of estates up to \$100,000. It was moved and seconded that the following Resolution be adopted. Motion carried.

It was determined to postpone discussion of the AIEC Statewide Member Survey results to next month's Board Meeting.

Manager Frasco presented the Capital Credit Estate Refunds Report.

President Martin reminded the Board that next month's meeting was scheduled for February 19, 2008, at 6:00 p.m.

Under other business, President Martin reminded the Board that the Prairie Power Annual Meeting was scheduled for March 12, 2008, at the Northfield Inn, Springfield, Illinois, and that the NRECA Annual Meeting was scheduled for February 25 - 27, 2008, in Anaheim, California.

There being no further business to come before the Board, it was moved and seconded the meeting be adjourned. Motion carried.

**Board minutes also available on [menard.com](http://menard.com) about 30 days after the Meeting.**

**MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com)**

# MENARD



**Menard Electric Cooperative**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

14300 State Hwy 97 • P.O. BOX 200 • PETERSBURG, ILLINOIS 62675 • 1-800-872-1203 • 217-632-7746

<http://www.menard.com>

## Annual Meeting: June 7, 2008

**M**ark your calendar for the 71st annual meeting of Menard Electric Cooperative Saturday, June 7, 2008, at PORTA High School in Petersburg. The free pork chop dinner begins at 5:00 p.m. and the business meeting starts at 6:30 p.m.

We're owned by you, our members, and this annual meeting is your chance to participate directly in the operations of your cooperative by electing directors and voting on other issues.

Directors will be elected this year from districts 3, 7 and 8. The incumbents in these districts are Michael Carls, district 3, and Warren Goetsch, district 8. James Graff, district 7, has announced his retirement from the board after serving more than 35 years.



**MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. — 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com)**

## Frequently Asked Questions Information on Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs (CFLs) and Mercury

### Why should people use CFLs?

Switching from traditional light bulbs to CFLs is an effective, accessible change every American can make right now to reduce energy use at home and prevent greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global climate change. Lighting accounts for close to 20 percent of the average home's electric bill. ENERGY STAR qualified CFLs use up to 75 percent less energy than incandescent light bulbs, last up to 10 times longer, cost little up front, and provide a quick return on investment.

If every home in America replaced just one incandescent light bulb with an ENERGY STAR qualified CFL, in one year it would save enough energy to light more than 3 million homes and prevent greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to those of more than 800,000 cars.

### Do CFLs contain mercury?

CFLs contain a very small amount of mercury sealed within the glass tubing – an average of 5 milligrams – about the amount that would cover the tip of a ball-point pen. By comparison, older thermometers contain about 500 milligrams of mercury. It would take 100 CFLs to equal that amount.

Mercury currently is an essential component of CFLs and is what allows the bulb to be an efficient light source. No mercury is released when the bulbs are intact or in use. Many manufacturers have taken significant steps to reduce mercury used in their fluorescent lighting products. In fact, the average amount of mercury in a CFL is anticipated to drop by the end of 2007 thanks to technology advances and a commitment from members of the National Electrical Manufacturers Association.

### What precautions should I take when using CFLs in my home?

CFLs are made of glass and can break if dropped or roughly handled. Be careful when removing the bulb from its packaging, installing it, or replacing it. Always screw and unscrew the lamp by its base (not the glass), and never forcefully twist the CFL into a light socket. If a CFL breaks in your home, follow the clean-up recommendations below. Used CFLs should be disposed of properly (see 16g).



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### **What should I do with a CFL when it burns out?**

EPA recommends that consumers take advantage of available local recycling options for compact fluorescent light bulbs. EPA is working with CFL manufacturers and major U.S. retailers to expand recycling and disposal options. Consumers can contact their local municipal solid waste agency directly, or go to [www.epa.gov/bulbrecycling](http://www.epa.gov/bulbrecycling) or [www.earth911.org](http://www.earth911.org) to identify local recycling options.

If your state permits you to put used or broken CFLs in the garbage, seal the bulb in two plastic bags and put it into the outside trash, or other protected outside location, for the next normal trash collection. CFLs should not be disposed of in an incinerator.

ENERGY STAR qualified CFLs have a warranty. If the bulb has failed within the warranty period, look at the CFL base to find the manufacturer's name. Visit the manufacturer's web site to find the customer service contact information to inquire about a refund or replacement.

### **How should I clean up a broken fluorescent bulb?**

EPA recommends the following clean-up and disposal guidelines:

#### **Before Clean-up: Vent the Room**

1. Open a window and leave the room for 15 minutes or more.
2. Shut off the central forced-air heating/air conditioning system, if you have one.

#### **Clean-Up Steps for Hard Surfaces**

3. Carefully scoop up glass fragments and powder using stiff paper or cardboard and place them in a glass jar with metal lid (such as a canning jar) or in a sealed plastic bag.
4. Use sticky tape, such as duct tape, to pick up any remaining small glass fragments and powder.
5. Wipe the area clean with damp paper towels or disposable wet wipes and place them in the glass jar or plastic bag.
6. Do not use a vacuum or broom to clean up the broken bulb on hard surfaces.

#### **Clean-up Steps for Carpeting or Rug:**

3. Carefully pick up glass fragments and place them in a glass jar with metal lid (such as a canning jar) or in a sealed plastic bag.
4. Use sticky tape, such as duct tape, to pick up any remaining small glass fragments and powder.
5. If vacuuming is needed after all visible materials are removed, vacuum the area where the bulb was broken.

6. Remove the vacuum bag (or empty and wipe the canister), and put the bag or vacuum debris in a sealed plastic bag.

#### **Disposal of Clean-up Materials**

7. Immediately place all cleanup materials outside the building in a trash container or outdoor protected area for the next normal trash.
8. Wash your hands after disposing of the jars or plastic bags containing clean-up materials.
9. Check with your local or state government about disposal requirements in your specific area. Some states prohibit such trash disposal and require that broken and unbroken lamps be taken to a local recycling center.

#### **Future Cleaning of Carpeting or Rug: Vent the Room During and After Vacuuming**

10. For at least the next few times you vacuum, shut off the central forced-air heating/air conditioning system and open a window prior to vacuuming.
11. Keep the central heating/air conditioning system shut off and the window open for at least 15 minutes after vacuuming is completed.

### **What is mercury?**

Mercury is an element (Hg on the periodic table) found naturally in the environment. Mercury emissions in the air can come from both natural and man-made sources. Coal-fired power plants are the largest man-made source because mercury that naturally exists in coal is released into the air when coal is burned to make electricity. Coal-fired power generation accounts for roughly 40 percent of the mercury emissions in the U.S.

EPA is implementing policies to reduce airborne mercury emissions. Under regulations EPA issued in 2005, mercury emissions from coal-fired power plants will drop by nearly 70 percent by 2018.

The use of CFLs reduces power demand, which helps reduce mercury emissions from power plants.

For more information on all sources of mercury, visit <http://www.epa.gov/mercury>

For more information about compact fluorescent bulbs, visit <http://www.energystar.gov/cfls>

EPA is continually reviewing its clean-up and disposal recommendations for CFLs to ensure that the Agency presents the most up-to-date information for consumers and businesses.

## FACT SHEET: Mercury in Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFLs)

The US Environmental Protection Agency has prepared this fact sheet to respond to questions/concerns about mercury in energy-efficient lighting that uses compact fluorescent technology.

### What are the Health Risks of Mercury and How do CFLs Fit In?

Mercury is an essential ingredient for most energy-efficient lamps. The amount of mercury in a CFL's glass tubing is small, about 4mg. However, every product containing mercury should be handled with care. Exposure to mercury, a toxic metal, can affect our brain, spinal cord, kidneys and liver, causing symptoms such as trembling hands, memory loss, and difficulty moving.

As energy-efficient lighting becomes more popular, it is important that we dispose of the products safely and responsibly. Mercury is released into our environment when products with mercury are broken, disposed of improperly, or incinerated. If you break a CFL, clean it up safely. And always dispose of it properly to keep CFLs working for the environment.

Mercury is an ingredient in several household products. Recycling programs exist for mercury in older non-digital thermostats and mercury thermometers, but residential CFL recycling programs are just now appearing.



**Safe cleanup precautions:** If a CFL breaks in your home, open nearby windows to disperse any vapor that may escape, carefully sweep up the fragments (do not use your hands) and wipe the area with a disposable paper towel to remove all glass fragments. Do not use a vacuum. Place all fragments in a sealed plastic bag and follow disposal instructions above.

### Resources for Recycling or Proper Disposal of CFLs

*NOTE: Residential recycling programs are not yet available in most regions.*

1. **Earth911.org** (or call 1-800-CLEAN-UP for an automated hotline): Online, enter your zip code, press "GO," click "Household Hazardous Waste," then "fluorescent light bulb disposal." The site will identify your nearest residential mercury recycling facility or mail disposal method. If you find no specific information on CFL disposal, go back and click on the link for "Mercury Containing Items."
2. Call your local government if the Web site and Hotline number above does not have your local information. Look on the Internet or in the phone book for your local or municipal government entity responsible for waste collection or household hazardous waste.

### CFLs Responsible for Less Mercury than Incandescent Light Bulbs

Ironically, CFLs present an opportunity to prevent mercury from entering our air, where it most affects our health. The highest source of mercury in our air comes from burning fossil fuels such as coal, the most common fuel used in the U.S. to produce electricity. A CFL uses 75% less energy than an incandescent light bulb and lasts at least 6 times longer. A power plant will emit 10mg of mercury to produce the electricity to run an incandescent bulb compared to only 2.4mg of mercury to run a CFL for the same time.

### Always Dispose of Your CFL Properly

While CFLs for your home are not legally considered hazardous waste according to federal solid waste rules, it is still best for the environment to dispose of your CFL properly upon burnout. Only large commercial users of tubular fluorescent lamps are required to recycle. If recycling is not an option in your area (see below on how to find out), place the CFL in a sealed plastic bag and dispose the same way you would batteries, oil-based paint and motor oil at your local Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Collection Site. If your local HHW Collection Site cannot accept CFLs (check Earth911.org to find out), seal the CFL in a plastic bag and place with your regular trash.

# REBATES\$

## ■ Water Heater Rebates and Rate

**T**his water heater rebate program is available on a **one-time** basis to all members who agree to replace an existing fossil fuel fired water heater with an electric



water heater that has at least a 40-gallon capacity. If the new electric water heater is installed in a new structure or replaces a fossil fuel fired water heater you will receive a \$100 rebate. For the second new water heater you will receive \$75. If the new electric water heater replaces an existing electric water heater you will receive a \$75 rebate. To qualify for the rebate you must sign up for the cooperative's load management program. In addition

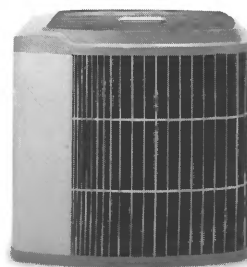
to the rebate above you will qualify for a 3 cent per kilowatt-hour rate reduction on kilowatt-hours used between 600 and 1,000 every month of the year. This could save you up to \$144 each year in addition to the rebate.

## ■ Geothermal Rebates & Rates

**T**he rebate is \$600 regardless of the size of the units installed. The unit can be installed in either a new or existing home. If you install a geothermal heating and cooling system you will also be eligible for your cooperative's geothermal rate, if you have an all electric home. Under this rate you will be billed 5 cents per kilowatt-hour for all kilowatt-hours used between 1,000 and 6,000 for the billing months of October through May each year.

## ■ Heat Pump Rebates

**Y**our cooperative is offering a \$200 rebate regardless of the size of the unit installed.



## ■ Certified Comfort Home Rebate

**I**f you build a new home to the standards described in the Certified Comfort Home book you will receive a onetime \$100 rebate.



If you have any questions on these rebates give the cooperative a call at (800) 872-1203 or check out the cooperative's Web site at [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com).

# Make Your Life Easier With Our Automatic Payment Plan

**W**ith our Automatic Payment Plan, you can pay your bill each month automatically from your checking or savings account.

## 5 ways automatic payment can help you:

1. It saves time – fewer checks to write.
2. It is convenient and timely – even if you're out of town.
3. It is always on time – no lost or misplaced statements help maintain good credit and avoid late charges.
4. It saves money – no postage or envelopes needed.
5. It's easy – it's easy to sign up for or cancel, just call us.

## How it works:

The Automatic Payment Plan is dependable, flexible, convenient, and easy. You authorize regularly scheduled payments to be made from your checking or savings account. Then, just sit back and relax. Your payments will be made automatically on the 10th day of each month, and proof of payment will appear on your statement. The amount withdrawn from your account will be the net amount due shown on your bill. The authority you give us to charge your account will remain in effect until you notify us in writing to terminate the authorization.

## Sign up Now!

To take advantage of this service, please fill out the application form included on page 16g of this newsletter.

# Paying Your Electric Bill through a Financial Institution

**I**f you pay your Menard Electric bill online through your financial institution, please include your Menard Electric Account No. in the appropriate location on your financial institution's form.

This is the number in the upper right hand corner of the stub on the bottom of your electric bill. It is

in bold face type above the Map Location No. on your bill stub which you would normally return with your payment if you were to mail it to the office with a check. This number is important to us so we can make sure your payment is posted to your account.

## Please Detach and Return Bottom Portion with Payment

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Menard Electric Cooperative  
P.O. Box 200  
Petersburg, IL 62675-0200

REGULAR	XXXXXXXX
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Amount Due	
Due Date	

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**Make Things Easy!**  
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Mail with a voided check to Menard Electric Cooperative, PO Box 200, Petersburg, IL 62675.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ SS# \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_ Map Location # \_\_\_\_\_

Bank Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Bank Account # \_\_\_\_\_

Checking acct. ☐ Savings acct. ☐

I, \_\_\_\_\_, authorize Menard Electric Cooperative to draw monthly bank drafts through the automatic plan (ACH) on the account shown above for the payment of my electric bill in full and any other services I authorize. I understand that I may discontinue my participation at any time by notifying Menard Electric Cooperative in writing. Both Menard Electric Cooperative and the bank may terminate this agreement with 10 days written notice. I understand that Menard Electric Cooperative reserves the right to limit participation in this program to customers whose accounts are in good standing. I understand that the amount of my bill each month will be drafted on the 10th or next business day after. I understand that if funds are not available in my account for the draft to clear, there will be a charge posted to my Menard Electric Cooperative account, for NSF, and I will still be required to make full payment before the due date of the bill.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# BOARD MEETING REPORT

**Menard Electric Cooperative  
From the Board Room  
FEBRUARY 19, 2008**

The monthly Board Meeting of the Board of Directors of Menard Electric Cooperative was called to order by President Gary L. Martin at 6:00 P.M. at the headquarters of the Cooperative, 14300 State Highway 97, Petersburg, County of Menard and State of Illinois.

On roll call the following Directors were present: Jerry W. Brooks, Michael L. Carls, D. Jay Frye, Warren D. Goetsch, James G. Graff, Gary L. Martin, Donald E. McMillan, Roy H. Seane and Steven L. Wörner. Also present was Manager Lynn A. Frasco and Attorney Charles K. Smith.

Manager Frasco presented the Manager's Report for the month of January, 2008. He reviewed the Balance Sheet, Budget, as well as the Outage Summary and Safety Report. Under the Operations Report, Manager Frasco reviewed the Irrigation Construction Schedule for 2008. He advised that he had recently visited the ICG Coal Mine and had reviewed with them their most recent bill and all the components of that bill. He advised the Board of the future expansion plans for the Mine and reviewed with the Board a map showing the expansion. He also reviewed with the Board a map showing Illinois Ethanol Ventures including the proposed plants, as well as those in operation and those under construction. He reported on the Meeting with the Mason County Irrigators. He reported that the Cooperative was in negotiations with Ameren with regard to a dispute involving a service West of Athens. He advised that the Cooperative was discussing a proposed Partial Service Agreement to resolve this issue. He advised that Ameren had complained to Prairie Power about issues with regard to switches. He advised that as a result of this Complaint, the Cooperative Staff was meeting with representatives from Ameren to discuss proper procedure with regard to switches. Manager Frasco discussed the RUS Cushion of Credit - Temporary Investment Option. He also discussed the option of converting the current Hardship Loan Application to the FFB Loan rate. He advised that he would provide further information to the Board for consideration at next month's Meeting with regard to the possible conversion. It was moved and seconded that Manager's Report be approved as presented. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco presented the Financial Report for the Month of January. Year to date margins were (\$719) compared to (\$177,078) a year earlier. Equity as of the end of January was 31.95% and the number of members served was 10,364 compared to 10,255 a year ago. Net Utility Plant at the end of January was \$33,102,559 compared to \$31,750,850 last year. The cooperative continues to meet

the requirements of the RUS, FFB and NRUCFC.

Director Goetsch reported on AIEC Activities and the CRN dues and advised that the CRN dues were to be added to the NRECA dues.

Director Carls reported on Prairie Power, Inc.

Director Brooks presented the Report of the Annual Meeting Committee and advised of the status of plans for the 2008 Annual Meeting.

Manager Frasco reviewed the proposed Burton Tree Service Contract for March 1, 2008 through February 28, 2009. After discussion by the Board, it was moved and seconded that the Contract be approved. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco reviewed with the Board a Phone Service Contract with AT&T for a Flex Reach Plan. He advised that the Cooperative was proceeding with switching to the AT&T Flex Reach Plan.

Manager Frasco reviewed with the Board revisions to the Net Metering & Cooperative Purchase of Excess Member Owned Generation Capacity Policy that had been discussed at last month's Meeting. He reviewed with the Board the changes he had made to the Policy. It was moved and seconded that the Policy be moved to second reading for approval at next month's Board Meeting. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco also reviewed the Interconnection & Parallel Operation of Distributed Generation Policy. It was moved and seconded the Policy be moved to second reading for approval at next month's Board Meeting. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco presented to the Board a proposed Resolution with regard to Renewable Energy Resources and Coal Technology Development. It was moved and seconded that the Resolution, which is marked Exhibit A, attached and incorporated herein by reference, be adopted. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco presented the Capital Credit Estate Refunds Report.

President Martin advised that next month's Meeting was scheduled for March 25, 2008 at 6:00 p.m.

Under other business, President Martin advised that the Prairie Power Annual Meeting was scheduled for March 12, 2008 at the Northfield Inn in Springfield, Illinois, and the NRECA Annual Meeting was scheduled for February 24 - 27, 2008 in Anaheim, California.

There being no further business to come before the Board, it was moved and seconded the Meeting be adjourned. Motion carried.

**Board minutes also available on [menard.com](http://menard.com) about 30 days after the Meeting.**

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# MENARD



**Menard Electric Cooperative**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

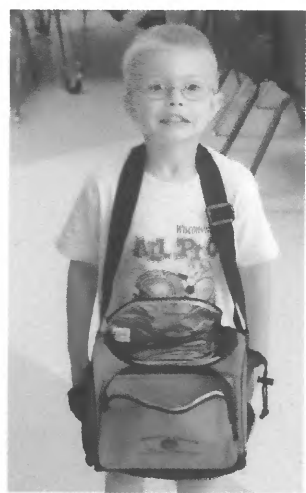
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<http://www.menard.com>

## 71st Annual Meeting

**Saturday, June 7, 2008**

**PORTA High School, Petersburg**



Registration begins at 4:00 p.m. Dinner will be served at 4:30 p.m. by the Mason County Pork Producers. The Menard County Singers will be performing and there will be free health screenings available. Bucket Truck rides will be provided, weather permitting, for those who want to participate. There will be special prize drawings for the children. The Grand Prize giveaway for this year's meeting will be a 32 inch flat screen television.

Please mark your calendar and plan to attend this year's annual meeting. Cooperative's are owned by those they serve. The annual meeting is your opportunity to participate directly in the operations of your cooperative by electing directors and voting on other issues as they arise. We look forward to seeing you at this year's annual meeting.

## Budget Billing begins in June - Sign up now

Your cooperative will again offer budget billing to all Farm & Residential single-phase services. The budget-billing plan is a method where the member is rendered equal bills for a maximum of 11 months. The budget billing cycle will begin with the June 30 bill and end with the April 30 bill. The May 31 bill, the settlement/true-up bill, will show an amount due or a credit balance, depending upon whether the actual kilowatt-hour use was higher or lower than estimated.

Monthly budgeted amounts are determined by estimating the average kilowatt-hour use based on the actual use of the previous 12 months. For new members the budget amount will be determined based upon the best available data.

If you have any questions or would like to sign up for the budget billing plan, please contact the cooperative office and we will be happy to send you the necessary information.

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# REBATES\$

## ■ Water Heater Rebates and Rate

**T**his water heater rebate program is available on a one-time basis to all members who agree to replace an existing fossil fuel fired water heater with an electric water heater that has at least a

40-gallon capacity. If the new electric water heater is installed in a new structure or replaces a fossil fuel fired water heater you will receive a \$100 rebate. For the second new water heater you will receive \$75. If the new electric water heater replaces an existing electric water heater you will receive a \$75 rebate. To qualify for the rebate you must sign up for the cooperative's load management program.

In addition to the rebate above you will qualify for a 3 cent per kilowatt-hour rate reduction on kilowatt-hours used between 600 and 1,000 every month of the year. This could save you up to \$144 each year in addition to the rebate.

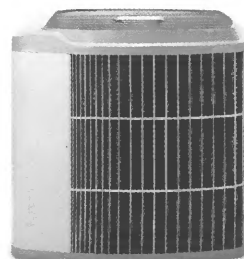


## ■ Geothermal Rebates & Rates

**T**he rebate is \$600 regardless of the size of the unit installed. The unit can be installed in either a new or existing home. If you install a geothermal heating and cooling system you will also be eligible for your cooperative's geothermal rate, if you have an all electric home. Under this rate you will be billed 5 cents per kilowatt-hour for all kilowatt-hours used between 1,000 and 6,000 for the billing months of October through May each year.

## ■ Heat Pump Rebates

**Y**our cooperative is offering a \$200 rebate regardless of the size of the unit installed.



## ■ Certified Comfort Home Rebate

**I**f you build a new home to the standards described in the Certified Comfort Home book you will receive a one-time \$100 rebate.



If you have any questions on these rebates give the cooperative a call at (800) 872-1203 or check out the cooperative's Web site at [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com).

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# Youth Day

**S**tate Representatives Rich Myers and Rich Brauer and State Senator John Sullivan met with 13 students representing Menard Electric Cooperative during the Illinois Electric and Telephone Cooperatives Youth Day on Wednesday, April 9, in Springfield. Students had an opportunity to view state government in action and tour the State Capitol, Illinois Supreme

Court, Old State Capitol and the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum.

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

Menard Electric Cooperative is a member of Touchstone Energy® — an alliance of more than 640 local, consumer-owned electric utili-

ties around the country. Menard Electric is committed to providing superior service based on four core principles: integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community. The co-op serves more than 10,275 members over 2,577 miles of line in parts of Cass, Logan, Macon, Mason, Menard, Morgan, Sangamon and Tazewell counties. For more information visit [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com).



Front row from left are Trish Michels of Menard Electric Cooperative, Rep. Myers, Kelsy Whitney of Decatur, Emilee Trenter of Virginia, Samantha Pelc of Sherman, Ashley McCoy of Petersburg, Kai Yin Ho of Chestnut, Sen. Sullivan and Rep. Brauer.

Center row from left are Kurt Fowler of Sherman, Gary Stover, Jr. of Sherman and Seth Deibert of Mt. Pulaski.

Back row from left are Rachel Brooks of Oakford, Emma Fanter of Kilbourne, Daniel Ray of Havana, Henry Dunn of Niantic and Steve Kuhn of Petersburg.

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# Electrical Storms Can be Deadly

Safe Electricity Offers Tips for Lightning Safety Awareness Week June 22-28

**L**ightning never strikes twice in the same place." "You have more of a chance of getting struck by lightning." These often-repeated sayings give the impression that lightning strikes are extremely rare - predictable and avoidable. This idea, however, is wrong.

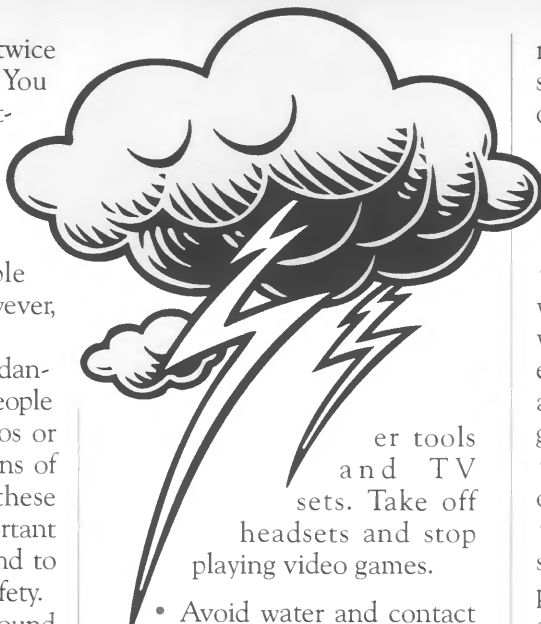
Although seemingly less dangerous, lightning kills more people per year than either tornados or hurricanes and causes billions of dollars in damage. Given these statistics, it's extremely important to take lightning seriously and to stay educated on lightning safety.

"Plan outdoor activities around the weather and be prepared to seek shelter if the weather turns threatening," says Molly Hall, Safe Electricity Executive Director. "If thunderstorms and lightning are approaching, the safest location is indoors away from doors and windows. Avoid water, electric appliances and other objects that could conduct electricity, and use only cordless or cell phones to make emergency calls."

Phone use is the leading cause of indoor lightning injuries in the U.S. A direct strike is not necessary for lightning voltage to enter your home through phone lines, electrical wires, cables and plumbing.

Other recommendations to avoid lightning shock and damage indoors include:

- Turn off and unplug appliances well before a storm nears - never during.
- Stay away from electrical outlets, appliances, computers, pow-



er 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.

Lightning can strike up to 10 miles from the area in which it is raining. This means that if you can hear thunder, you're within striking distance. A good idea is to use the '30-30 Rule'. According to this rule, if you count less than 30 seconds between a lightning flash and the thunder following it, you should seek shelter from the storm. When the storm is over, wait thirty

minutes after the last lightning strike you see before going back outside.

If caught outdoors during a thunderstorm and unable to take shelter in a building, take the following precautions:

- Try to take shelter in a 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 or 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. If you are in a group, spread out so that you are at least 20 feet apart.

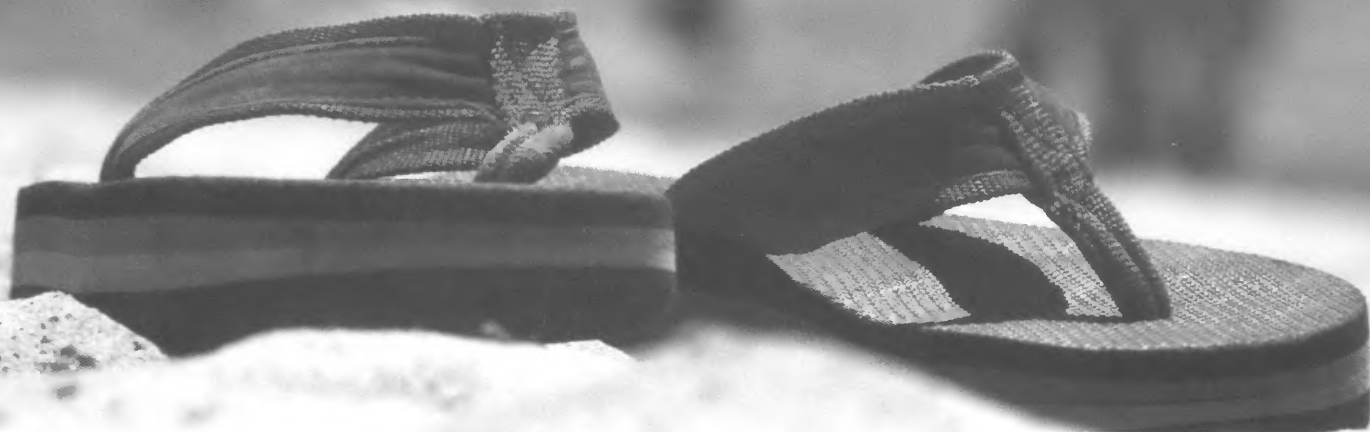
If you are outside and your skin tingles or you hear crackling sounds, this could signal that lightning is about to strike. Drop immediately into a crouching position and make yourself as small as possible with minimal contact with the ground.

If a person is struck by lightning, call 911 and care for the victim immediately. You are not in danger of being electrocuted by the victim.

More information on lightning safety can be found at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Web site at [www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov](http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov). Also visit [www.SafeElectricity.org](http://www.SafeElectricity.org) for more electrical safety information.

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# *How To* Save Money on Energy When You're on Summer Vacation



**W**hen you go on a summer vacation, you may assume that your home will use less kilowatt-hours (kWh) while you're gone and your next bill will be lower. But often, your home continues to run as normal, even though you're not there. Sometimes bills are even higher after vacations because of the preparations before the trip and the mountains of laundry to do after returning home.

Follow these seven steps to prepare your home for your vacation and see a decrease in kWh while you're gone.

1. If you're going on an extended trip, empty your refrigerator, unplug it and leave the door open to prevent mildew. If you're going a short trip keep in mind that it costs more to operate refrigerators and freezers that are only partially filled.
2. If you have a pool, shorten the time your pool filter and automatic cleaner runs since you won't be swimming.
3. If you have a waterbed, unplug the heater, or at least lower the temperature 10 degrees.
4. Install a compact fluorescent bulb into a lamp you set with a timer to turn on at night for a few hours for added home security. Leaving the lamp on all day will waste energy.
5. Your water heater will continue to heat the water in its tank to the set temperature. Turn the temperature to the lowest setting and leave yourself a reminder to turn it back up when you return.
6. Unplug all electronic devices before you go. Computers, DVD players, TVs and CD players all use electricity even when they are turned off. You'll have to reset any digital clocks when you return, but you'll save money while you're gone. Keep in mind, though, that some appliances may need to be kept running, like sump pumps and security lights.
7. Finally, turn your thermostat to 85 degrees. If you have a programmable thermostat be sure to turn it to the manual, hold or vacation setting before you leave so the temperature remains the same. This will enable your air conditioner to keep the humidity out of your house while not having to run as much to keep it cool.



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# Make Your Life Easier With Our Automatic Payment Plan

**W**ith our Automatic Payment Plan, you can pay your bill each month automatically from your checking or savings account.

## 5 ways automatic payment can help you:

1. It saves time – fewer checks to write.
2. It is convenient and timely – even if you're out of town.
3. It is always on time – no lost or misplaced statements help maintain good credit and avoid late charges.
4. It saves money – no postage or envelopes needed.
5. It's easy – it's easy to sign up for or cancel, just call us.

## How it works:

The Automatic Payment Plan is dependable, flexible, convenient, and easy. You authorize regularly scheduled payments to be made from your checking or savings account. Then, just sit back and relax. Your payments will be made automatically on the 10th day of each month, and proof of payment will appear on your statement. The amount withdrawn from your account will be the net amount due shown on your bill. The authority you give us to charge your account will remain in effect until you notify us in writing to terminate the authorization.

## Sign up Now!

To take advantage of this service, please fill out the application form included on page 16g of this newsletter.

# Accountability

You hold us accountable. As a Touchstone Energy Cooperative, we are accountable to you, our members.

After all, you own this cooperative.



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**Make Things Easy!**  
**Sign up now to pay your bill automatically**

**W**ith our Automatic Payment Plan you can have your electric bill automatically deducted from your checking or savings account on the 10th of each month. We will deduct the net amount shown on your bill, and proof of payment will appear on your monthly statement. No checks to write, stamps to buy or deadlines to worry about! Fill out the application below to make your life just a little easier!

Mail with a voided check to Menard Electric Cooperative, PO Box 200, Petersburg, IL 62675.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ SS# \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_ Map Location # \_\_\_\_\_

Bank Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Bank Account # \_\_\_\_\_

Checking acct. ☐

Savings acct. ☐

I, \_\_\_\_\_, authorize Menard Electric Cooperative to draw monthly bank drafts through the automatic plan (ACH) on the account shown above for the payment of my electric bill in full and any other services I authorize. I understand that I may discontinue my participation at any time by notifying Menard Electric Cooperative in writing. Both Menard Electric Cooperative and the bank may terminate this agreement with 10 days written notice. I understand that Menard Electric Cooperative reserves the right to limit participation in this program to customers whose accounts are in good standing. I understand that the amount of my bill each month will be drafted on the 10th or next business day after. I understand that if funds are not available in my account for the draft to clear, there will be a charge posted to my Menard Electric Cooperative account, for NSF, and I will still be required to make full payment before the due date of the bill.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# BOARD MEETING REPORT

**Menard Electric Cooperative  
From the Board Room  
March 25, 2008**

**T**he monthly Board Meeting of the Board of Directors of Menard Electric Cooperative was called to order by President Gary L. Martin at 6:00 P.M. at the headquarters of the Cooperative, 14300 State Highway 97, Petersburg, County of Menard and State of Illinois.

On roll call the following Directors were present: Jerry W. Brooks, Michael L. Carls, D. Jay Frye, Warren D. Goetsch, James G. Graff, Gary L. Martin, Donald E. McMillan, Roy H. Seaney and Steven L. Worner. Also present was Manager Lynn A. Frasco and Attorney Charles K. Smith.

Manager Frasco presented the Manager's Report for the month of February, 2008. He reviewed the Balance Sheet, Budget, as well as the Outage Summary and Safety Report. Under the Operations Report, Manager Frasco reviewed the Summary of ongoing irrigation construction. He discussed construction that had been completed and that still under construction. He advised that the City of Petersburg had moved into the old Cooperative Headquarters. President Martin called the Board into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters. President Martin reconvened the regular Board Meeting. Manager Frasco discussed with the Board possible changes to the Cooperative's Disconnect Policy. It was the consensus of the Board not to make any changes at the present time. He advised that the Cooperative had received \$18,726.00 from Co-Bank as capital credits. He discussed the RUS option of converting the Cooperative Hardship Loan Application to a FFB Loan Guaranty. He advised that an inquiry had been made by Cooperative Staff as to whether the Cooperative could convert a portion of the Hardship Rate Loan Application to FFB, rather than the entire amount. Manager Frasco advised that RUS had advised that such was possible. He discussed the possibility of converting then just a portion thereof. There would need to be a Board Resolution requesting the FFB Loan Guaranty. It was the consensus of the Board to proceed with such. Manager Frasco advised that at next month's meeting he would present a Resolution to modify the loan package and the loan application to switch a portion of the \$11,000,000.00 Hardship Loan to a FFB Loan. Manager Frasco reviewed the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, which listed Cooperative Members who had received assistance under the Program. Manager Frasco discussed the Wind Turbine Grant Application. It was his recommendation that the Cooperative put together an Application for a Renewable Energy Project, including Wind Turbine. He advised that even though no monies were presently available, the Cooperative then would have the Grant Application ready

to go when further Grant funds become available. It was the consensus of the Board to proceed with preparing a Grant Application. It was moved and seconded the Manager's Report be approved as presented. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco presented the Financial Report for the Month of February. Year to date margins were \$201,551 compared to (\$81,876) a year earlier. Equity as of the end of February was 32.67% and the number of members served was 10,347 compared to 10,226 a year ago. Net Utility Plant at the end of February was \$33,242,770 compared to \$31,762,962 last year. The cooperative continues to meet the requirements of the RUS, FFB and NRUCFC.

Director Goetsch reported on AIEC Activities.

Director Carls reported on Prairie Power, Inc. and discussed the Prairie Power, Inc. Annual Meeting.

Director Brooks reported on the status of plans for the Annual Meeting.

Manager Frasco reviewed with the Board Menard's Low Income Program. He presented a draft of the Program as developed by Corn Belt. He discussed with the Board possible changes to that Policy. It was the consensus of the Board to have Manager Frasco present to the Board at next month's Meeting a proposed Policy for Low Income Assistance. Manager Frasco discussed who planned to attend the NRECA Legislative Conference scheduled for May 5-7, 2008.

The Board reviewed the Net Metering & Cooperative Purchase of Excess Member Owned Generation Capacity Policy, which was presented to the Board for second reading. It was moved and seconded the Policy be adopted. Motion carried.

The Board reviewed the Interconnection & Parallel Operation of Distributed Generation Policy, which was presented to the Board for second reading. It was moved and seconded the Policy be adopted. Motion carried.

Those Directors who attended the NRECA Annual Meeting reviewed with the Board the sessions they had attended and information obtained at the Annual Meeting.

Manager Frasco presented the Capital Credit Estate Refunds Report.

President Martin reminded the Board that the next meeting was scheduled for April 22, 2008 at 6:00 p.m.

Under other business, President Martin reminded the Board that the ICWCG Meeting was scheduled for April 1, 2008.

There being no further business to come before the Board, it was moved and seconded

Meeting is adjourned. Motion carried.

**Board minutes also available on [menard.com](http://menard.com) about 30 days after the Meeting.**

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# NEWS

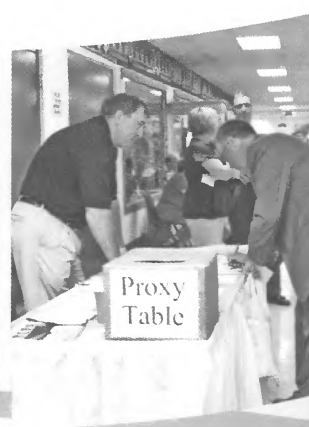
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# Menard Electric Cooperative's 71st Annual Meeting



Leaders of Menard Electric Cooperative updated co-op members on rising energy costs during the local co-op's 71st annual meeting on Saturday, June 7 at PORTA High School in Petersburg. Members were warned a rate adjustment would be needed in 2009 because of an increase in wholesale power.

Board President Gary L. Martin of Alexander told the members that higher prices for fuel, utility materials and even health care costs have already forced the co-op's board to make some very tough choices. The co-op's line extension policy changed last year and its facility charge increased too. "We felt, for the financial

good of the organization, we had to keep up with these costs," said Martin. "Unfortunately, we are also going to have to make rate adjustments next year."

Martin said that market speculation, increased fuel costs, environmental mandates and increased competition for utility equipment are just a few of the factors increasing power costs.

General Manager Lynn Frasco told the members that the co-op's last rate increase was 14 years ago and that the co-op actually had a small 5 percent rate decrease in 1998. With the end of a favorable wholesale power contract, members will see an increase of between 5 and 19 percent,

depending on the rate class and the amount of electricity used each month.

Frasco said, "Over the last six years, our power supplier, Prairie Power G&T Cooperative, has had very favorable power supply contracts that helped Menard Electric maintain the rate stability our members have enjoyed in the last few years. At the end of this year, those favorable contracts will be coming to an end and the power supplied next year will be delivered under new contracts that are priced at the current higher market rates. During the last few weeks, we have received projections for our power supply cost from 2009 through 2012 from

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Prairie Power that will result in about 1.5 cents per kilowatt-hour of additional cost."

To avoid some of the market's volatility, the co-op is hedging its future power supply with a 15-megawatt ownership interest in Prairie State Power Plant. Frasco said, "This plant will be one of the cleanest burning, and environmentally efficient coal fired plants in the country. When the construction phase is completed in 2012, this plant will provide Menard Electric with nearly 60 percent of our member's energy for the next 40 years at a very stable competitive rate."

Frasco said part of the volatility and increased power cost are result of explosive growth in countries like China. He said China alone is building a new coal fired plant every week. "China currently gobbles up about one-half of the world's concrete, one-third of the all the steel produced, one-quarter of the world's copper supply and one-fifth of all the global oil."

A larger percentage of Illinois coal is being shipped to other countries, said Frasco, and the cost of coal has increased nearly 50

percent in the last three years. On top of that, all utilities have seen overall material costs increase 35 percent. Some materials have shot up even more. Aluminum conductor is up 50 percent, transformers increased 65 percent and copper skyrocketed 200 percent in price.

On top of these increases, Frasco says climate change legislation will also add pressure to already increasing rates. "We have seen reports that predict electric rates will increase between 25 and 200 percent in the next 15 to 20 years to meet possible climate change mandates. Obviously, no one really knows what the future impact will be. But changes in the electric industry are coming."

Frasco encouraged the members to start a dialogue with their elected representatives either on their own, or through a write-in campaign organized by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association that is called "Our Energy, Our Future." Employees handed out cards that members could fill out and Frasco said they could also send an e-mail by simply going to [www.ourenergy.coop](http://www.ourenergy.coop).

Frasco said, "The simple fact is

no one single solution can address all the problems we will be dealing with in trying to fix the climate change issue." He said elected officials need to balance climate change goals and the financial impact legislation will have on consumers.

There was some good news to report. Frasco said the co-op is nearing completion of an automated meter reading system installation project with only 20 percent of the high-tech meters left to install. The innovative meter technology will enable remote meter readings. Because it provides a communications network from the co-op's office to every meter, it will help the co-op improve its efficiency, reduce costs, improve service and possibly provide new services in the future.

Treasurer Roy H. Seaney of Tallula said the co-op's kWh sales increased 4 percent because of a warm summer and an increasing number of members switching from propane to electric heat. Margins, however, were down slightly. Seaney said last year the co-op retired \$334,078 in capital credits to members who received



service in 1982. Through 2007 the co-op has returned a total of \$5,111,733 in capital credits to the members. He said \$240,000 would be returned in June to members who received service in 1983.

During the meeting members re-elected Michael Carls of Virginia and Warren D. Goetsch of Williamsville. James G. Graff of Middleton retired from the board and three members ran for his open seat. Members elected Mike Patrick of New Holland.

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## FOR SALE

*2002 Ford F550  
4x4 Cab/Chassis  
165,149 Miles*

*All sealed bids should  
be received before 4:30 p.m.  
on 7/25/2008*



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# Take a Dip, Don't be One.

## Tips for Staying Safe Around Pools, in Boats and While Fishing

Summer brings to mind a cool dip in the pool, a refreshing day at the lake or fishing on the bank of a trickling stream. Don't let a safety hazard dampen your summer fun.

Menard Electric Cooperative and Safe Electricity remind everyone that water and electricity are a dangerous combination. Assessing electrical hazards near areas of water is a wise investment of time and personal energy.

"Water and electricity don't mix, and the combination can be life threatening," says Menard Electric Manager, Lynn Frasco. "Safe Electricity offers great tips on staying safe around swimming pools and lakes. I encourage all of our members to keep these things in mind this summer."

- Use battery operated, rather than electrical, appliances near swimming pools. Do not put any electrical appliances within 5 feet of a swimming pool.
- Any electrical outlets within 20 feet of a pool should be equipped with a Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI).
- Pools and decks should be built at least 5 feet away from all underground electrical lines, and at least 25 feet away from overhead electrical lines.
- Never swim during a thunderstorm.
- If a swimmer is electrocuted or shocked, don't dive in yourself or you could be electrocuted as well. Turn off the power, and then use a fiberglass shepherd's hook to pull the victim out of the water.
- When you leave the pool, don't change the radio station or touch any electrical appliances until you



are dry - never touch any electrical appliances when you are wet or standing in water. If children wish to play with sprinklers or hoses, emphasize that they should be set up well away from any electrical outlets or appliances.

Electricity and water are dangerous around larger bodies of water as well. If you plan to go boating or fishing this summer, be aware of your surroundings and potential electrical hazards.

- Keep 10 feet between your boat and power lines.

If your boat does come in contact with a power line, never jump out of the boat into the water - the

water could be energized. Instead, stay in the boat and avoid touching anything metal until help arrives or until your boat is no longer in contact with the line.

- Be sure dockside outlets have ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) protection and check cords that are plugged into them to make sure there is no broken casing or exposed wires.

- Check for the location of power lines before fishing. Make sure you are casting the line away from power lines to avoid potential contact.

For more information on electrical safety, visit [www.SafeElectricity.org](http://www.SafeElectricity.org).

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**Make Things Easy!**  
**Sign up now to pay your bill automatically**

**W**ith our Automatic Payment Plan you can have your electric bill automatically deducted from your checking or savings account on the 10th of each month. We will deduct the net amount shown on your bill, and proof of payment will appear on your monthly statement. No checks to write, stamps to buy or deadlines to worry about! Fill out the application below to make your life just a little easier!

Mail with a voided check to Menard Electric Cooperative, PO Box 200, Petersburg, IL 62675.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ SS# \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_ Map Location # \_\_\_\_\_

Bank Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Bank Account # \_\_\_\_\_

Checking acct. ☐

Savings acct. ☐

I, \_\_\_\_\_, authorize Menard Electric Cooperative to draw monthly bank drafts through the automatic plan (ACH) on the account shown above for the payment of my electric bill in full and any other services I authorize. I understand that I may discontinue my participation at any time by notifying Menard Electric Cooperative in writing. Both Menard Electric Cooperative and the bank may terminate this agreement with 10 days written notice. I understand that Menard Electric Cooperative reserves the right to limit participation in this program to customers whose accounts are in good standing. I understand that the amount of my bill each month will be drafted on the 10th or next business day after. I understand that if funds are not available in my account for the draft to clear, there will be a charge posted to my Menard Electric Cooperative account, for NSF, and I will still be required to make full payment before the due date of the bill.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Plant Seeds of Safety around Irrigation Equipment

## Safe Electricity offers tips to work safely with irrigation pipe



**I**rrigation systems allow farmers to keep their livelihoods and continue to produce a crop even in times of drought or in dry areas of the country. However, the increasing use of farm irrigation equipment means irrigation electrical hazards are a growing problem in many regions of the country.

While extremely useful, irrigation equipment can also pose some risks. Because irrigation equipment is made up of two very powerful electrical conductors—water and metal—it is important to exercise caution around power lines and electrical equipment. Safe Electricity urges workers to know and follow proper safety precautions to avoid electrical injuries when operating and handling watering systems and remind children not to play with irrigation pipes, or lift and stand them on end to retrieve materials in them.

“Knowing the location of nearby electrical lines when working with irrigation equipment is essential,”

says Molly Hall, executive director of Safe Electricity. “Avoid moving aluminum irrigation pipes on windy days. Because they are lightweight, a sudden gust could lift pipes into overhead power lines proving fatal to the person holding the pipe.”

Take time to survey your surroundings before moving equipment. Look up and around you; note any power lines that could be close enough to come into contact with equipment—and stay away. To ensure safe operation of irrigation equipment, Safe Electricity offers the following tips:

- Make sure that irrigation system wiring is properly grounded. Before the start of each irrigation season, have a qualified electrician check the pump and wiring.
- Store unused irrigation pipes far away from power lines or electrical equipment.
- Position irrigation pipes at least 15 feet away from power lines.
- Position the water jet streams so that there is no chance of them spraying onto power lines—if

this happens, the entire system could become energized, creating a danger for anyone nearby.

- Stay away from the machine during any lightning activity. Install lightning arresters to protect your equipment.
- If fuses continually blow or circuit breakers repeatedly trip, have a professional check the wiring. This could indicate a potential electrical hazard.
- Always shut off and lock the master electrical control switch before servicing the machine.

“If an irrigation pipe comes in contact with a power line, never try to remove it yourself,” cautions Hall. “Stay away from the pipe, and call your local electric utility for help.”

For more information about electrical safety, visit [www.SafeElectricity.org](http://www.SafeElectricity.org). Safe Electricity is a safety public awareness program created and supported by a coalition of several dozen organizations, including electric utilities, educators and others committed to promoting electrical safety.



## ***How to*** **Keep your refrigerator from using more power than necessary**

**Y**our refrigerator runs often, which means it's the biggest energy user in your kitchen. If you have a really old unit, it will use even more energy. Check out these steps to keep your refrigerator running at its best.

1. **Check the temperature.** Your freezer should be between 0-5°. Your fridge should be 35-38°. Use an appliance or outdoor thermometer to check the temp.
2. **Keep it full.** A fridge or freezer with empty spaces loses the temperature quicker, making the compressor run more often.
3. **Clean it once a year.** Not the inside, the outside. The condenser coils on the back of or underneath your fridge can get pretty dirty. Unplug the unit and then vacuum them.
4. **Don't smother it.** Find another place for storage, leave the top and sides free for ventilation.
5. **Close the door.** Keep the door closed and make sure it's tightly sealed. Just give it a little extra nudge each time to be sure.
6. **Keep foods sealed.** Put cooled foods in labeled plastic containers with lids. Evaporating moisture or hot foods make the compressor run more.

# BOARD MEETING REPORT

**Menard Electric Cooperative  
From the Board Room  
April 22, 2008**

The monthly Board Meeting of the Board of Directors of Menard Electric Cooperative was called to order by President Gary L. Martin at 6:00 P.M. at the headquarters of the Cooperative, 14300 State Highway 97, Petersburg, County of Menard and State of Illinois.

On roll call the following Directors were present: Jerry W. Brooks, Michael L. Carls, D. Jay Frye, Warren D. Goetsch, James G. Graff, Gary L. Martin, Donald E. McMillan and Roy H. Seaney. Director Steven L. Worner was absent. Also present was Manager Lynn A. Frasco, Kevin Kelso from Dreyer & Kelso and Attorney Charles K. Smith.

Manager Frasco advised that it appeared that there was a typographical error in the Board Minutes for August, 2007. He advised that the minutes as prepared by Attorney Smith appeared to have the correct dates, but somehow the draft had the wrong month referenced in the minutes. The change related to a motion with regard to adjustment to Menard's service charge/facility charge and the effective date should have read January, 2008 instead of July, 2008. It was moved and seconded that the minutes be corrected to reflect that. It was moved and seconded that Menard's service charges/facility charges be approved, effective for the January, 2008 billing. Motion carried.

President Martin reviewed with the Board the Consensus Agenda. It was moved and seconded that the Consensus Agenda be approved. Motion carried.

President Martin introduced the Cooperative Auditor, Kevin Kelso, who presented and reviewed with the Board the 2007 Financial Audit of the Cooperative. He answered questions from Board Members with regard to the Audit.

Manager Frasco presented the Manager's Report for the month of March, 2008. He reviewed the Balance Sheet, Budget, as well as the Outage Summary and Safety Report. Under the Operations Report, Manager Frasco and Auditor Kelso reviewed with the Board the IRS Form 990 for 2007. Manager Frasco advised that there were changes to the Form 990 and would be additional changes in the coming years to the Form 990. Those changes related to information with regard to compensation to Board Members, Officers and key employees. He advised that in the future, there would be a much more comprehensive disclosure of each business relationship. He discussed matters with regard to various Cooperative employees. He advised that James Haddick would be retiring soon and that Stuart Churchill's last day was Thursday. A reception was planned for him on that date. He discussed the status of irrigation construction and advised that for the year, there were a total of 52 systems, those being 20 diesel conversions and 32 new systems. He advised that the Cooperative had applied for and had been granted an additional eighteen (18) month extension to complete work under FEMA, for ice storm damage. He advised that Federated Insurance was having a Strategy Lab regarding Workman's Compensation. Manager Frasco and Director Frye discussed the ICWCG Annual Meeting that they both attended. It was

moved and seconded the Manager's Report be approved as presented. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco advised that there was a need to update signatures on Bank Accounts of the Cooperative in light of the retirement of Stu Churchill and the retirement of Director Graff. It was moved and seconded that Director Graff and Stu Churchill be removed as signatories on Cooperative Bank Accounts and in their place, that Trish Michels be added along with Director Brooks. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco presented the Financial Report for the Month of March. Year to date margins were \$337,648 compared to \$63,623 a year earlier. Equity as of the end of March was 32.99% and the number of members served was 10,343 compared to 10,231 a year ago. Net Utility Plant at the end of March was \$33,387,206 compared to \$31,914,610 last year. The cooperative continues to meet the requirements of the RUS, FFB and NRUCFC.

Director Goetsch reported on AIEC Activities.

Director Carls reported on Prairie Power, Inc. Manager Frasco reviewed and discussed with the Board the 2009 Wholesale Power Cost Estimate for Prairie Power, Inc. and discussed the effects this would have on Cooperative rates. Manager Frasco discussed proposed changes to the Cooperative rates and advised that this would be discussed further by the Board at subsequent Board Meetings.

Director Brooks reported on plans for the Annual Meeting for June 7, 2008. He advised that three (3) nominating Petitions for Board candidates had been received by the Cooperative with regard to the seat being vacated by Director Graff and that the last date to file nominating petitions was Wednesday, April 23, 2008.

Manager Frasco discussed with the Board a proposed Resolution with regard to Menard's Hardship Loan. It was moved and seconded that the Resolution, marked Exhibit A, attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference, be approved. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco discussed with the Board a change to the Resolution previously adopted by the Board with regard to participation in the Illinois Renewable Energy Assistance Program. He advised that, in conversations with the State, he had been informed that it was necessary to have an effective date in the Resolution. He suggested having an effective date of the July, 2008 billing. It was moved and seconded that the Resolution previously adopted be amended to provide for an effective date of the July, 2008 billing. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco presented the Capital Credit Estate Refunds Report.

Manager Frasco discussed those who would be attending the NRECA Legislative Conference from May 5-7, 2008.

President Martin reminded the Board that the next Board Meeting was scheduled for May 27, 2008 at 6:00 p.m.

There being no further business to come before the Board, it was moved and seconded the Meeting be adjourned. Motion carried.

**Board minutes also available on [menard.com](http://menard.com) about 30 days after the Meeting.**

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# Menard Electric Cooperative

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Rachel Brooks of Oakford and Seth Deibert of Mt. Pulaski represented Menard Electric Cooperative in Washington, D.C., during the annual "Youth to Washington" tour, June 13-20. 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.



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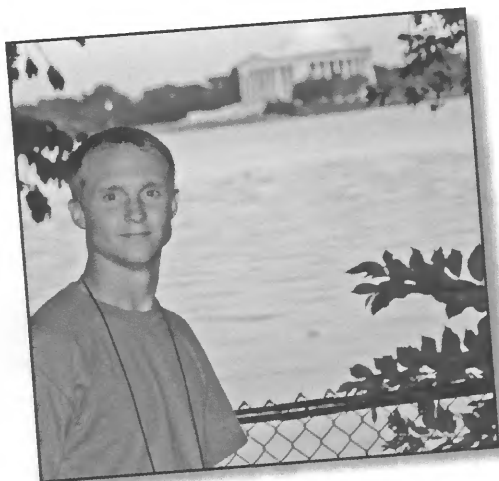
"Menard was proud to have Seth and Rachel represent the cooperative on youth tour. They are both outstanding students," said Trish Michels, director of member services for the co-op.

The students met with several of their elected officials in the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate and were among 66 rural Illinois youth leaders selected for the trip. In addition to the Capitol, they also visited the White House, Arlington National Cemetery, the National Cathedral, the Smithsonian Museums, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, the World War II Memorial, the new Newseum and a number of other historical sites.

Brooks and Deibert were chosen out of 13 students representing Menard Electric Cooperative during Youth Day in Springfield on April 9, 2008.



*Rachel Brooks of Oakford, left, and Seth Deibert of Mt. Pulaski, right, represented Menard Electric Cooperative during the annual "Youth to Washington" tour. Former Youth Leadership Council Representative, Joe Van Leer, center, served as summer staff in Washington during the tour.*



*Seth Deibert, center, and Rachel Brooks, right, are joined by Alison Myers, Legislative Assistant to Congressman Ray LaHood, on their recent trip to Washington where they represented Menard Electric Cooperative on the "Youth to Washington" tour.*

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# ATTENDANCE PRIZES - 71st ANNUAL MEETING MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

June 7, 2008

## SUPPLIER GIFTS

BROWN WOOD PRESERVING - 8 Gallon Shop Vac - Albert Glasscock - Springfield - (Early Bird)  
 BROWNSTOWN ELECTRIC - Spice Set - Ruth L. Lepper - Jacksonville  
 BURTON TREE - Madison Dogwood Tree - Henry & Rosemary Mester - Petersburg  
 BURTON TREE - Magnolia Shrub - Frances Pickett - Elkhart  
 BURTON TREE - Flowering Crab Tree - James Elmore - Petersburg  
 CENTRAL IL RECLOSERS - LED Rechargeable Flashlight - Jurgens Farms - Ashland  
 CENTRAL IL RECLOSERS - Hamilton Beach Slow Cooker - Dennis Kunken - Greenview  
 CENTRAL IL RECLOSERS - Presto Electric Griddle - Robert Eck - New Berlin  
 FLETCHER REINHARDT - Small Floor Fan - Virgil Gathmann - Manito  
 HD SUPPLY - 47 Piece Socket Set - Phyllis Webb - Petersburg  
 U. S. ELECTRIC - Set of 8 Fluorescent Bulbs - Worner Farms - Delavan  
 U. S. ELECTRIC - Set of 8 Fluorescent Bulbs - Melvin Nall - Bath  
 UNITED UTILITY - Sears \$25 Gift Card - Homer Weidhuner - Greenview

## MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE PRIZES

Michael J. Albertini	Petersburg	Black & Decker Food Processor
Michael S. Baumgartner	Pleasant Plains	Out Back \$25 Gift Certificate
Dean Broughton	Petersburg	Digital Wireless Weather System
Glenn Dambacher	Middletown	50 foot Garden Hose
Karen S. Degener	Cantrall	\$50 Credit on Electric Account
Earl A. Dugger	Athens	50 foot Garden Hose
Dewey Dunaway	Springfield	Heavy Duty Tool Box
Stephen G. Fricke	Petersburg	Lone Star \$25 Gift Certificate
Eldon Garlich	San Jose	Hamilton Beach Portable Slow Cooker
Jon P. Gentry	Tallula	Electric Efficiency Kit
Calvin Hall	Athens	Sunbeam Iron
Helena M. Heyen	Petersburg	Rolling Cooler
Indian Creek P'tive Church	Petersburg	2-slice Toaster
Lloyd Ingersoll	Mason City	\$50 Credit on Electric Account
Hazel L. Jordan	Havana	Smokey Bones \$25 Gift Certificate
W. Dale Keltner	Jacksonville	Mr. Coffee 12 cup Coffeemaker
Curt Kruse	Petersburg	\$50 Credit on Electric Account
G & C Foat Lepper	Ashland	2 Gallon Sprayer
Marjorie M. Schafer	Pleasant Plains	Armor-All Car Care Pack
Schirding Farms	Petersburg	Twin Window Fan
St Paul Lutheran Church	Green Valley	VIZIO 32-inch LCD HD TV - GRAND PRIZE
Quinn & Kendra Taplin	Athens	\$50 Credit on Electric Account
Karl F. Weidhuner	Greenview	\$50 Credit on Electric Account

## PROXY PRIZES

E. B. Millner, Jr.	Virginia	Black & Decker Electric Knife
William F. Rathbone	Sherman	Black & Decker Electric Knife
David R. Rawlings	New Holland	Black & Decker Electric Knife
Raymond Renken	Mason City	Black & Decker Electric Knife
Lyle Read	New Holland	Black & Decker Electric Knife

# Make Your Life Easier With Our Automatic Payment Plan

**W**ith our Automatic Payment Plan, you can pay your bill each month automatically from your checking or savings account.

## 5 ways automatic payment can help you:

1. It saves time – fewer checks to write.
2. It is convenient and timely – even if you're out of town.
3. It is always on time – no lost or misplaced statements help maintain good credit and avoid late charges.
4. It saves money – no postage or envelopes needed.
5. It's easy – it's easy to sign up for or cancel, just call us.

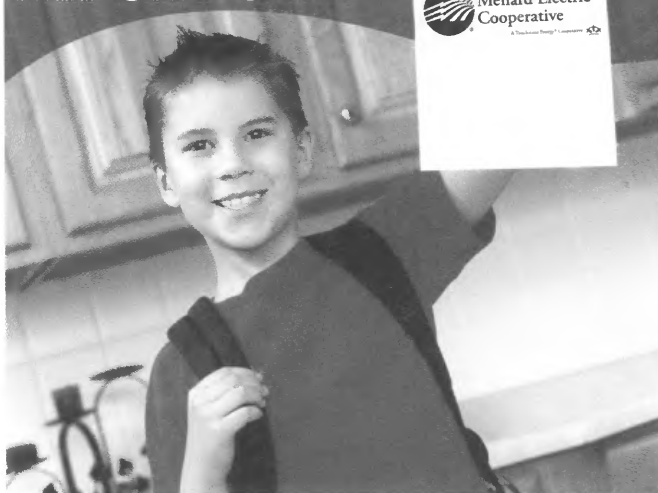
## How it works:

The Automatic Payment Plan is dependable, flexible, convenient, and easy. You authorize regularly scheduled payments to be made from your checking or savings account. Then, just sit back and relax. Your payments will be made automatically on the 10th day of each month, and proof of payment will appear on your statement. The amount withdrawn from your account will be the net amount due shown on your bill. The authority you give us to charge your account will remain in effect until you notify us in writing to terminate the authorization.

## Sign up Now!

To take advantage of this service, please fill out the application form included on page 16g of this newsletter.

## Everyone likes getting a **GOOD REPORT CARD**



\*Touchstone Energy ACSI member ratings using the ACSI customer satisfaction survey questions are compared to the ACSI ratings of residential customers of the U.S. largest investor-owned energy utilities.

We'd like to thank our members for helping us score an "80" in the recent American Customer Satisfaction\* Index. Your feedback puts Menard Electric a full 8 points higher than the utility industry average.

Even though ACSI recognizes "customer" satisfaction, Menard Electric members are in fact "owners." That's an important distinction. And it's why we strive to provide a level of service that's second to none.

Naturally, we're honored. But it won't go to our head. We'll remain the dependable source of electricity our members never have to think twice about. Unless, of course, they're being surveyed by the ACSI.



**Touchstone Energy®**  
*Looking out for you.*

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## Make Things Easy!

### Sign up now to pay your bill automatically

**W**ith our Automatic Payment Plan you can have your electric bill automatically deducted from your checking or savings account on the 10th of each month. We will deduct the net amount shown on your bill, and proof of payment will appear on your monthly statement. No checks to write, stamps to buy or deadlines to worry about! Fill out the application below to make your life just a little easier!

Mail with a voided check to Menard Electric Cooperative, PO Box 200, Petersburg, IL 62675.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ SS# \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_ Map Location # \_\_\_\_\_

Bank Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Bank Account # \_\_\_\_\_

Checking acct. ☐ Savings acct. ☐

I, \_\_\_\_\_, authorize Menard Electric Cooperative to draw monthly bank drafts through the automatic plan (ACH) on the account shown above for the payment of my electric bill in full and any other services I authorize. I understand that I may discontinue my participation at any time by notifying Menard Electric Cooperative in writing. Both Menard Electric Cooperative and the bank may terminate this agreement with 10 days written notice. I understand that Menard Electric Cooperative reserves the right to limit participation in this program to customers whose accounts are in good standing. I understand that the amount of my bill each month will be drafted on the 10th or next business day after. I understand that if funds are not available in my account for the draft to clear, there will be a charge posted to my Menard Electric Cooperative account, for NSF, and I will still be required to make full payment before the due date of the bill.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# IT'S TIME TO COME TOGETHER AND CHANGE OUR FUTURE.



## We have an energy challenge, America.

When it comes to finding solutions, we must meet climate change goals while keeping costs down and electricity available. America needs a plan. Immediately. Because we all know that our energy needs keep on growing—every day.

Now is the time to have a candid conversation with your elected officials. Together, we can find answers and take action.

Start the conversation today at [www.ourenergy.coop](http://www.ourenergy.coop).



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# How To

## Replace a Light Switch

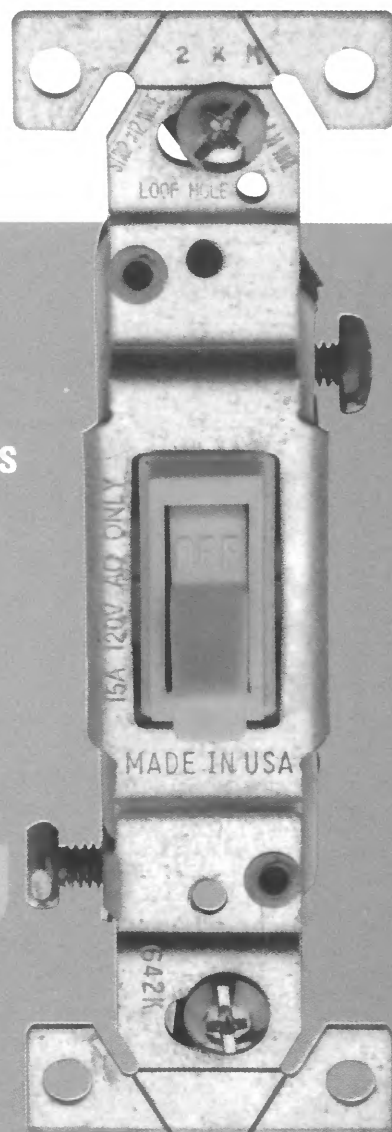
**Y**ou can save energy by installing dimmer or motion sensor light switches. Here's how to change your light switch, whether for energy savings, or even just to change your décor color or style.

1. Turn off the circuit breaker to cut power to the switch you are going to change. Put a note on the circuit breaker to prevent someone from resetting it before you're ready. Double check that power has been cut to the switch. If the light switch shares an electrical box with an outlet, make sure the power to the outlet is disconnected too before beginning.
2. Remove the switch cover plate.
3. Remove the screws holding the switch in place and pull it out of the wall.
4. Make note of where the wires are attached to the switch by drawing a template or marking the wires with tape.
5. Remove the wires by unscrewing the screws holding them in place.
6. Unless your home is very old, all of your switches will have a green screw on one end that is the grounding screw. You will need to reconnect the wire hooked to this screw to the new switch's grounding screw.
7. Attach the other wires to the new switch in the same positions as the old one. If you're installing a dimmer switch, it will have wires already coming out the back of the switch. Twist these wires to the old

8. Push the wires and the switch back into the wall and attach with screws.
9. Put the switch plate back on.
10. Turn back on the power to that circuit. Remember to always

look away from the breaker box and use one hand to flip the circuit just in case the circuit blows. Now, consider changing that light bulb you just lit up to a compact fluorescent (CFL) for more energy savings. Make sure to look for CFLs that specify use with dimmers or three-way fixtures.

“Unless your home is very old, all of your switches will have a green screw on one end that is the grounding screw.”





# MENARD



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## Quality takes Time, Especially with Wine!

by Justin Stuva

Most Illinois farmers think of growing corn and soybeans as a way of life, but for Mark and Connie Lounsberry, this is no longer the case. He is a seventh generation farmer, who is taking a chance on a different type of crop - grapes. The Lounsberys are part of a growing number of Illinois farmers, who are focusing on both the production of quality grapes and the creation of specialty wines.

Hill Prairie Winery, which was established in 2002, is located between Petersburg and Oakford, Illinois. The name of the winery honors the central Illinois prairies that have disappeared over the years. As farming became more mechanized, farmers were able to till more land. Consequently, the prairies started to decline. The Lounsberys wanted to capture the essence of the prairie by bringing back the grassland spirit to their winery.

Tucked away on a country road is a beautiful barn that was built in the early 1900s. Mark's great-grandfather originally built the barn to house draft horses. Eventually, the idea of turning the



**Hill Prairie Winery has won numerous awards and the hearts of wine enthusiasts throughout Illinois.**

hillside farm into a winery began to take shape. The barn, which was renovated into a modern day winery, is outfitted with a gift shop, wine-tasting bar and the latest wine making technology.

A lot of time and effort goes into the wine making process. Although most wines are prepared in the fall, due to the harvesting of grapes, operating a vineyard is a year round job. Between the bottling process of the previous year's wine and the normal day-to-day activities, Mark and his family are never short on things to do. The winery currently grows

approximately 70 percent of the grapes used in producing their wine, which consists of three varieties of table grapes and four varieties of wine grapes.

The rewards of their hard work are easily recognized when entering the gift shop. There is an entire wall that houses bottles of wine, which the winery has produced. There is also a group of wines that recently won medals at the 2008 Illinois State Fair Wine Competition.

Over 15 different types of wine are offered throughout the

(Continued on page 16b) ►

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◀ (Continued from page 16a)

year. Typically the winery has at least 10 of these varieties on hand, due to some of the wines being seasonal. This assortment of wines is made up of different varieties ranging from red to white and sweet to dry wine. It's easy to find a wine, no matter what your palette's desire!

Besides delicious wines, Hill Prairie Winery offers a large meeting area in the barn that can be rented out. The winery has been home to everything from weddings, receptions, business meetings and parties. The Lounsberrys go above and beyond to make sure everyone gets the best quality service possible.

While touring the grounds, people will be in awe of the beauty that surrounds them. The atmosphere is enhanced by two ponds, as well as nine acres of grapes that encircle the property. The public can come out and enjoy the winery during their normal business hours. Hill Prairie Winery also hosts several festivals and dinners throughout the year. Several local talents perform at the winery on special days.

One of the most popular activities at the winery is the "murder mystery dinners." An acting crew from St. Louis comes to the winery and typically puts on a three-act show, with different courses of a meal being served in between the acts. The facility can accommodate 120-130 people and those who leave are always very complimentary.

So, the next time you are looking for something local and something very unique, visit the Hill Prairie Winery. It is a short drive from anywhere in the cooperative's service area. In fact, when you are sipping on a glass of wine, close your eyes and experience the wine country of Napa Valley, right here in Illinois!



**Since 1887, five generations of Lounsberrys have farmed the Hill Prairie site.**

- For more information: visit [www.hillprairiewinery.com](http://www.hillprairiewinery.com) or call 217-635-9900.
- Hill Prairie Winery is located on Route 97 in Oakford, Illinois.
- Directions from Springfield: Take 125 northeast, turn right on Route 97. Hill Prairie Winery is just before Oakford.
- Summer hours (June 1 - December 31) 11a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday thru Saturday. Sunday, noon to 5 p.m.

*Wineries throughout the state continue to flourish and grow. See page 10 of Illinois Country Living for a story on their economic impact.*

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## Surge Suppression Program

**M**enard Electric Cooperative has a surge suppression program which includes a premium monthly service in addition to the existing basic whole house protection service. The cooperative will continue to provide whole house protection for "white" appliances at a monthly cost of \$4.95 as it has in the past. In addition to this basic service you can protect the sensitive electronic devices in your home in addition to the electromechanical appliances for a minimal investment of \$49.95 and a monthly cost of \$5.95.

Today, more than any time in the past, our homes are filled with sophisticated electronic equipment and expensive appliances that are more sensitive than ever before. As a result, voltage irregularities due to lightning can easily damage appliances, televisions, stereos, telephones and other electronic devices resulting in costly repairs. It's for this reason your cooperative has expanded its program even further in reducing this type of expense and allowing members a choice in the coverage they purchase.

For members who want to protect the major electromechanical appliances in their home such as the refrigerator, washer, dryer, range, dishwasher, etc. the cooperative will continue to offer the Basic Surge Protection Plan. For

\$4.95 per month on your bill we will install a whole house surge protector on your electric meter which offers excellent protection for these "white" appliances. This is less than 17 cents per day and not only covers the cost of the surge protector and installation, but also all future maintenance.

For members who want to go one step further and protect the sensitive electronic equipment in their home such as a computer, television, stereo, telephone, answering machine, clock radio, etc. the cooperative offers the Premium Surge Protection Plan. For an initial investment of \$49.95 and a monthly payment of \$5.95 on your bill you will receive a point of use surge protection package in addition to the installation of the whole house surge protector. This package includes four individual point of use surge protectors that can be used to protect a television, entertainment center or computer center, along with a cordless phone or answering machine and two or three other pieces of electronic equipment. This kit also includes a handy circuit receptacle tester to let you know if your home grounding is adequate or if changes need to be made to assure proper protection.

In addition to the devices provided with the two monthly programs, the cooperative will

be selling additional point of use protection devices for your computer, television, satellite dish and other electronic equipment. These devices can be purchased from the cooperative at very reasonable prices. All surge protection devices come with a lifetime warranty on the device as well as repair or replacement warranties for the equipment they are protecting. Remember, lightning is very unpredictable and can enter your home not only on the electrical service, but also through a phone line, cable television line, satellite dish or antenna. With these individual devices installed on your telephone, computer, television, etc. in addition to having protection at the electric meter, you will be able to rest easy the next time a storm is in the area.

For more information about this and other "Value Added Services" call the cooperative office. 1-800-872-1203 or (217) 632-7746 or visit [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com)



**Our offices  
will be  
closed on  
Labor Day**

### FOR SALE

*2003 Chevrolet  
4x4 Cab/Chassis  
145,000 Miles*

*All sealed bids should  
be received before 4:30  
p.m. on 9/26/2008*



**MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com)**

## How To Install and maintain a smoke detector

**P**roperly installed and maintained smoke detectors can reduce your likelihood of dying in a home fire by 51 percent. Follow these tips to keep your family safe.

**What Kind?** New homes are required to have an alarm in each sleeping room and all alarms must be interconnected. These hard-wired alarms operate on your electrical current, with battery backup, so when one alarm registers a fire, they all sound. Battery-operated alarms can be easily installed yourself. Choose what works best for your family.

**How Many?** At least one on every level, including the basement. You also need one outside sleeping areas, or, if bedroom doors are kept closed at night, one in each bedroom. You may also consider placing one in your garage or in large open spaces or long hallways.

**Where?** Place away from drafts (windows, doors, ductwork). If mounting on the ceiling, keep 4 inches from the nearest wall. If mounting on the wall, keep 4 to 12 inches from the ceiling. Remember smoke

risers, so mount them as high as possible. If the ceiling is pitched, mount at its highest point.

**How Do I Maintain Them?** Check alarms once a month. Replace batteries at least once a year. Clean alarms once a year. Never paint over, or place anything on the alarms.

**Note:** When buying new alarms, consider purchasing a combination smoke/carbon monoxide alarm if you do not currently have a carbon monoxide alarm. Since January 2007, all homes that use any fossil fuel appliances or heating unit are required to have a working carbon monoxide alarm within 15 feet of all sleeping areas. All-electric homes without fireplaces are the exceptions and do not need the alarms. For more information on smoke and carbon monoxide alarms contact your local fire department.



## Paying Your Electric Bill through a Financial Institution


**I**f you pay your Menard Electric bill online through your financial institution, please include your Menard Electric Account No. in the appropriate location on your financial institution's form.

This is the number in the upper right hand corner of the stub on the bottom of your electric bill. It is

in bold face type above the Map Location No. on your bill stub which you would normally return with your payment if you were to mail it to the office with a check. This number is important to us so we can make sure your payment is posted to your account.

**Please Detach and Return Bottom Portion with Payment**

**Please Remit Payment to:**  
Menard Electric Cooperative  
P.O. Box 200  
Petersburg, IL 62675-0200

<b>REGULAR</b>	<b>XXXXXXXX</b> 
<b>Map Location Number</b>	<b>02-104-001</b>
<b>Amount Due</b>	
<b>Due Date</b>	

**MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com)**



**Make Things Easy!**  
**Sign up now to pay your bill automatically**

**W**ith our Automatic Payment Plan you can have your electric bill automatically deducted from your checking or savings account on the 10th of each month. We will deduct the net amount shown on your bill, and proof of payment will appear on your monthly statement. No checks to write, stamps to buy or deadlines to worry about! Fill out the application below to make your life just a little easier!

Mail with a voided check to Menard Electric Cooperative, PO Box 200, Petersburg, IL 62675.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ SS# \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_ Map Location # \_\_\_\_\_

Bank Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Bank Account # \_\_\_\_\_

Checking acct. ☐

Savings acct. ☐

I, \_\_\_\_\_, authorize Menard Electric Cooperative to draw monthly bank drafts through the automatic plan (ACH) on the account shown above for the payment of my electric bill in full and any other services I authorize. I understand that I may discontinue my participation at any time by notifying Menard Electric Cooperative in writing. Both Menard Electric Cooperative and the bank may terminate this agreement with 10 days written notice. I understand that Menard Electric Cooperative reserves the right to limit participation in this program to customers whose accounts are in good standing. I understand that the amount of my bill each month will be drafted on the 10th or next business day after. I understand that if funds are not available in my account for the draft to clear, there will be a charge posted to my Menard Electric Cooperative account, for NSF, and I will still be required to make full payment before the due date of the bill.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# REBATES\$

## ■ Water Heater Rebates and Rate

**T**his water heater rebate program is available on a **one-time** basis to all members who agree to replace an existing fossil fuel fired water heater with an electric



water heater that has at least a 40-gallon capacity. If the new electric water heater is installed in a new structure or replaces a fossil fuel fired water heater you will receive a \$100 rebate. For the second new water heater you will receive \$75. If the new electric water heater replaces an existing electric water heater you will receive a \$75 rebate. To qualify for the rebate you must sign up for the cooperative's load management program.

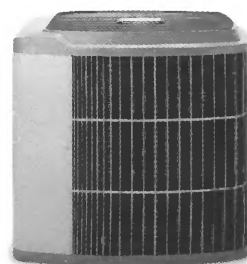
In addition to the rebate above you will qualify for a 2.5 cent per kilowatt-hour rate reduction on kilowatt-hours used between 700 and 1,000 every month of the year. This could save you up to \$90 each year in addition to the rebate, effective Jan. 2009.

## ■ Geothermal Rebates & Rates

**T**he rebate is \$600 per unit regardless of the size of the unit installed. The unit can be installed in either a new or existing home. If you install a geothermal heating and cooling system you will also be eligible for your cooperative's geothermal rate, if you have an all electric home. Under this rate you will be billed 6.7 cents per kilowatt-hour for all kilowatt-hours used between 1,000 and 6,000 for the billing months of October through May each year.

## ■ Heat Pump Rebates

**Y**our cooperative is offering a \$200 rebate regardless of the size of the unit installed.



## ■ Certified Comfort Home Rebate

**I**f you build a new home to the standards described in the Certified Comfort Home book you will receive a onetime \$100 rebate.



If you have any questions on these rebates give the cooperative a call at (800) 872-1203 or check out the cooperative's Web site at [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com).

MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com)

# Yield Fewer Accidents This Harvest

**H**arvest season can yield higher numbers of electrocution, shock and burn injuries on the farm. Nationwide, an average of 64 agricultural workers are electrocuted and hundreds more injured in electrical accidents each year. Safe Electricity and Menard electric Cooperative urge farm workers to



avoid tragic accidents by taking note of farm activities that take place around power lines.

Equipment contacting overhead power lines is the leading cause of farm electrocution accidents in the Midwest. Many of these accidents occur near grain bins, when augers make contact with power lines.

"Everyone who works on the farm should know the location of power lines and keep farm equipment at least 10 feet away from them – below, to the side and above power lines," says Molly Hall, Director of Safe Electricity. "Ensuring proper clearance can save lives."

Here are some safety considerations for farm workers:

- Always lower portable augers or elevators to their lowest possible level - under 14 feet - before moving or transporting; use care when raising them.
- Be aware of increased height when loading and transporting larger modern tractors with higher antennas.
- Always use a spotter or someone to help make certain that

contact is not made with a line when moving large equipment or high loads.

- Do not 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 may also conduct electricity under certain conditions.
- Use qualified electricians for work on drying equipment and other farm electrical systems.
- Apply decals to all equipment that may pose electrical hazards and explain decals to workers who use the equipment.
- Inspect farm equipment for transport height and determine clearance with any power lines under which the equipment must pass.
- Review the possibility of underground utility supplies for new or replacement power lines.

- If you have a standby power system, review its location, operation and importance with all workers.
- Train seasonal employees to be aware of risks for potential electrical shock on the farm even if they only work temporarily.
- Never attempt to raise or move a power line to clear a path.

If you come into contact with a power line:

"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," says Hall.

If the power line is energized and you step outside, your body becomes the path and electrocution is the result. Even if a power line has landed on the ground, the potential for the area nearby to be energized still exists. 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 hop or shuffle 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. Many electrocutions happen when the operator dismounts and, realizing nothing has happened, tries to get back on the equipment.

For more information on farm and other electrical safety, visit [www.SafeElectricity.org](http://www.SafeElectricity.org).

# BOARD MEETING REPORT

**Menard Electric Cooperative  
From the Board Room  
June 24, 2008**

**T**he monthly Board Meeting of the Board of Directors of Menard Electric Cooperative was called to order by President Gary L. Martin at 6 p.m. at the headquarters of the Cooperative, 14300 State Highway 97, Petersburg, County of Menard and State of Illinois.

On roll call the following Directors were present: Jerry W. Brooks, Michael L. Carls, D. Jay Frye, Warren D. Goetsch, Gary L. Martin, Donald E. McMillan, Michael E. Patrick, Roy H. Seaney and Steven L. Worner. Also present was Manager Lynn A. Frasco and Attorney Charles K. Smith.

President Martin reviewed with the Board the Consensus Agenda. It was moved and seconded that the Consensus Agenda be approved. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco presented the Manager's Report for the month of May, 2008. He reviewed the Balance Sheet, Budget, as well as the Outage Summary and Safety Report.

Under the Operations Report, Manager Frasco reported that notice had been received from the Internal Revenue Service changing the mileage rate, effective July 1, 2008, from 50.5 cents to 58.5 cents. He reported on a fire that had occurred on Member Albert Garlich's property. He discussed the fact that the Farmer River Drainage District was utilizing its pumping facilities. Trish Michels presented a Report on the Capital Credit payments as of June, 2008. It was moved and seconded the Manager's Report be approved as presented. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco presented the Financial Report for the Month of May. Year to date margins were \$983,754 compared to (\$95,291) a year earlier. Equity as of the end of May was 34.18 percent and the number of members served was 10,377 compared to 10,276 a year ago. Net Utility Plant at the end of May was \$33,680,024 compared to \$32,010,850 last year. The cooperative continues to meet the requirements of the RUS, FFB and NRUCFC. Director Goetsch reported on AIEC Activities. Director Carls reported on Prairie Power, Inc. President Martin reviewed with the Board proposed Board Meeting dates and times for 2008-2009. It was moved and seconded that the Meeting dates

and times be approved. Motion carried.

The Board discussed the 2008 Annual Meeting. Trish Michels presented a Report on the Annual Meeting.

President Martin discussed with the Board, Committee and Delegate appointments for 2008-2009. It was moved and seconded that the Delegate and Board Member appointments be approved as set forth on Exhibit A, which is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference. Motion carried. President Martin discussed with the Board the Committee appointments for 2008-2009. It was moved and seconded that the Committee appointments be approved as set forth on Exhibit B, which is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference. Motion carried.

President Martin called the Board into Executive Session to discuss the Union negotiations. President Martin adjourned the Executive Session and reconvened the monthly Board Meeting.

Manager Frasco reviewed with the Board proposed adjustments to the proposed 2009 Rate Design. There was much discussion by the Board. It was determined to review the matter further for consideration at next month's Board Meeting.

Manager Frasco presented the Capital Credit Estate Refunds Report.

President Martin reminded the Board that the next Board Meeting was scheduled for July 22, 2008 at 6:00 p.m.

Under other business, President Martin reminded the Board that July 31 through August 1st was the AIEC Annual Meeting at the Crowne Plaza. He also advised that July 30 was the NRECA Course 966.1 "Understanding the New World of Power Supply". President Martin discussed with the Board the CFC Forum he had attended. He also discussed the fact that he was running for Directorship on the CFC Board.

There being no further business to come before the Board, it was moved and seconded the Meeting be adjourned. Motion carried.

Board minutes also available on [menard.com](http://menard.com) about 30 days after the Meeting.

**MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com)**

# MENARD



## NEWS

**Menard Electric Cooperative**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



14300 State Hwy 97 • P.O. BOX 200 • PETERSBURG, ILLINOIS 62675 • 1-800-872-1203 • 217-632-7746

<http://www.menard.com>

## The Menard Electric Cooperative Board approves rate adjustment for 2009

**T**he Menard Electric Cooperative Board of Directors recently approved rate adjustments that will be effective in January 2009 and will be used to calculate our member's bills that arrive Feb. 1, 2009.

Your Cooperative has been able to maintain stable rates for over 14 years, with the last Menard Electric rate increase being put in place in 1994. The Cooperative's Board and employees have worked diligently to manage the normal costs of providing electric service over this time, but unfortunately the new cost for wholesale power that is purchased to service our member's electric demands will be increasing about 1 ½ cents per kilowatt-hour in 2009. Because nearly two-thirds of Menard Electric's revenue is used to pay for wholesale power purchases, this entire cost increase will need to be collected with the new rates. The primary purpose of this rate adjustment is to collect energy related costs and as such, the billing formula will not be increasing the facility charges, or demand charges. The effect of this energy increase is that members that have a low kilowatt-hour usage will see their bills increase a smaller percentage, but members that have a large kilowatt-hour usage will see a larger percentage increase on their total bills.

As an example, 75 percent of our members receive service on our Rate 10, the Farm and Residential Rate and average about 1,000 kilowatt-hours per month. These members will see their bills increase \$10.50 per month or about 8.2 percent over the current 2008 rate. Another member who also receives service on Rate 10, but uses 3,000 kilowatt-hours per month, would see the bill increase \$32.50 per month or about 11.3 percent over their current cost.

### **Current Rate 10 – Farm & Residential Service with Power Cost Adjustment**

Facility Charge	\$24.00 per month
Energy Charge	
First 200 kWh @	12.2 cents per kWh
Next 500 kWh @	10.2 cents per kWh
Next 800 kWh @	9.7 cents per kWh
Over 1500 kWh @	7.3 cents per kWh

### **New Rate 10 – Farm & Residential Service (effective January 2009)**

Facility Charge	\$24.00 per month
Energy Charge	
First 1000 kWh @	11.5 cents per kWh
Over 1000 kWh @	9.0 cents per kWh

As you review the new rate schedule, you will notice that we are also reducing the number of rate blocks from four to two. This change results in a flatter rate design that tends to reward members who use less energy. Because this style of rate tends to collect nearer the average billing rate across a broader range of usage levels, it is considered that it will encourage energy conservation. Our historic rate structures were designed to reward higher levels of energy usage, by charging less per kilowatt-hour, the more you used. The old motto "the more you use, the cheaper it gets", was represented by our old rate design. Today, with higher energy costs and a focus on energy conservation, our new rate design will result in all members paying nearer the actual average cost of the energy they use.

Another area in which the rates have been adjusted is the amount of credit on the energy cost for the kilowatt-hours used for electric water heating, electric home heating and geo-thermal usage. Next year, the credit for electric water heaters will be 2.5 cents per kilowatt-hour from 700 to 1,000 kilowatt-hour usage per month, or \$7.50 credit. Also the residential electric heating Rates 17 & 18 will have the energy rate block between 1,000 kWh and 6,000 kWh set at 7.1 cents per kilowatt-hour. The Geo-Thermal Rate 19, which has always been our lowest priced rate block, will have the energy rate block between 1,000 kWh and 6,000 kWh set at 6.7 cents per kilowatt-hour. Generally, Rates 11, 17, 18 & 19 have members who use the largest amount of energy during the year, and as was discussed earlier, the members with higher levels of kWh usage will have a larger percentage of increase to their total bills next year. Members who use an average amount of kilowatt-hours on Rate 11, 17 and 18 should expect to see their bills increase between 10-12 percent, while members on Rate 19 who use the largest amount of kilowatt-hours on average will have an annual increase of about 16 percent.

The Irrigation Rate 52 members have been a growing segment of Menard Electric's total load. With our new TWACS metering system we can now determine the actual electrical demand of each irrigation service. Beginning with the 2009 irrigation season, Menard Electric will no longer bill irrigation services a Name Plate Horse Power Charge of \$29.80 /HP/Year, but rather the actual kW demand, at the rate of \$27.00/kW/Year. This change in the Horse Power/

(Continued on page 16c) ►

**MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com)**



**Make Things Easy!**  
**Sign up now to pay your bill automatically**

**W**ith our Automatic Payment Plan you can have your electric bill automatically deducted from your checking or savings account on the 10th of each month. We will deduct the net amount shown on your bill, and proof of payment will appear on your monthly statement. No checks to write, stamps to buy or deadlines to worry about! Fill out the application below to make your life just a little easier!

Mail with a voided check to Menard Electric Cooperative, PO Box 200, Petersburg, IL 62675.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ SS# \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_ Map Location # \_\_\_\_\_

Bank Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Bank Account # \_\_\_\_\_

Checking acct. ☐

Savings acct. ☐

I, \_\_\_\_\_, authorize Menard Electric Cooperative to draw monthly bank drafts through the automatic plan (ACH) on the account shown above for the payment of my electric bill in full and any other services I authorize. I understand that I may discontinue my participation at any time by notifying Menard Electric Cooperative in writing. Both Menard Electric Cooperative and the bank may terminate this agreement with 10 days written notice. I understand that Menard Electric Cooperative reserves the right to limit participation in this program to customers whose accounts are in good standing. I understand that the amount of my bill each month will be drafted on the 10th or next business day after. I understand that if funds are not available in my account for the draft to clear, there will be a charge posted to my Menard Electric Cooperative account, for NSF, and I will still be required to make full payment before the due date of the bill.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

◀ Rate adjustment for 2009 - (Continued from page 16a)

Demand Charge billing will result in most members realizing a decrease in this billing component. However, the energy rate is being increased to 6.5 cents per kilowatt-hour. Due to the weather sensitive electrical usage of irrigation services, it is very difficult to estimate changes in cost from year to year. While the rate adjustment will affect each irrigation service to varying degrees, the average irrigation service in an average summer growing season should have about a 17 percent increase in the total bill for annual electric service.

Many members will want to learn more about how their bills will be impacted by the new rates, before they go into effect. In each of the next few months, we will continue our discussion in the "center section" of the Illinois County Living Magazine, to provide additional information. We also have scheduled a series of regional member meetings, to give all members the opportunity to hear about the rate adjustments in detail, and to answer any questions they may have.

All members of Menard Electric Cooperative are invited to attend one of the member meetings that will be held around Menard's service territory to discuss the upcoming rate increase that will be effective on January 31, 2009 billing statement.

### Regional Member Meetings

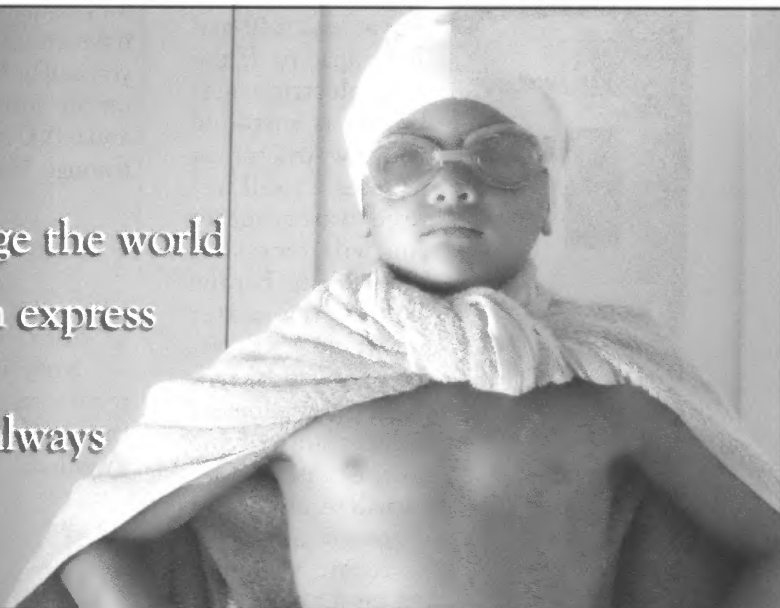
- Date:** November 5, 2008  
**Time:** 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm  
**Location:** Mason County Farm Bureau  
127 South High Street, Havana, IL 62644
- Date:** November 6, 2008  
**Time:** 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm  
**Location:** St. Augustine Catholic Church Hall  
320 South Saratoga St, Ashland, IL 62612
- Date:** November 12, 2008  
**Time:** 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm  
**Location:** Sherman Athletic Club  
300 South 1st St, Sherman, IL 62684
- Date:** November 13, 2008  
**Time:** 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm  
**Location:** River Bank Lodge  
522 South 6th St, Petersburg, IL 62675

# He has

## The power to change the world

## Parents who let him express himself

## A belief that good always conquers evil



## An electric cooperative that helps his family defeat high energy prices

At your electric cooperative, we help families like this superhero's find solutions to save energy and money. Solutions like the energy-efficient washer and dryer that keep his cape clean while using less water and electricity. Watch this magazine for ways to save money on your bills.



**Menard Electric Cooperative**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

**MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com)**

# REBATES\$

## ■ Water Heater Rebates and Rate

**T**his water heater rebate program is available on a **one-time** basis to all members who agree to replace an existing fossil fuel fired water heater with an electric

water heater that has at least a 40-gal-lon capacity. If the new electric water heater is installed in a new structure or replaces a fossil fuel fired water heater you will receive a \$100 rebate. For the second new water heater you will receive \$75. If the new electric water heater replaces an existing electric water heater you will receive a \$75 rebate. To qualify for the rebate you must sign up for the cooperative's load management program. In addition

to the rebate above you will qualify for a 2.5 cent per kilowatt-hour rate reduction on kilowatt-hours used between 700 and 1,000 every month of the year. This could save you up to \$90 each year in addition to the rebate, effective Jan. 2009.

*\*Tankless water heaters do not qualify for rebate or load control.*

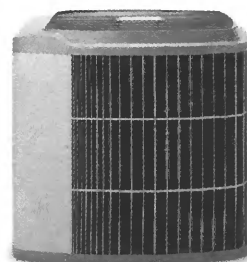


## ■ Geothermal Rebates & Rates

**T**he rebate is \$600 per unit regardless of the size of the unit installed. The unit can be installed in either a new or existing home. If you install a geothermal heating and cooling system you will also be eligible for your cooperative's geothermal rate, if you have an all electric home. Under this rate you will be billed 6.7 cents per kilowatt-hour for all kilowatt-hours used between 1,000 and 6,000 for the billing months of October through May each year.

## ■ Heat Pump Rebates

**Y**our cooperative is offering a \$200 rebate regardless of the size of the unit installed.



## ■ Certified Comfort Home Rebate

**I**f you build a new home to the standards described in the Certified Comfort Home book you will receive a onetime \$100 rebate.



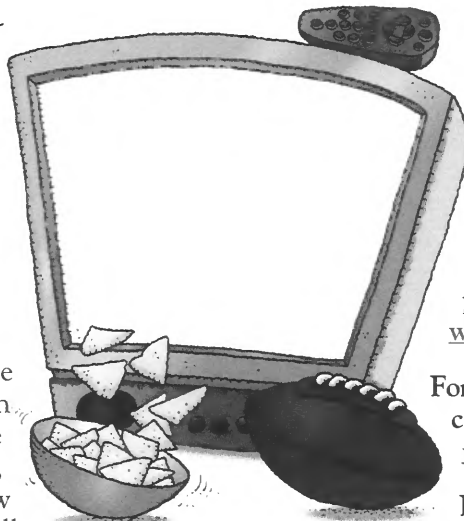
If you have any questions on these rebates give the cooperative a call at (800) 872-1203 or check out the cooperative's Web site at [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com).

MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com)

## TV Converter Box Coupon Program

**M**idnight, Feb. 17, 2009, television viewing in America is scheduled to change. All full-power television stations in the United States are converting their broadcasting from analogue to 100 percent digital. This will result in better clarity of viewing and more programming options for the public.

Individual households will be required to have a conversion box if their television sets are not controlled through cable, satellite or fiber optics. From now until March 2009, consumers will be able to apply for up to two \$40 coupons per household provided by the U.S. Government. The converter box is a one-time purchase and prices are expected to range between \$50 and



\$70 without the coupon. Coupons expire within 90 days of the date they are mailed out to consumers. Local retailers will carry the boxes for purchase.

For complete information here is a list of websites to visit -

For coupon applications please visit:

[www.dtv2009.gov](http://www.dtv2009.gov)

For information on where to purchase converter boxes, please visit:

[www.ntiadtv.gov](http://www.ntiadtv.gov)

For information on how to install a converter box, please visit:

[www.DigitalTips.org](http://www.DigitalTips.org)

To learn more about options please visit:

[www.DTVTransition.org](http://www.DTVTransition.org)

## Paying Your Electric Bill through a Financial Institution

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This is the number in the upper right hand corner of the stub on the bottom of your electric

bill. It is in **bold face type** above the Map Location No. on your bill stub which you would normally return with your payment if you were to mail it to the office with a check. This number is important to us so we can make sure your payment is posted to your account.

**Please Detach and Return Bottom Portion with Payment**

**Please Remit Payment to:**  
Menard Electric Cooperative  
P.O. Box 200  
Petersburg, IL 62675-0200

REGULAR	XXXXXXXX
Map Location Number	02-104-001
Amount Due	
Due Date	





## America's Cooperative Electric Utilities The Nation's Consumer Owned Electric Utility Network

**E**lectric cooperatives are an integral part of the \$300 billion U.S. electric utility industry. They play a critical role in our nation's economy and in local communities.

*Cooperatives are  
owned by the  
members they serve.*

ments in 2,500 of 3,141 counties in the U.S.

■ 12 percent of the nation's population.

### Electric cooperatives are:

- private independent electric utility businesses,
- owned by the consumers they serve,
- incorporated under the laws of the states in which they operate,
- established to provide at-cost electric service,
- governed by a board of directors elected from the membership, which sets policies and procedures that are implemented by the cooperatives' professional staff.

Distribution cooperatives deliver electricity to the consumer. Generation and transmission cooperatives (G&Ts) generate and transmit electricity to distribution co-ops.

In addition to electric service, many electric co-ops are involved in community development and revitalization projects, e.g., small business development and jobs creation, improvement of water and sewer systems, and assistance in delivery of health care and educational services.

### Facts at a Glance

- 864 distribution and 66 G&T cooperatives serve:
- 40 million people in 47 states.
- 17 million businesses, homes, schools, churches, farms, irrigation systems, and other establish-

### To perform their mission, electric cooperatives:

- own assets worth \$97 billion,
- own and maintain 2.4 million miles, or 43%, of the nation's electric distribution lines, covering three quarters of the nation's landmass,
- deliver 10 percent of the total kilowatt-hours sold in the U.S. each year,
- generate nearly 5 percent of the total electricity produced in the U.S. each year,
- employ 67,000 people in the United States,
- retire more than \$483 million in capital credits annually.
- pay more than \$1.2 billion in state and local taxes

### Compared with other electric utilities:

- Co-ops serve an average of 7.0 consumers per mile of line and collect annual revenue of approximately \$10,565 per mile of line,
- Investor-owned utilities average 35 customers per mile of line and collect \$62,665 per mile of line,
- Publicly owned utilities, or municipals, average 46.6 consumers and collect \$86,302 per mile of line.

**MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com)**

## A Consumer's Guide to Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Demand (Tankless or Instantaneous) Water Heaters

**D**emand (tankless or instantaneous) water heaters provide hot water only as it is needed. They don't produce the standby energy losses associated with storage water heaters, which can save you money. Here you'll find basic information about how they work, whether a demand water heater might be right for your home, and what criteria to use when selecting the right model.

Illustration of an electric demand water heater. At the top of the image, the heating unit is shown. Cold water flows in one end of a pipe, flows through and around several curved pipes over the heating elements, and out the other end as hot water. Beneath the heating unit, a typical sink setup is shown. The sink has two pipes coming out the bottom, one for the hot water line and one for the cold water line. Both pipes lead to the heating unit, which is installed in close proximity to the area of hot water use, and is connected to a power source (110 or 220 volts).

### How They Work

Demand water heaters heat water directly without the use of a storage tank. Therefore, they avoid the standby heat losses associated with storage water heaters. When a hot water tap is turned on, cold water travels through a pipe into the unit. Either a gas burner or an electric element heats the water. As a result, demand water heaters deliver a constant supply of hot water. You don't need to wait for a storage tank to fill up with enough hot water. However, a demand water heater's output limits the flow rate.

Typically, demand water heaters provide hot water at a rate of 2–5 gallons (7.6–15.2 liters) per minute. Gas-fired demand water heaters produce higher flow rates than electric ones. Sometimes, however, even the largest, gas-fired model cannot supply enough hot water for simultaneous, multiple uses in large households. For example, taking a shower and running the dishwasher at the same time can stretch a demand water heater to its limit. To overcome this problem, you can install two or more demand water heaters, connected in parallel for simultaneous demands of hot water. You can also install separate demand water heaters for appliances—such as a clothes washer or dishwasher—that use a lot of hot water in your home.

Other applications for demand water heaters include the following:

- Remote bathrooms or hot tubs.
- Booster for appliances, such as dishwashers or clothes washers.
- Booster for a solar water heating system.

Although gas-fired demand water heaters tend to have higher flow rates than electric ones, they can waste energy if they have a constantly burning pilot light. This can sometimes offset the elimination of standby energy losses when compared to a storage water heater. In a gas-fired storage water heater, the pilot light heats the water in the tank so the energy isn't wasted. The cost of operating a pilot light in a demand water heater varies from model to model. Ask the manufacturer how much gas the pilot light uses for the model you're considering. If you purchase a model that uses a standing pilot light, you can always turn it off when it's not in use to save energy. Also consider models that have

an intermittent ignition device (IID) instead of a standing pilot light. This device resembles the spark ignition device on some gas kitchen ranges and ovens.

For homes that use 41 gallons or less of hot water daily, demand water heaters can be 24 percent – 34 percent more energy efficient than conventional storage tank water heaters. They can be 8 percent – 14 percent more energy efficient for homes that use a lot of hot water—around 86 gallons per day. You can achieve even greater energy savings of 27 percent – 50 percent if you install a demand water heater at each hot water outlet.

### Selecting a Demand Water Heater

Demand water heaters cost more than conventional storage water heaters. However, you may find that a demand water heater may have lower operating and energy costs, which could offset its higher purchase price.

Before buying a demand water heater, you also need to consider the following:

- Size.
- Fuel type and availability.
- Energy efficiency (energy factor).
- Estimate costs.

For information about specific demand water heater models, see the Product Information resources listed on the right side of this page (or below if you've printed out this page).

### Installation and Maintenance

Proper installation and maintenance of your demand water heater can optimize its energy efficiency.

Proper installation depends on many factors. These factors include fuel type, climate, local building code requirements, and safety issues, especially concerning the combustion of gas-fired water heaters. Therefore, it's best to have a qualified plumbing and heating contractor install your demand water heater. Do the following when selecting a contractor:

- Request cost estimates in writing.
- Ask for references.
- Check the company with your local Better Business Bureau.
- See if the company will obtain a local permit if necessary and understands local building codes, etc.

If you're determined to install your water heater yourself, first consult the manufacturer. Manufacturers usually have the necessary installation and instruction manuals. Also, contact your city or town for information about obtaining a permit, if necessary, and about local water heater installation codes.

Most tankless water heaters have a life expectancy of more than 20 years. They also have easily replaceable parts that extend their life by many more years. In contrast, storage water heaters last 10–15 years. Periodic water heater maintenance can significantly extend your water heater's life and minimize loss of efficiency. Read your owner's manual for specific maintenance recommendations.

# BOARD MEETING REPORT

**Menard Electric Cooperative**  
**From the Board Room**  
**July 22, 2008**

**T**he monthly Board Meeting of the Board of Directors of Menard Electric Cooperative was called to order by President Gary L. Martin at 6:00 P.M. at the headquarters of the Cooperative, 14300 State Highway 97, Petersburg, County of Menard and State of Illinois.

On roll call the following Directors were present: Jerry W. Brooks, Michael L. Carls, D. Jay Frye, Warren D. Goetsch, Gary L. Martin, Donald E. McMillan, Roy H. Seaney and Steven L. Worner. Director Michael E. Patrick was absent. Also present was Manager Lynn A. Frasco and Attorney Charles K. Smith.

President Martin reviewed with the Board the Consensus Agenda. It was moved and seconded that the Consensus Agenda be approved. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco presented the Manager's Report for the month of June, 2008. He reviewed the Balance Sheet, Budget, as well as the Outage Summary and Safety Report.

Under the Operations Report, Manager Frasco advised that the Farmers Drainage District had, for the first time in five (5) years, operated their pumps. During such operation, the Cooperative had received a transmission peak warning and had advised the Drainage District that they needed to interrupt. They chose not to interrupt. Manager Frasco discussed with the Board the effect that would have on their bill. He advised that he had attended the Logan County Economic Planning Meeting at Lincoln College. He stated that Rich Brauer would be the AIEC Public Servant Award Recipient for 2008 as would be Senator DeMuzio. Manager Frasco then reviewed with the Board a Preliminary Wind Site Results Report. The Report was a map of different wind velocities in different locations in the State of Illinois. Manager Frasco discussed with the Board the possibility of a windmill within the Menard service territory. Manager Frasco was given authority by the Board to investigate this matter further. It was moved and seconded that the Manager's Report be approved as presented. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco presented the Financial Report for the Month of June. Year to date margins were \$999,356 compared to (\$86,250) a year earlier.

Equity as of the end of June was 33.96 percent and the number of members served was 10,390 compared to 10,286 a year ago. Net Utility Plant at the end of June was \$33,939,394 compared to \$31,937,053 last year. The cooperative continues to meet the requirements of the RUS, FFB and NRUCFC.

Director Goetsch reported that there was no AIEC Board Meeting for the month. He discussed the Annual Meeting dates and times.

Director Carls reported on Prairie Power, Inc.

Manager Frasco reviewed with the Board a proposed Third Amendment to Wholesale Power Plant Contract for Prairie Power, Inc. It was moved and seconded that the President and Secretary be authorized to enter into the Third Amendment. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco reviewed with the Board a proposed Third Amendment to the Transmission Services Agreement for Prairie Power, Inc. It was moved and seconded that the President and Secretary be authorized to enter into the Third Amendment. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco reviewed with the Board proposed changes to Menard Electric's Rate Schedules. After much discussion by the Board, it was moved and seconded that the changes as presented by the Manager be approved and adopted, to be effective January 1, 2009. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco reminded the Board that he and Director Seaney had reviewed with the Board their recommendations as far as the new Local 51 IBEW Collective Bargaining Agreement for 2009 - 2013. He advised that there was needed a motion to authorize the President and Secretary to enter into the Contract. It was moved and seconded that the President and Secretary be authorized to enter into the Contract on the terms and provisions as approved at last month's Meeting. Motion carried. Manager Frasco reviewed the Capital Credit Estate Refunds Report.

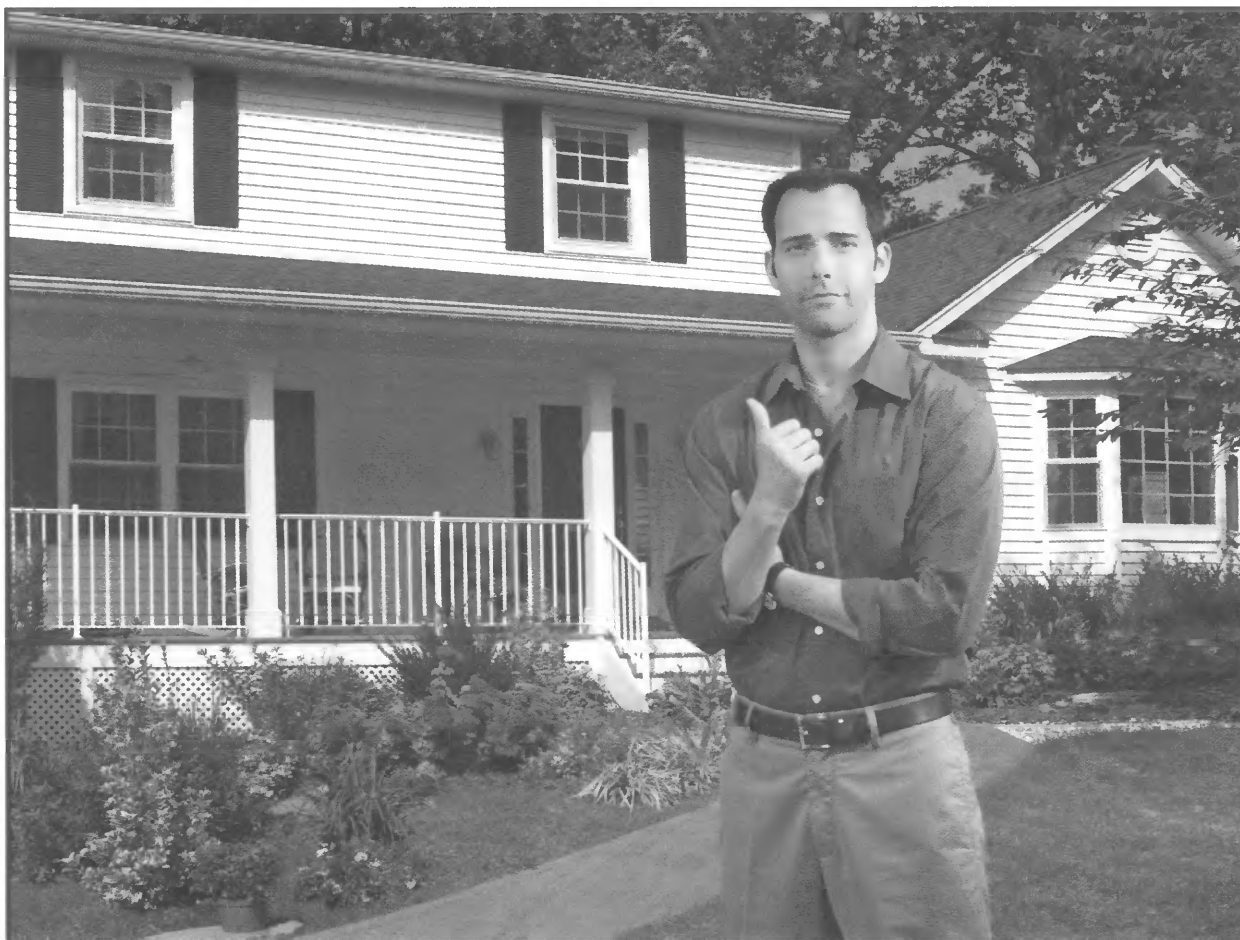
President Martin advised that next month's Meeting was scheduled for August 26, 2008 at 6:00 p.m.

There being no further business to come before the Board, it was moved and seconded the Meeting be adjourned. Motion carried.

**Board minutes also available on [menard.com](http://menard.com) about 30 days after the Meeting.**

**MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com)**





## Some homes waste nearly as much energy as they use.

At your co-op, we do everything in our power to ensure you always have an affordable, reliable source of energy. We also work hard to make sure all our members understand the latest and best ways to be more energy efficient. We have hundreds of things that you can do to save energy. Simple things to make sure you get the most out of the electricity you use.

*We're all in this together.*



The Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives of Illinois

*The power of human connections*

[www.touchstoneenergy.coop](http://www.touchstoneenergy.coop)

**MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com)**



## Students Encouraged To Apply For 2009 IEC Memorial Scholarships

**M**enard Electric Manager Lynn Frasco has announced that for the 14th year the Illinois electric cooperatives will award academic scholarships to high school seniors.

Seven scholarships of \$1,250 each will be awarded in 2009 to eligible high school seniors through the Illinois Electric Cooperative (IEC) Memorial Scholarship Program.

Four scholarships will be awarded to students who are the sons or daughters of an Illinois electric cooperative member receiving service from the cooperative. A fifth scholarship will be awarded to a student who is the son or daughter of an Illinois electric cooperative employee. The sixth and seventh scholarships are reserved for students enrolling full-time at a two-year Illinois community college who are a sons or daughters of Illinois electric cooperative members, employees or directors.

"We hope to assist electric cooperative youth while honoring past rural electric leaders with this scholarship," says Frasco.

"Menard Electric Cooperative and the other Illinois electric cooperatives are always seeking ways to make a difference in our communities. One of the best ways we can do that is by helping our youth through programs like this one."



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. Applications must be

received by the Cooperative on or before Jan. 2, 2009. Winners of the scholarship will be notified in May 2009.

For more information contact Trish Michels at Menard Electric Cooperative at 800-872-1203 or 217-632-7746.

**MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com)**

# REBATES\$

## ■ Water Heater Rebates and Rate

**T**his water heater rebate program is available on a **one-time** basis to all members who agree to replace an existing fossil fuel fired water heater with an electric



water heater that has at least a 40-gallon capacity. If the new electric water heater is installed in a new structure or replaces a fossil fuel fired water heater you will receive a \$100 rebate. For the second new water heater you will receive \$75. If the new electric water heater replaces an existing electric water heater you will receive a \$75 rebate. To qualify for the rebate you must sign up for the cooperative's load management program. In addition

to the rebate above you will qualify for a 2.5 cent per kilowatt-hour rate reduction on kilowatt-hours used between 700 and 1,000 every month of the year. This could save you up to \$90 each year in addition to the rebate, effective Jan. 2009.

*\*Tankless water heaters do not qualify for rebate or load control.*

## ■ Geothermal Rebates & Rates

**T**he rebate is \$600 per unit regardless of the size of the unit installed. The unit can be installed in either a new or existing home. If you install a geothermal heating and cooling system you will also be eligible for your cooperative's geothermal rate, if you have an all electric home. Under this rate you will be billed 6.7 cents per kilowatt-hour for all kilowatt-hours used between 1,000 and 6,000 for the billing months of October through May each year.

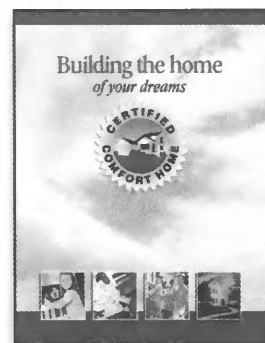
## ■ Heat Pump Rebates

**Y**our cooperative is offering a \$200 rebate regardless of the size of the unit installed.



## ■ Certified Comfort Home Rebate

**I**f you build a new home to the standards described in the Certified Comfort Home book you will receive a onetime \$100 rebate.



If you have any questions on these rebates give the cooperative a call at (800) 872-1203 or check out the cooperative's Web site at [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com).

**MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com)**



**Make Things Easy!**  
**Sign up now to pay your bill automatically**

**W**ith our Automatic Payment Plan you can have your electric bill automatically deducted from your checking or savings account on the 10th of each month. We will deduct the net amount shown on your bill, and proof of payment will appear on your monthly statement. No checks to write, stamps to buy or deadlines to worry about! Fill out the application below to make your life just a little easier!

Mail with a voided check to Menard Electric Cooperative, PO Box 200, Petersburg, IL 62675.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ SS# \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_ Map Location # \_\_\_\_\_

Bank Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Bank Account # \_\_\_\_\_

Checking acct. ☐

Savings acct. ☐

I, \_\_\_\_\_, authorize Menard Electric Cooperative to draw monthly bank drafts through the automatic plan (ACH) on the account shown above for the payment of my electric bill in full and any other services I authorize. I understand that I may discontinue my participation at any time by notifying Menard Electric Cooperative in writing. Both Menard Electric Cooperative and the bank may terminate this agreement with 10 days written notice. I understand that Menard Electric Cooperative reserves the right to limit participation in this program to customers whose accounts are in good standing. I understand that the amount of my bill each month will be drafted on the 10th or next business day after. I understand that if funds are not available in my account for the draft to clear, there will be a charge posted to my Menard Electric Cooperative account, for NSF, and I will still be required to make full payment before the due date of the bill.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Paying Your Electric Bill through a Financial Institution


If you pay your Menard Electric bill online through your financial institution, please include your Menard Electric Account No. in the appropriate location on your financial institution's form.

This is the number in the upper right hand corner of the stub on the bottom of your electric

bill. It is in **bold face type** above the Map Location No. on your bill stub which you would normally return with your payment if you were to mail it to the office with a check. This number is important to us so we can make sure your payment is posted to your account.

### Please Detach and Return Bottom Portion with Payment

**Please Remit Payment to:**  
Menard Electric Cooperative  
P.O. Box 200  
Petersburg, IL 62675-0200

<b>REGULAR</b>	<b>XXXXXXXX</b> 
<b>Map Location Number</b>	<b>02-104-001</b>
<b>Amount Due</b>	
<b>Due Date</b>	

## Make Your Life Easier With Our Automatic Payment Plan

**W**ith our Automatic Payment Plan, you can pay your bill each month automatically from your checking or savings account.

### 5 ways automatic payment can help you:

1. It saves time – fewer checks to write.
2. It is convenient and timely – even if you're out of town.
3. It is always on time – no lost or misplaced statements help maintain good credit and avoid late charges.
4. It saves money – no postage or envelopes needed.
5. It's easy – it's easy to sign up for or cancel, just call us.

### How it works:

The Automatic Payment Plan is dependable, flexible, convenient, and easy. You authorize regularly scheduled payments to be made from your checking or savings account. Then, just sit back and relax. Your payments will be made automatically on the 10th day of each month, and proof of payment will appear on your statement. The amount withdrawn from your account will be the net amount due shown on your bill. The authority you give us to charge your account will remain in effect until you notify us in writing to terminate the authorization.

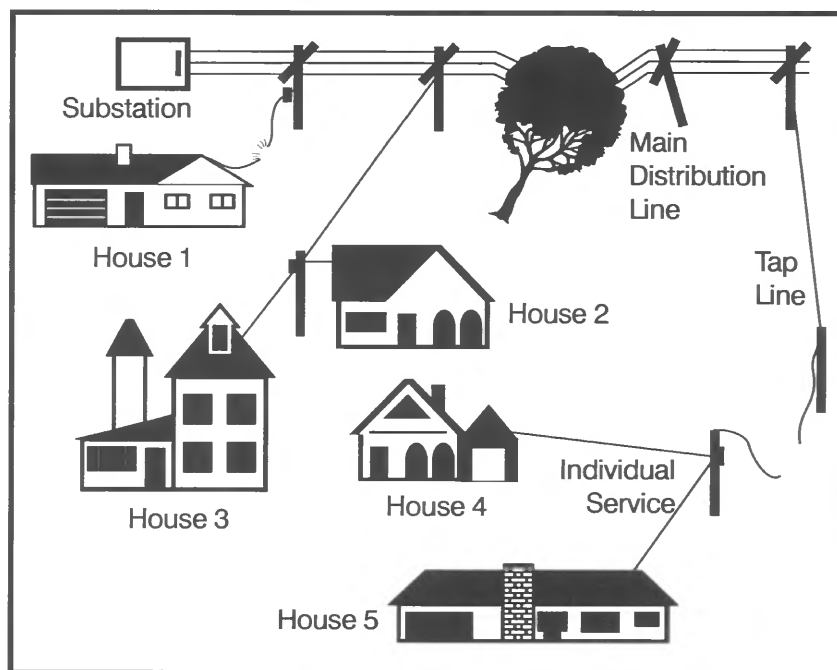
### Sign up Now!

To take advantage of this service, please fill out the application form included on page 16e of this newsletter.

## Priorities In Restoring Electric Service

Occasionally, we are asked how we would choose which house gets electric service restored during a major wind or ice storm. The chart to the right depicts a simplified version of how we would go about restoring service to each house. Specifically, we would start at the source of the power, namely the substation. Then similar to spokes on a wheel we would work out on the main distribution line, repairing and restoring service to the main feeder lines. It would do no good to repair a small wire attached to your house if the main line was dead, plus the time spent at this house would mean that many other people are off even longer.

In our diagram, the men would first work to restore the main distribution line. Since there is nothing wrong with the lines leading to House 2 and House 3, the repair to the main line would automatically bring them on. Next we would clear up any problems with the tap lines leading off the main line. In our example the tap line



would restore service to House 4. Only after all the high voltage lines are repaired would we repair problems at individual homes. In our example, individual House 1 and 5 would then be restored.

Occasionally, we have people call and say our men drove by but did not stop to repair a problem at

their particular house. We hope this explanation will help you understand our priorities. Although at times it may not seem like it, there is a predetermined plan to restore service to the largest number of people in the quickest time possible.

## OFFICE CLOSINGS

Your cooperative will be closed  
Tuesday, November 11  
in honor of Veterans Day.



The cooperative office  
will also be closed on Thursday and  
Friday, Nov. 22 and 23,  
to observe the Thanksgiving Holiday  
with family and friends.





A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

<http://www.menard.com>

## A black and white illustration of Santa Claus, depicted with a large white beard and a hat, holding a gift. He is surrounded by several reindeer with large antlers, some wearing harnesses. The scene is filled with various Christmas gifts, including a teddy bear, a camera, and a small boat. The background features a large, bright circular light, possibly the moon or a full sun, and several stars. The text 'N'S' and 'NGS' is visible on the left side of the image.

## 16a



## Students Encouraged To Apply For 2009 IEC Memorial Scholarships

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For more information contact Trish Michels at Menard Electric Cooperative at 800-872-1203 or 217-632-7746.

**MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com)**

## 2009 Rate Adjustment Information

In November, Menard Electric Cooperative held member meetings to discuss the upcoming rate adjustment. The new rates will take effect on the Jan. 31, 2009 bill. Below is a list of bullet points that we discussed about the new rate adjustment. If you have any questions about the new rates, please contact MEC office.

- Menard Electric Cooperative (MEC) has not raised energy rates since 1994.
- No change in the Facility Charge or Demand Charge at this time.
- MEC purchases power from our power supplier Prairie Power, Inc.
- MEC, through our power supplier, has purchased stake in the Prairie State Generation

Campus – a new, clean coal generating plant in southern Illinois.

- MEC's new wholesale electricity cost will increase by nearly 1.5 cents/kWh in 2009.
- MEC has completed a cost-of-service study to determine how the new wholesale power cost will affect each rate class.
- The rate adjustment only affects the energy portion of the member's bill. The energy portion is collected by MEC to pay the wholesale power bill from PPI.
- Members/Owners with low kilowatt usage will have a small percentage increase.
- Members/Owners with high kilowatt usage will see a larger percentage increase.

- A member with average usage in the residential class (Rate Code 10, 11, 17, 18 or 19) will see an increase that ranges from 7 percent to 16 percent.
- As a member-owned and governed electric cooperative, MEC is exempt from regulation by the Illinois Commerce Commission.
- The need for additional revenue was introduced at our annual meeting in June 2008.
- MEC has communicated the new rate adjustment by placing notes on the bill, a series of articles in the monthly ICL center section that discussed the need for and impact of the rates on member bills and member meetings held in November.

## Congratulations to Menard Linemen For Placing 1st at Rodeo



It was all smiles after the Menard linemen took first place at the annual Lineman's Rodeo. Pictured far left is AIEC's Ken Macken and Jim Miles, followed by Menard's three-man team Jeremy Willis, Rob Hanner and Daren Deverman. AIEC's Roger Larkin is pictured at right.

**MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com)**

# Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

The LIHEAP program provides a one-time lump sum payment directly to the utility company on behalf of the customer. The payment is based upon the number of people in the household and the gross monthly income of everyone in that household. This process can take approximately 30 days once you have completed an application.

The LIHEAP program can help with natural gas,

electricity, propane, and heating oil. In some cases if the utility service is shut off the customer may be required to make a Good Faith payment to the utility company before LIHEAP can make any promise of payment.

You may be eligible for assistance if your household's combined income is at or below the following levels:

<i># of people living in the household:</i>	<i>Gross income for 30 days prior to application date:</i>
1	\$1,300
2	\$1,750
3	\$2,200
4	\$2,650
5	\$3,100

Please call your local office for additional amounts.

If you think you are eligible to participate in the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). You may wish to contact an agent in your area.

## **CIEDC (Logan County)**

1800 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Lincoln, IL 62656  
(217) 732-2159

## **Decatur-Macon County Opportunity Corp.**

1122 E. Marietta St.  
Decatur, IL 62521  
(217) 428-2193

## **MCS Community Services**

Cass & Morgan County  
345 W. State St.  
Jacksonville, IL 62650  
(217) 243-9404  
(888) 288-4413

## **Sangamon County Dept. of Community Resources**

200 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St., Room 311  
Springfield, IL 62701  
(217) 535-3120

## **Tazewood Community Service, Inc.**

Tazewell County  
2005 S. Main St.  
Morton, IL 61550-1540  
(309) 266-9941

## **CIEDC (Mason County)**

532 S. Schrader  
Havana, IL 62644  
(309) 543-2594

## **CIEDC (Menard County)**

809 Old Salem Rd.  
Petersburg, IL 62675  
(217) 632-3878

# How to Deck the Halls - Safely

Each year, improper installation and use of holiday lighting and decorations cause thousands of avoidable electrical fires and injuries.

Look for and eliminate potential dangers due to holiday lighting, decorating, and entertaining.

- Use only lights that have been safety tested and approved by Underwriters Laboratory (UL). Look for the UL label on the box and on each string.
- Place fresh-cut trees away from heat sources such as heat registers, fireplaces, radiators, and televisions. Water the tree frequently.
- Before plugging in the lights, check each string for broken sockets, frayed cords, or faulty plugs. Replace damaged strings.
- 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 electric cords away from high-traffic areas.

Don't stretch them across a room where people can trip over them. Likewise, don't hide them under rugs or carpets.

- Always unplug lights before going to bed or leaving your home.
- Outdoors, use only lights and cords rated for outdoor use. Do not lay cords across sidewalks, decks, or other walkways.
- 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.
- Do not attach cords or lights to metal objects.
- Never plug more than two home appliances into an outlet at once. Use surge protectors and power strips for multiple plugs, and use only outlets designed to handle multiple plugs.

For more information, visit [www.SafeElectricity.org](http://www.SafeElectricity.org).

**MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com)**

## How to Calculate Your Capital Credits

**F**or the fiscal year 2007 the capital credit allocation factor will be .04908024. To determine the amount of capital credits

on your account, multiply the allocation factor by the amount paid for electricity excluding tax. For example, energy payments of

$\$1,000 \times .04908024 = \$49.08$ . Please contact the co-op office for more information.

### OFFICE CLOSING

Menard Electric Cooperative will be closed December 25 and 26 in observance of Christmas



*Dear Santa,*

*This Christmas, please bring me items that my co-op says will help me save money!*

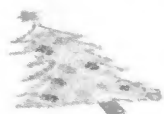
- 1. An electric blanket*
- 2. Energy-efficient washer and dryer*
- 3. Energy Star dishwasher*
- 4. Low-flow showerhead*
- 5. Programmable thermostat*

*Happy Holidays*

*From your Touchstone Energy Cooperative*



*Dear Santa*



Menard Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



**MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com)**



**Make Things Easy!**  
**Sign up now to pay your bill automatically**

**W**ith our Automatic Payment Plan you can have your electric bill automatically deducted from your checking or savings account on the 10th of each month. We will deduct the net amount shown on your bill, and proof of payment will appear on your monthly statement. No checks to write, stamps to buy or deadlines to worry about! Fill out the application below to make your life just a little easier!

Mail with a voided check to Menard Electric Cooperative, PO Box 200, Petersburg, IL 62675.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ SS# \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_ Map Location # \_\_\_\_\_

Bank Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Bank Account # \_\_\_\_\_

Checking acct. ☐

Savings acct. ☐

I, \_\_\_\_\_, authorize Menard Electric Cooperative to draw monthly bank drafts through the automatic plan (ACH) on the account shown above for the payment of my electric bill in full and any other services I authorize. I understand that I may discontinue my participation at any time by notifying Menard Electric Cooperative in writing. Both Menard Electric Cooperative and the bank may terminate this agreement with 10 days written notice. I understand that Menard Electric Cooperative reserves the right to limit participation in this program to customers whose accounts are in good standing. I understand that the amount of my bill each month will be drafted on the 10th or next business day after. I understand that if funds are not available in my account for the draft to clear, there will be a charge posted to my Menard Electric Cooperative account, for NSF, and I will still be required to make full payment before the due date of the bill.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Paying Your Electric Bill through a Financial Institution

If you pay your Menard Electric bill online through your financial institution, please include your Menard Electric Account No. in the appropriate location on your financial institution's form.

This is the number in the upper right hand corner of the stub on the bottom of your electric

bill. It is in **bold face type** above the Map Location No. on your bill stub which you would normally return with your payment if you were to mail it to the office with a check. This number is important to us so we can make sure your payment is posted to your account.

### Please Detach and Return Bottom Portion with Payment

**Please Remit Payment to:**  
Menard Electric Cooperative  
P.O. Box 200  
Petersburg, IL 62675-0200

REGULAR	XXXXXXXX
Map Location Number	02-104-001
Amount Due	
Due Date	

## Make Your Life Easier With Our Automatic Payment Plan

With our Automatic Payment Plan, you can pay your bill each month automatically from your checking or savings account.

### 5 ways automatic payment can help you:

1. It saves time – fewer checks to write.
2. It is convenient and timely – even if you're out of town.
3. It is always on time – no lost or misplaced statements help maintain good credit and avoid late charges.
4. It saves money – no postage or envelopes needed.
5. It's easy – it's easy to sign up for or cancel, just call us.

### How it works:

The Automatic Payment Plan is dependable, flexible, convenient, and easy. You authorize regularly scheduled payments to be made from your checking or savings account. Then, just sit back and relax. Your payments will be made automatically on the 10th day of each month, and proof of payment will appear on your statement. The amount withdrawn from your account will be the net amount due shown on your bill. The authority you give us to charge your account will remain in affect until you notify us in writing to terminate the authorization.

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# Menard Electric Cooperative From the Board Room September 23, 2008

The monthly Board Meeting of the Board of Directors of Menard Electric Cooperative was called to order by President Gary L. Martin at 6:00 P.M. at the headquarters of the Cooperative, 14300 State Highway 97, Petersburg, County of Menard and State of Illinois.

On roll call the following Directors were present: Jerry W. Brooks, Michael L. Carls, D. Jay Frye, Warren D. Goetsch, Gary L. Martin, Donald E. McMillan, Michael E. Patrick, Roy H. Seaney and Steven L. Worner. Also present was System Engineer, James Rechner, Manager Lynn A. Frasco and Attorney Charles K. Smith.

President Martin reviewed with the Board the Consensus Agenda. It was moved and seconded that the Consensus Agenda be approved. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco presented the Manager's Report for the month of August, 2008. He reviewed the Balance Sheet, Budget, as well as the Outage Summary and Safety Report.

Under the Operations Report, Manager Frasco reported that the Cooperative was moving ahead with testing laptops in the area servicemen's trucks and that they were getting a more "rugged" laptop computer to use in servicemen's trucks. The Cooperative intended to download all maps and customer billing information on the computers. Manager Frasco discussed the dates and times for the Regional Information Meetings and discussed the Agenda for those Meetings. He reported on the status of the documentation for the FFB loan and advised that the paperwork for the loan should be forthcoming in the near future. System Engineer, James Rechner reviewed with the Board the proposed revisions to the Line Extension Policy. The Board discussed the Policy as revised and suggested other revisions to Mr. Rechner. Manager Frasco advised that the Staff would revise the Policy and bring it back to the Board at next month's Meeting. Manager Frasco presented to the Board an uncollectible accounts write off summary as to various accounts that had been written off and the reason therefore as prepared by Wayne Jones. Attorney Smith advised of the status of matters with regard to the radio interference matter with the FCC. He reported that the FCC had ruled with Menard Electric and determined that Carlinville Area Hospital/Macoupin County was incorrectly granted the same frequency as Menard. The FCC has ordered Macoupin County to get off the frequency and has provided a new frequency to them. Attorney Smith advised that he had spoken with the Coordinator for Macoupin County, who advised that as of September 12, 2008, Macoupin County and all of its subsidiaries were now off the frequency. It was moved and seconded the Manager's Report be approved as presented. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco presented the Financial Report for the Month of August. Year to date margins were \$1,286,206

compared to \$530,046 a year earlier. Equity as of the end of August was 33.58% and the number of members served was 10,426 compared to 10,339 a year ago. Net Utility Plant at the end of August was \$34,017,349 compared to \$31,942,480 last year. The cooperative continues to meet the requirements of the RUS, FFB and NRUCFC.

Director Goetsch reported on AIEC Activities.

Director Carls reported on Prairie Power, Inc. Director Carls reviewed with the Board a news release from Prairie Power with regard to Wind Farm Development. Prairie Power was investigating pursuing developing a Wind Farm near Pittsfield, Illinois. Manager Frasco discussed a letter of support for the Shelbyville, Illinois Hydro Project at the Lake Shelbyville Dam. The letter was to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. It was moved and seconded that the President be authorized to execute said letter of approval and support. Motion carried. Manager Frasco advised that the draft Wholesale Power Contract had finally been approved by RUS.

The Board reviewed for first reading the revised Section III - Director Compensation Policy. It was moved and seconded that the Policy be moved to second reading for approval at next month's Board Meeting. Motion carried. The Board reviewed for first reading the revised Section V - Long Term Disability Insurance Program. It was moved and seconded that the Policy be moved to second reading for approval at next month's Board Meeting. Motion carried. The Board reviewed for first reading the revised Section VII - 401K Plan Policy. It was moved and seconded that the Policy be moved to second reading for approval at next month's Board Meeting. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco reviewed with the Board a proposal with regard to the Non-Union 2008 salary adjustments. It was moved and seconded that the Non-Union 2008 salary adjustment be approved. Motion carried.

President Martin reported on the NRECA Region V Meeting.

Manager Frasco presented the Capital Credit Estate Refunds Report.

President Martin called the Board into Executive Session to evaluate Manager Frasco and to review his Contract. President Martin adjourned the Executive Session and reconvened the monthly Board Meeting.

President Martin reminded the Board that the next Meeting was scheduled for October 28, 2008 at 6:00 p.m.

Under other business, President Martin advised the Board that Menard Electric's Christmas Party is scheduled for December 5, 2008.

There being no further business to come before the Board, it was moved and seconded the Meeting be adjourned. Motion carried.

**Board minutes also available on [menard.com](http://menard.com) about 30 days after the Meeting.**

**MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com)**