



• **Report outages and other electrical issues**

*So we'll know you are out of power*

• **View detailed maps of outages**

*You'll know how large the outage is*

• **Get information about the outage**

*Linemen will share details and estimated restoration times if known*

**Step 1: Download the MyMEC App**

Android users will visit the Google Play store, and iOS users will visit the App store. Search for Menard Outage.

As of this printing, we aren't quite sure the exact date the app will be available for download. We are planning on February 1. Stay updated with our progress through our Facebook Page at [www.menard.com/Facebook](http://www.menard.com/Facebook).

*MyMEC works best through an app on your mobile device; we'll also have a link on our webpage at [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com) to a desktop version if you prefer. Please note that you may continue to call the office to report outages; our employees and after-hours call center will enter your information into our system just as if you'd used the MyMEC app.*



you a confirmation that your outage was reported. Outage Update Notifications could include restoration times and other important information. We encourage you to turn on all notifications.

That's it! Now you're all set and ready to use the MyMEC app whenever you have an outage to report!

**Reporting an Outage**

From the homescreen, select Report Outage, then the account you wish to report.

The screen Status line color will indicate whether our system has the service as active (green), or in a confirmed interruption (red). An outage will be predicted if other members have reported in. After clicking the Report Electric Issue button, you'll enter a phone number where you can be reached, and

from a drop-down menu you'll report your issue.



**Step 2: Add Your Account(s)**

From the homescreen, select Account Management to set up your account(s) on your device; you'll only need to do this once.

You'll need your account number or meter number (these can be found on your bill).

If you have multiple accounts, you can name them an alias of your choosing to keep them straight – like “house” and “barn.”

This page is also where you'll select to allow push notifications. Turning on the Outage Notifications allows us to send



**Electric Maps**

Select View Electric Map from the homescreen to view the real-time status of our entire system. If you zoom in, you'll see more detail and can even turn on satellite imagery if you wish.



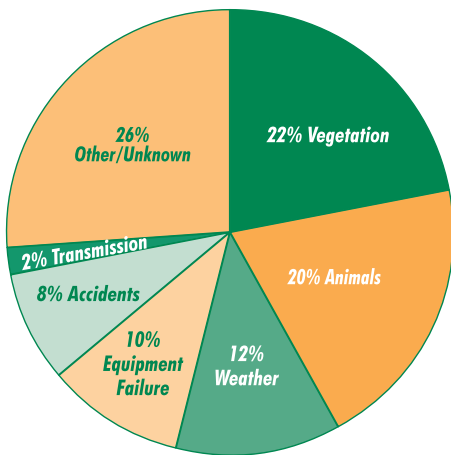
# “Why was my power out?”

## Causes of outages in 2017

Sometimes determining the cause of an outage is as simple as looking out a window, other times blue skies leave our members stumped as to why they are out of power. From car accidents to raccoons to tree limbs, the causes vary.

Our new MyMEC app will provide members with more information about our outages as they are happening. The outage management system powering the MyMEC app will allow us to communicate outage causes.

In the meantime, we thought we'd share some outage information from January to November 2017.



### 22% Vegetation

Trees contact our lines for many reasons, oftentimes wind and snow/ice are involved in weighing down limbs that are too close to our lines. This is why our vegetation management program is so important.

### 20% Animals

A variety of animals (birds, squirrels, opossums, snakes, etc.) sneak into substations, hang out on electric poles and chew through stuff, making contact with our equipment and causing outages. We install guards and barriers to protect sensitive equipment, but those pesky critters are troublesome.

### 12% Weather

Big events like tornadoes and ice storms are easy to remember – but those daily thunderstorms, snow showers and high wind events take their toll and cause outages too.

### 10% Equipment Failure

Normal wear-and-tear and weather-induced deterioration of our electrical infrastructure will contribute to equipment failure.

### 8% Accidents

Vehicles and farm equipment can take out energized power lines and cause damage to our system resulting in outages.

### 2% Transmission

Our power suppliers experience transmission line outages serving our substations. This type of outage affects hundreds of members all at once.

### 26% Other/Unknown

A little of this, a little of that, and mostly causes that are not apparent.



## 2018 Youth to Washington Tour Scholarship Program

See page 13 of this publication for information on our new Scholarship and Youth to Washington Tour opportunity! Applications and information are available at [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com) or by contacting the office.

## Rate increase reminder

Phase 2 of the facility charge and security light rate increase implemented by the Board of Directors in 2016 will take effect on your March 7 bills.

Rate Class	Rate Code	Increase/mo
Residential	10, 10S, 11, 11S, 13, 17, 17S, 18, 18S, 19, 19S	\$2.50
Small Commercial	20 and 21	\$5.50
Large Power	30 and 31	\$8.00
Irrigations (seasonal)	50, 51 and 52	\$4.50
Commercial/ No Demand	60, 61 and 62	\$3.00
Security Light		\$0.50



## Touchstone Energy



An alliance of

↑ 750

local, consumer-owned electric utilities across

46 states providing service to

32 million members under the

4 core principles:

integrity, accountability, innovation, commitment to community.



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# Board highlights

For full minutes visit [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com) or contact the office.

## November 28, 2017

- Present were Directors Jay Frye, Warren Goetsch, Gary Martin, Donald McMillan, Michael Patrick, Dennis Ryan, Roy Seaney & Steven Worner, Manager Alisha Anker, Manager of Accounting & Information Systems Chris Hinton & Attorney Charles Smith; Director Jodine Tate absent.
- Hinton: Presented proposed amendment to CoBank master loan & revolving line of credit agreements; no action taken.
- Hinton & Anker: Reviewed changes to 2018 budget.
- Hinton & Anker: Presented Prairie Power 2017 deferred revenue option/offer to re-defer 2015-16 monies into 2018-19. No changes made to current 2017 revenue deferral of 0.25 mills per kWh. Co-op would defer \$400,000 of revenue deferred during 2015-16 for use in 2018-19. Staff authorized to accept offer from Prairie Power.
- Anker: Reviewed balance sheet, budget, rebate, outage, safety, security, work orders & irrigation reports.
- Anker: Reviewed terms of Rate 51 agreement/program; over 32 inquiries in program.
- Anker: Advised she & Frye would present \$10,000 check to Mason County 4-H and Jr. Livestock Show Assoc from Sharing Success Program.
- Anker: Gave demonstration of new Outage Management System; should be running in February.
- Anker: Gave October financial report. Year to date margins \$2,803,199 compared to \$3,033,523 last year. End of October equity 40.90%. Served 10,898 member accounts. Net utility plant \$47,380,785 compared to \$45,755,241 last year. Co-op meets requirements of RUS, FFB, NRCFC & CoBank.
- Worner: AIEC activities & executive summary.
- Anker: Plan for 2018 ACRE contributions.
- Anker: Discussed changing participation in Youth Day & Youth Tour to include college scholarships; no action taken.
- Martin & Anker: Prairie Power Inc. report & October energy charge.
- Policies approved: Vegetation Management; Computer, Network, Email and Internet Use; Sick Leave Bonus Plan; Net Metering and Cooperative Credit for Excess Member-Generated Electric Energy; Interconnection of and Service to Qualifying Facilities Under Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act (PURPA).
- Board entered into executive session; reconvened.

**Notice: Look for enhancements coming soon to the layout of our Online Bill Pay webpage**

## Co-op Corner

# Space heaters & your bill

“Are you using space heaters?” It’s one of the first questions I ask members in the winter months when we look at their electric usage. For several years, I’ve been helping members discover the reasons for higher-than-expected electric usage. Thanks to our automatic meters, I can look at usage for each meter hour by hour, and hopefully spot patterns that help members discover more about how they use electricity.

By now, I know the common culprits, and space heaters are on that list. Members often don’t realize how much that small heater can add to their bills.

The heaters can be small square boxes or large elaborate fireplace-looking models, but the one thing they all have in common is an electric motor.

For a hypothetical situation, let’s say Sarah runs two small 1,500-watt heaters to take the chill off her living room and kitchen from 6 to 8 a.m. and 5 to 11 p.m. (She knows it is unsafe to run the heaters while she’s at work or asleep). Running the two heaters for eight hours would add up to about \$3 each day; that’s \$90 on her monthly bill.

We’ve all heard the claims by space heaters on how they can save you money on your energy bills. The only way Sarah could make this work is by lowering her thermostat enough to more than offset the cost of the space heaters. If she drops the temperature to keep her entire home cooler while using the heaters she might save money (but certainly not gain any comfort or convenience).

*By Michelle McNeal, Communications*

If Sarah’s living room and kitchen areas are drafty, she’ll make a wiser investment sealing air leaks with weather stripping and caulking.

We all want to be comfortable in our homes, and space heaters can provide that little extra warmth to ensure that. Just be aware what they could add to your bill. Give me a call at the office to look at your hourly usage if you’d like to see how a space heater, or any other change you make, affects your electric usage.

### Figure the daily usage

# of watts X # hours X electric rate  
(0.124) ÷ 1,000 = \$\$\$ per day.



## Picasso on the Prairie – Art for All

Think you've got what it takes to create a painting for your home? Ashley Trueblood does. She's bringing out the artist in individuals throughout our territory with Picasso on the Prairie. Her slogan is "art for all" because everyone who comes to a Picasso on the Prairie event will leave with a unique painting all their own.

Here's the basics of an event: Participants will choose a seat at a table already laid out with a blank canvas, paints, brushes and anything else needed to create a work of art. As the night progresses, participants often enjoy a glass of wine and a lot of laughs as they receive instruction, encouragement, and help as needed to create a painting based off the one chosen for the event. Painters have a whole lot of fun, and in about two hours, they all go home with a unique art piece.

"I have a lot of repeat customers," says Ashley. "They come to an event and go home with something they can be proud of. Then, they come back with a friend. Often, we'll have a group of ladies who come together – it's a time to be social and spend time together, and it's a lot of fun."

It all began four years ago as a collaboration between Ashley and Connie Lounsberry at Hill Prairie Winery in Oakford; the name Picasso on the Prairie even incorporates the winery's name. Connie has passed away, but the family-owned winery has stayed devoted to the events.

The original plan was to hold an event once a month at Hill Prairie Winery, but their popularity led to additional events at other wineries and venues in towns such as Petersburg, Jacksonville, Springfield and Havana.

"I try to keep it to three events a month now as my schedule allows," Ashley says. She also holds private



events at holiday and birthday parties, community fundraisers, and similar events.

"The hardest part of this is coming up with new original artwork. Most of my ideas come from a photo. I keep the designs relevant to this area and to the style people have in this area. I don't repeat any paintings unless a private class requests it," she says.

Some paintings, and events, are more popular than others, and Ashley will bring an assistant, or several, depending on the number of participants.

Ashley says she couldn't hold events without assistant Jill Stuhmer, who helps with everything from choosing paintings to helping others during the events. Ashley and her assistants walk around the room as painters work and help to solve any problems that come up. "Sometimes when people make a mistake, it's hard for them to figure out how to fix it. But everything is fixable in art. You just work with what you've got," Ashley says.

Having taught art at the elementary and intermediate schools in the Athens

School District for 15 years, Ashley says adults are more accepting than kids of having a piece turn out different than the example. "But on the other hand, the adults will often just hand me the brush and have me fix something," she says. "Whereas kids are more apt to try and fix a mistake themselves."

But again, Ashley emphasizes that everything is fixable in painting. "You can always try something new and different. That's important because we should never all do the exact same thing."

So, do you think you have what it takes to create a painting for your home? If you want to join a Picasso on the Prairie event, check out the Facebook page or visit the website at [www.picassoontheprairie.com](http://www.picassoontheprairie.com) to register for upcoming events. You'll see what painting has been chosen for each. Kids classes and other events are scheduled occasionally as well.