



Alan W. Wattles

Across The President's Desk

What is grid resiliency?

Resiliency of the grid is one of the most popular concepts being talked about in the electric industry today. This concept recently made headlines in the wake of Hurricanes Irma and Maria, which caused extraordinary damage to Puerto Rico's electric grid resulting in the longest sustained outage in U.S. history. Lack of resilience became the go-to phrase to describe Puerto Rico's grid. Here in Illinois, what does grid resiliency mean for you?

Resiliency is many things – it's reliability in your electric service, it's our ability to efficiently restore your power, it's being able to meet the demands of new technology and it's how we serve you with various generation sources without skipping a beat. Ultimately, resilience is how we deliver on our promise to improve the quality of life for our member-owners.

When it comes to having a resilient electric grid, it begins with a system that is designed and built to withstand high winds, powerful storms, cybersecurity threats and other disruptions that could result in outages. A resilient grid is also flexible and adaptable by allowing different types of generation – such as wind, solar, coal and hydro – to seamlessly work together to provide you with safe and reliable power. The way our systems react to advancements in technology – from demand response investments to serving the needs of electric vehicles – all factor into the resilience of our

grid.

Resiliency is a 24/7, 365-days-a-year task. Whether it's the power lines, substations or generation facilities on our grid, it takes proactive maintenance and investment to keep them running smoothly. With thousands of consumers without power for months, the lack of resiliency in Puerto Rico's power grid wasn't solely caused by hurricane damage; it was the result of years of neglect in taking care of their system and preparing for a worst-case scenario.

In a similar way to how we maintain our vehicles with regular oil changes, inspections and tire rotations, a grid must also be properly maintained. Throughout the year, we regularly conduct pole and line inspections. Our goal is to find a problem before it

becomes one. For example, if we find a weak pole that has damage from termites, we replace that pole. Doing so ensures that pole is as strong – or as resilient – as it can be.

Living in Illinois, we know that significant power outages can occur, especially as we enter spring and summer storm season. We're at the mercy of Mother Nature, and we have confidence in the resiliency of our system to recover from the situation with as little disruption as possible.

In the dictionary, resilience is defined as "the ability to bounce back, recover quickly and go back into shape or position after being stretched." When it comes to providing our member-owners with resilient service, this is what we work toward – day in and day out!



Michaela Runge represents MCEC on Washington Youth Tour

What do you get when 71 students from 27 Illinois electric and telephone cooperatives join more than 1,800 of their peers across the United States?

You get the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Youth to Washington Tour.

A local student was selected from a diverse group of applicants to represent Monroe County Electric Co-Operative (MCEC) to enjoy an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C. from June 8-15 as part of the annual Youth Tour. The 2018 Youth Tour delegate from MCEC was Michaela Runge of Fults. Michaela is the daughter of Craig and Christine Runge.

The students toured Capitol Hill and met with U.S. Senator Dick

Durbin and Congressman Mike Bost. They also visited historical and cultural sites including Arlington National Cemetery, the Supreme Court, Newseum, Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia, a variety of memorials and the U.S. Capitol. Among fun activities the students enjoyed were the Marine Corps Sunset Parade, the Smithsonian Museums and an assembly of Youth Tour participants from across the nation.

“Youth Tour is a great opportunity that changes these students’ lives,” says Alan W. Wattles, president/CEO of MCEC. “This experience helps prepare them for their futures. After touring our nation’s capital, meeting congressional representatives and learning firsthand how our government works, they

return home with valuable knowledge and memories that will last a lifetime.”

Since 1964, the nation’s cooperative electric and telephone utilities have sponsored more than 60,000 high school students to visit Washington, D.C. To learn more about the Youth to Washington Tour, go to www.youthtour.coop.



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MCEC line outages - June 2018

Date	Duration	# Out	Location	Cause Desc	Substation
06/02/18	1:43	10	McBride Rd	Trees, Other	Poe
06/05/18	0:35	26	Golden Eagle Ln	Member Caused	Fountain
06/09/18	2:05	3	Triple Lakes Rd	Lightning	Millstadt
06/14/18	1:26	2	Kaskaskia Rd	Construction	Waterloo
06/22/18	1:03	22	Cedar Ridge Ln	Other, Deterioration	N. Waterloo
06/22/18	1:12	18	Bohleystville Rd	Lightning	N. Waterloo
06/28/18	2:47	27	Meadow Acres	Trees, Other	Millstadt
06/28/18	3:17	29	Powell Rd	Trees, Other	Poe
06/28/18	3:24	3	Berger Rd	Other, Faulty Equipment	Fountain

August 11 (8/11) is convenient reminder to Always call 811 before digging

With Aug. 11 almost here, Monroe County Electric Co-Operative hopes this date on the calendar, 8/11, will serve as a natural reminder for residents to call 811 prior to any digging project to have underground utility lines marked.

Every six minutes an underground utility line is damaged because someone decided to dig without first calling 811. In Illinois, the one-call center is JULIE that can also be reached at the toll-free number 800-892-0123 or online at www.illinois1call.com.

When calling 811, homeowners and contractors are connected to JULIE, the local one call center, which notifies the appropriate utility companies of their intent to dig. Professional locators are then sent to the requested digging site to mark the approximate locations of underground lines with flags, spray paint or both. The legal start date and time will be 48 hours from the time that JULIE processes your locate request.

Striking a single line can cause injury, repair costs, fines and inconvenient outages. Every digging project, no matter how large or small, warrants a call to 811. Installing a mailbox, building a deck, planting a tree and laying a patio are all examples of digging projects that need a call to 811 before starting.

On Aug. 11 and throughout the year, we remind homeowners and professional contractors alike to call 811 before digging to eliminate the risk of striking an underground utility line. It really is the only way to know which utilities are buried in your area.”

The depth of utility lines can vary for a number of reasons, such as erosion, previous digging projects and

uneven surfaces. Utility lines need to be properly marked because even when digging only a few inches, the risk of striking an underground utility line still exists.



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**



70% of Lightning Fatalities OCCUR JUNE THROUGH AUGUST

Take extra care when enjoying outdoor sporting events and activities when weather turns threatening. If you hear thunder, lightning is close enough to pose an immediate threat. That is why the National Weather Service advises: “When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!” Lightning can strike up to ten miles away from rain, even if you don’t see clouds.

Safe Electricity urges everyone to understand the importance of lightning awareness and how to stay safe. Learn more at SafeElectricity.org

**Safe
Electricity.org**