


Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

Hi-Lites

See You at the Annual Meeting

By Anne Prince, NRECA

Most of us lead busy lives. We find ourselves multitasking, constantly checking phones and email to keep up with the demands of modern life. Thanks to technology, we can accomplish many tasks electronically and remotely to be more efficient. With so many pressing obligations, we like to protect our “spare” time. Invitations to attend in-person meetings and gatherings are weighed carefully as we decide whether our time and effort to attend is beneficial. The answer to the question, “What’s in it for me?” must be compelling. You may think attending Coles-Moultrie Electric Cooperative’s (CMEC) Annual Meeting would be easy to lump into the “no benefit to me” category. However, I’d ask you to think again.

CMEC exists to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to its consumer-members (that’s you!). Equally important is our mission to enrich the lives of all members and to serve the long-term interests of our local communities. This is where you can help.

As a member of the community, you have a perspective that is valuable—and we invite you to share it with the cooperative. At the Annual Meeting, cooperative leaders will discuss priorities and challenges, and discuss the financial health and priorities for the coming years. Items under consideration may include capital credits, broadband internet, storm restoration and electric vehicles. Annual Meeting is also the time to meet new board members who will represent you—the members of



Mark your calendar

for CMEC’s 80th Annual Meeting on Friday, June 14, 2019.

the cooperative. Board members are local consumers, just like you.

CMEC is one of the few local organizations that is uniquely positioned to bring together all members of the community. It’s worth noting that the health of the cooperative and the well-being of the community are closely intertwined.

Perhaps you may feel you have nothing to add to the discussion, so there is no need to attend. However, every energy bill you pay helps ensure better service and reliability for the whole community. Your dollars are reinvested locally into improvements that impact the reliability and affordability of your energy, and CMEC

wants to hear from you to better inform our decisions as we plan.

While your cooperative provides convenient electronic options for bill-paying and communication, there are times when there is no substitute for in-person engagement. When members of our community come together for a common purpose, we improve the quality of life for all in our corner of the world.

If you’ve never attended, or if it’s been awhile, please stop by. We look forward to visiting with you! We’ll have food, fun and door prizes, so mark your calendar for CMEC’s 80th Annual Meeting on Friday, June 14, 2019 at Peterson Park, Mattoon.

P.O. Box 709 (104 Dewitt Ave., East)
 Mattoon, Illinois 61938

Phone: 217/235-0341 or
 Toll-Free: 1-888-661-CMEC (2632)
 Office hours:
 Monday-Friday
 7:30a.m. - 4:30p.m.

Chairman

Debbie Albin.....Mattoon

Vice Chairman

John Bowers Lovington

Secretary

Natalie ParkersonMattoon

Treasurer

Steve Shrader..... Westfield

Director

Jeffery Hudson..... Charleston

Kent Metzger Gays

Bill Voyles..... Sullivan

President/CEO

Kim Leftwich

To report an outage

- First check your fuses or circuit breakers and see if your neighbors have power.
- If the problem appears to be with the cooperative's lines, call the office at the toll free number (888-661-2632), give the name the service is listed under, and report any hazardous conditions.

Send your current email
 to info@cmech.coop



for a chance to win a
 \$25 bill credit.

Downed and Dangerous

If you see a downed power line, always assume it is energized and dangerous. Avoid going near it or anything in contact with the power line.



Downed power lines can energize the ground up to **35 ft.** away - so keep your distance.



Never drive over a downed line or through water that is touching the line.



If you see a downed line, notify the local authorities immediately.



Never try to move a downed power line, even if you think the line is deenergized or if you're using a non-conductive item - this will not prevent injury or death!



AMERICA'S ELECTRIC
 COOPERATIVES

Source: ESFI.org

President & CEO Report – October 2018

Safety

- CMEC Safety Committee met on 10/2/18 to have our monthly meeting. CMEC discussed the results of the RESAP visit and ways to improve our score.
- Staff members Jim Wallace and Sam Adair attended the JT&S safety meeting at the AIEC.
- CMEC has taken steps to move all our reporting checklists to an application on the tablets for the outside department.
- AIEC's Jim Miles was here for this month's safety meeting going over distracted driving and work site set up.

CONNECT

- 417 Current Customers
- Lake Land College tower experienced a major lightning strike last month. After replacement of the damaged equipment, we still had user experience intermittency throughout the day. After many days of troubleshooting, we found that the frequency we were using was being scrambled by a competitor's equipment. We were able to program equipment to move frequencies and adjust user's antenna. No reports of outages have come in since.
- Tower work/updates have been completed on the Chesterville Tower. These updates were needed and now we can serve areas north of Chesterville.
- Moultrie County Water Tower upgrade
The next and last tower that we will update for this year is the water tower north of Gays. We plan to move forward with this upgrade in the next month. More information to come.

Marketing/Member Services

- HomeServe program update. HomeServe will send out a new mailer at the end of October on Heating Systems. Currently over 300 members take advantage of this member service program. We hope to continue to supply our members with programs they can benefit from with no cost to the cooperative. This program continues to gain momentum around the country. We are constantly receiving calls from other cooperatives asking about the program with interest in starting their own.
- Cooperative Month: CMEC again participated in cooperative month. Co-op Connections Card Day was held and featured the Great Pumpkin Patch

as a CMEC Member. Our Facebook page traffic grew immensely with the weekly drawing for CMEC "swag." We also took part in and around our communities participating at the EIU Homecoming parade, Mattoon Trunk or Treat, CMEC Volunteer Day (Catholic Charities & Douglas Hart) and a blood drive hosted at our office.

- CMEC staff member Sam Adair attended the AIEC's Marketing & Member Services Meeting in Bloomington. The group discussed distributed renewable generation, Illinois Legislation and many other topics.
- Website Update: There were 1,669 visitors to the website and they looked at 8,464 pages. They stayed on the site for an average of 1 min. :42 per person. 885 people visited the site from their desktop computers, 676 from smart phones and 108 from tablets.
- Facebook has 2,172 followers.

Accounting/Finance

- Communications around retirement of capital credits will be published in November's edition of Illinois Country Living. Checks will be distributed around mid-November retiring the excess margins for 1977, 1978 and 1979.
- The budget process has begun for the 2019 fiscal year, this includes capital budget, operating budget and 10-year forecast.
- In addition, the department has begun preparations for final quarter 2018.

LED Lighting

- To date, (2,163) LED lights have been installed replacing (433) mercury vapor and (1,638) sodium vapor lights.

Engineering

- Manual meter reads decreased to 109 for Oct. 1 reads from 308 for Sept. 1 reads. Last month's network issues have been resolved, along with crops removed from the fields, contributing to better efficiency in reads.
- Engineering received requests for 287 JULIE locates and called in 18 JULIE locates. Of the 287 locate notifications received, CMEC personnel performed 28 primary and 24 secondary locates.
- 26 Report-On-Calls were received and assigned for member/new member requests. Up from eight in the month of August. Members are attempting to get

things done before winter arrives.

- As a result of increased Report-On-Calls, field engineers are focused on meeting with members. They are also creating pole replacement work orders from recent O&M inspections.

Operations

- In June, crews performed the following work: (1) new service, (1) service upgrade, (28) pole replacements due to: age (22), vehicle (1), weather (4), and service repair (1).
- The rebuild of the north/south mile of the W1A mile was completed. This is part of the Work Plan.
- Crews performed O&M on the M&P miles in order to create work. O&M inspections result in locating bad poles, thereby creating work for the crews.

Fleet

- Finalized drawings on the new digger truck (Replacement for Unit #18). Expect delivery in Feb/March 2019.
- Moving forward on obtaining the replacement bucket truck for Unit #11. Expect a unit by early November.

IT/SCADA

- Continuing work on software updates on office computers that PPI has suggested to help eliminate known vulnerabilities.
- Continuing working on Trilliant, NISC MultiSpeak interoperability.
- Trilliant will be assisting with hotfixes and firmware updates to the system.
- David Welsh attended the NISC MIC Conference, Smart Utility Summit, Cooperative Technology Conference. He attended a remote pilot class, and successfully tested for a remote pilot certificate. This is to allow operation of a drone for use in patrolling parts of the distribution system.
- Fiber to the north building is complete.
- Working with a new radio card for troubleshooting AMI field issues.
- Installing the Lakeland Sub SCADA pilot.

GIS

- Over the last month, Shaun Vester has been able to add more to the new web GIS. Additionally, he has started working on a new "late meters" map to give us a better understanding of the problem areas in our system.

Monthly Board Meeting Minutes can be viewed on our website: www.cmec.coop



Saving Lives

Mark your calendar for Monday, Jan. 21 and stop by our office. The American Red Cross Bloodmobile will be here from 7:30 – 11:30 a.m. Each unit of blood contains red blood cells for accident victims, plasma for burn patients and platelets for cancer patients.

Substation Testing

On Nov. 6, 7 and 8, CMEC crews assisted High Voltage Maintenance by switching substations for testing of the substation transformer and voltage regulators. The following substations were tested: Sarah Bush, Sullivan and Bethany. It is CMEC's practice to test the equipment every two years and to take oil samples in the off year, comparing the data with previous data to see if there are any issues arising that could potentially cause a catastrophic failure. During the period that the substation is deenergized for testing, the CMEC crews inspect all connections and operating components of the substation to ensure proper operation. Prior to the testing, a thermal scan is performed to determine any "hotspots" that may need attention. This is just one of many practices that CMEC has in place to provide the membership with the highest quality of service possible.

Submitted by Jim Wallace, CMEC Director of Operations & Engineering

Board Candidates

Director terms for districts 1 and 7 will expire June 14, 2019. Bill Voyles is currently representing district 1 and Jeff Hudson is representing district 7. Interested members from those districts shall complete a Request for Nominating Petitions and a Statement of Qualifications demonstrating that he/she is qualified to serve as a director under the terms and provisions of Article V, Section 3, of cooperative bylaws. All nominations shall be reviewed to ensure that the member seeking office as a director is qualified. Candidates who receive nominating petitions are required to obtain the valid signatures of 20 or more active members of the cooperative on his/her petitions and filing his/her petitions in the office of the cooperative by **4:30 p.m., March 13, 2019**. We encourage interested members from both districts to contact us at 217-235-0341 or email info@cmeccoop.

Congratulations

to our Cooperative Month Winners!

**Margaret Meunier Blair,
Bea Conley, Amy Diener,
Viola Gingerich, Pam Klingler,
Becky Rice, Maelona Sims,
Kristen Watson and
Donna Wininger.**

Reminder

CHOOSE OPTION #2 when calling in to pay your bill. 217-235-0341 or Toll Free 888-661-2632. You can also come into the office, mail in your payment, set up auto pay, use SmartHub online, or drop your bill off at any First Mid Bank.



Credits

Capital credit checks totaling \$976,336.69 were mailed Nov. 20, 2018. Your board voted to retire years 1977-1979 resulting in 4,549 checks. Credits are paid at the discretion of the board when the cooperative has met certain financial requirements and other obligations. We appreciate your membership and are pleased to return this benefit back to you.



EASY WAYS TO SAVE ENERGY

WEATHERIZE

Seal doors and windows with caulk, weather stripping and/or plastic film.



SEAL IN WARMTH

Close blinds and curtains during the night to keep cold air out. Open them during the day to let sunlight in.



COOK UP SAVINGS

Use smaller appliances, like microwaves, toaster ovens and slow cookers when possible.

