



Mike Smith
President and CEO

From the CEO's desk

Hopefully over the last several months you have learned a little bit about what drives rate-making decisions at your cooperative. Technology has changed considerably over the last several years, and it is continuing to change. It has given members the opportunity to generate their own electricity on site and to put the excess energy back on the grid. The member who opts to generate their own electricity can reduce their kilowatt hour usage considerably, but as I said previously, that is the most inexpensive part of a member's bill. The rest of the bill is made up of cost recovery for utility plant that needs to run 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

In the future, I believe we will see more and more solar installations if only because there are some impressive incentives currently being offered by the state. This will continue to push our rates toward more fixed cost recovery, so all our members are sharing in the cost to access the grid. There is a lot of discussion about the development of storage for electricity, and larger scale storage has made some impressive gains over the last couple of years. Small scale storage is currently available, but it is costly and does not allow the member to unhook from the grid. I have yet to hear of anyone disconnecting from the grid other than those who are truly dedicated to self-sufficiency or those who live so remotely that it is the only option.

I also see utilities continue to evolve, relying less on carbon-based fuels and moving more toward renewable generation and efficiency. We will continue to

see large scale solar and wind development, but without the same scale of development in utility scale storage it will become a challenge for utilities to dispatch. Efficiency in this case means changing our members' usage patterns of electricity. Most electric utilities build power plants to cover peak usage. What if incentives were made to shift some of that peak usage to a different "off peak" period? **435FN11-1212C** Conversely, what if a premium price was charged for periods when "on peak" periods were happening? Generally speaking, our "on peak" periods are from 5 to 8 p.m., and I would encourage each of you to not only look how much electricity you use, but also when it is being used. Accessing your online account through our website is a great start.

At the end of the day, we are here for our members. Our goal is to provide our members the highest reliability for the lowest cost, and in windswept western Illinois, that is often a challenging proposition. Thank you for the opportunity to serve you, and should you have any questions, always feel free to contact your hometown cooperative.

*Our office
will be closed
Monday, May 27,
for Memorial Day.*



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Lobby Day 2019

Ninety Illinois electric cooperative directors, managers and staff visited the Illinois State Capitol in March to fly the co-op flag and build important relationships with their local legislators. Representing McDonough Power at Electric Cooperative Lobby Day were President/CEO Mike Smith, director Jerry Riggins and Energy Services Manager Kelly Hamm. **8120SL369-830B** They spoke with state representatives Randy Frese and Norine Hammond whose districts include their co-op territory regarding issues of importance to electric cooperative members. They discussed various pieces of legislation currently being debated in Springfield, sharing how those proposals could impact cooperatives and their members. This included the various energy proposals that have been filed, Senate Bill 1304/House Bill 1633 which would expand criminal penalties for damage to critical infrastructure facilities and Senate Bill 1304/House Bill 2839 on administrative decision review.





Pictured with Representative Norine Hammond are students: Iratze Aceves, Gavin Bergmann, Paige Blankenship, Taylor Carpenter, Brynn Chambers, Whitley Cooper, Erin Curley, Sarah Eden, McLain Engnell, Isaac Escapa, Reese Esther, Bella Gray, Colton Griggs, Lucy Gruidl, Jaxon Hiel, Peyton Jack, Will Ornduff, Kayla Pinedo, Annie Powell, Karli Strom, Logan Sumner, Kerem Tasdan, Dailenis Vera, Tommy Wilson and Erbenita Zejnul.

Electric cooperative youth participate in Youth Day

State Representative Norine Hammond met with students representing McDonough Power Cooperative and McDonough Telephone Cooperative, Inc. during the Illinois Electric and Telephone Cooperatives Youth Day in Springfield on Wednesday, April 3. Youth Day is designed to introduce young rural leaders to state government. More than 235 students representing 23 co-ops from across the state attended the event.

Students had the opportunity to visit the State Capitol, view state government in action from the Senate floor and question their legislators on key issues. They were also invited into the office of Secretary of State Jesse White.

During lunch, State Treasurer Michael W. Frerichs addressed students and chaperones and encouraged them to find where their passion lies. Frerichs said, "It doesn't matter what you do if you love what you are doing. Find your own path. There may be times when you start down a path and diverge from it but listen to your heart. Sometimes you have to immerse yourself in something and possibly fail. Even when we don't win, we learn from the experience."

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Collin Moseley, the 2018-19 Illinois Youth Leadership Council

representative from Clay Electric Cooperative, Inc., reflected on the past year and the experiences he had on the Youth to Washington Tour and his opportunity to represent Illinois at various meetings. He encouraged everyone going on the 2019 Youth to Washington Tour to apply to represent Illinois as the YLC and not be afraid to connect with others on the trip.

After lunch, the students visited the Old State Capitol and Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum.

At the end of the day, the students were interviewed for the chance to participate in the Youth to Washington tour, June 14-21, 2019. Those selected to represent McDonough Power Cooperative in Washington include Annie Powell from Macomb High School and Will Ornduff of United High School. Alternate winners include Whitley Cooper of Rushville-Industry High School and Erin Curley of Bushnell-Prairie City High School.



McDonough Power Youth to Washington recipients and alternates pictured left to right include Erin Curley, Whitley Cooper, Annie Powell and Will Ornduff.

Safety starts with you

Tips for spotting potential electrical hazards in your home

By Derrill Holly, NRECA

Electricity plays many roles in our lives, from powering baby monitors, cell phones and lighting, to running HVAC systems and appliances. No wonder we get so comfortable with its instant availability that when we flip a switch, we expect most systems or devices to do the job.

May is National Electrical Safety Month, and here at McDonough Power Cooperative, we think it's a great time to look around your home and check for potential safety hazards.

Remember, every electrical device has a purpose and a service lifespan. While we can extend their operations with maintenance and care, none of them are designed to last or work forever. When electricity is involved, failures can present electrical hazards that might be avoided with periodic inspections.

Ground fault circuit interrupters

Outdoor outlets or those in potentially damp locations in a kitchen, bathroom or laundry room often include GFCI features. They are designed to sense abnormal current flows, breaking the circuit to prevent potential electric shocks from devices plugged into the outlets.

The average GFCI outlet is designed to last about 10 years, but in areas prone to electrical storms or power surges, they can wear out in five years or less. Check them frequently by pressing the red test button. Make sure you hit the black reset button when you are done. Contact a licensed electrician to replace any failing GFCI outlets.

Loose or damaged outlets or switches

Unstable electrical outlets or wall switches with signs of heat damage or discoloration can offer early warnings of potential shock or electrical fire hazards. Loose connections can allow electrical current arcing. If you see these warning signs, it may be time to contact an electrician.

Surge protectors

Power strips with surge protectors can help safeguard expensive equipment like televisions, home entertainment systems and computer components from power spikes. Voltage spikes are measured in joules, and surge protectors are rated for the number of joules they can effectively absorb. That means if your surge protector is rated at 1,000 joules, it should be replaced when it hits or passes that limit. When the limit is reached, protection stops, and you're left with a basic power strip. **6326WW11-750B**

Some surge protectors include indicator lights that flicker to warn you when they've stopped working as designed, but many do not. If your electrical system takes a major hit, or if you don't remember when you bought your surge protector, replacement may be the best option.

Extension cords

If you use extension cords regularly to connect devices and equipment to your wall outlets, you may live in an underwired home. With a growing number of electrical devices connecting your family to the electricity you get from McDonough Power, having enough outlets in just the right spots can be challenging. Remember, extension cords are designed for temporary, occasional or periodic use.

If an extension cord gets noticeably warm when in use, it could be undersized for the intended use. If it shows any signs of frayed, cracked or heat-damaged insulation, it should be replaced. If the grounding prong is missing, crimped or loose, a grounded cord will not provide the protection designed into its performance. And always make sure that extension cords used in outdoor or potentially damp locations are rated for exterior use.

According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, approximately 51,000 electrical fires are reported each year in the United States, causing more

than \$1.3 billion in annual property damage.

Electricity is an essential necessity for modern living, and McDonough Power Cooperative is committed to providing safe, reliable and affordable power to all our members. We hope you'll keep these electrical safety tips in mind so that you can note any potential hazards *before* damage occurs.



Happy
Mother's
Day

May 12



Every month we will have four map location numbers hidden throughout The Wire. If you find the map location number that corresponds to the one on your bill (found above the usage graph), call our office and identify your number and the page that it is on. If correct, you will win a \$10 credit on your next electric bill.