



Mike Smith
President and CEO

Operation Round-Up

Operation Round-Up trustees met in January to review quarterly grant applications. Six organizations received funding; totaling \$14,125.35. To date, Operation Round-Up has provided \$103,375 in funding thanks to our generous members who allow their bills to be rounded up each month.



Christ's Church in Colchester was granted **\$1,000** toward the repair of their front entrance roofing, which is in desperate need of attention. Their project will help keep the building in usable condition and serve as a place of gathering for many community residents.

MacArthur Early Childhood Center in Macomb received **\$2,125.35** toward the purchase of a Bubble Wall for their Sensory Room. Their Sensory Room will have stations for active areas, calming areas, and various types of sensory activities - great for children with special needs as well as students experiencing emotional or behavioral difficulties.

Bushnell-Prairie City High School will benefit from a **\$3,000** grant toward their RealCare Baby Project. The funds will allow the school to replace three real-life baby simulators utilized in the Home Economics Adult Living class. The babies will help prepare students to raise their own children when they are ready as well as help them identify when that time may be. **10113A1A-408C**

Genesis Garden in Macomb was approved to receive **\$1,500** toward their Kids Cook Summer Meals Project. Genesis Garden's mission is to share food, provide shelter and empower community. The grant will help incorporate 25 community children into the prep, cooking, serving and cleanup of their daily summer meals.

Immaculate Conception School in Monmouth will receive **\$4,000** for their STEM Lab. STEM is a curriculum based on the idea of educating students in four specific disciplines - science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Funds will be utilized to purchase resources for the creation of a STEM lab.

Continued on page 20D





1210 West Jackson Street
P.O. Box 352
Macomb, Illinois
61455-0352

309-833-2101

www.mcdonoughpower.com

Office hours:
7 a.m. - 4 p.m. - Weekdays

Find us on 

DIRECTORS

Jeff Moore, Chairman

Walt Lewis, Vice Chairman

Steve Youngquist, Secretary

David Lueck, Treasurer

Jerry Riggins

Mike Cox

Bob Dwyer

Steve Hall

Steve Lynn

John D. McMillan, Attorney

**All Co-op Electric
Outages 837-1400**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative
The power of human connections



Considering solar? We're your trusted partner in renewable energy.

Today's consumers want and expect options, including the type of energy powering their homes. Many homeowners are looking for a less expensive form of energy with ongoing savings. Some are looking for a green energy source. These two motives are why many homeowners are exploring solar panels.

The interest in alternative energy sources is also being fueled by decreasing costs for solar, the availability of financial incentives and the proliferation of companies offering solar panel installation.

However, as attractive and popular as rooftop solar may appear, it is important for consumers to fully understand its true costs, the operational reality of this form of energy and actual energy savings. To determine whether solar is right for their situation, homeowners must undertake their due diligence.

We're here to help.

We won't be upset if members choose to install their own generation such as solar. McDonough Power actually can offer an assessment of your specific situation and help interconnect to the grid. After all, McDonough Power has a different "bottom line" that is not directly tied to the sale of a product or service. We constantly strive to find new ways to help you use energy more efficiently.

We will look at the total energy picture

and help you determine the best options for your home. While solar certainly works for many people, it's not the answer for all.

Sizing the system appropriately is key. It's in your best interest to offset only the energy you consume. Energy sent back to the grid receives credit for about \$.03 per kilowatt hour, not the \$.10-\$.12 retail rate. The retail rate that members pay includes transmission and distribution costs, which is a large portion of McDonough Power's bill from the wholesale supplier.

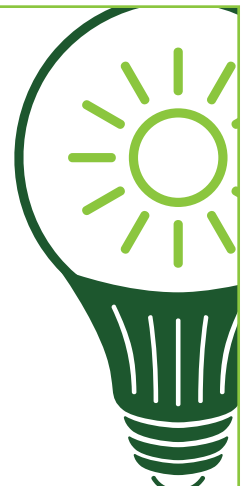
There are several financial factors at the utility level to consider when you are contemplating solar or any type of distributed generation.

- Will the current service need to be upgraded to accommodate the load?
- What will it cost to add \$1 million liability insurance to my current policy?
- If the system is over 10 kW there could be a metering cost, monthly administrative fees, etc. **8327D1-630C**

McDonough Power Cooperative recognizes that consumer interest in green energy sources and renewables is at an all-time high, and we stand ready to help our members determine their best options. Please visit the Distributed Generation & Net Metering section under the Member Services tab at www.mcdonoughpower.com for further details. We want to be your trusted partner in renewable energy.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Placing hot food in the refrigerator makes the appliance work harder than necessary, using more energy. Allow food to cool down before you place it in the fridge.



What is right-of-way and why is it necessary?

A right-of-way, when it comes to utilities, is an agreement that allows a utility to use or access a piece of property according to the terms of the easement.

Easements are areas designated for overhead and underground utility access and are usually defined when a lot or neighborhood is first platted. Easements are implemented because it is more efficient and less expensive to run utility lines straight through neighborhoods than it is to run them around parcels of land.

Having right-of-way means that utilities can access the area to fix a utility-related problem or to perform maintenance. Easements outline general property rights by others while right-of-way (as its name implies) is a specific property right.

According to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's frequently asked questions:

Q: *Who decides whether an electric utility can cut down a tree near a power line?*

A: The choice of how to trim trees and manage vegetation growth near a power line is primarily made by the electric utility, subject to state and local requirements and laws, applicable safety codes and any limitations or obligations specified in rights-of-way agreements.

Q: *The power lines near my house don't seem to be near the trees. So why are my trees getting trimmed anyway?*

A: There are two reasons for this. First, electric utilities are required to maintain the appropriate clearance between trees and power lines. On a cool, still day, it may appear that there is ample clearance. However, power lines sag as they expand in the summer due to air temperature and heavy use. Clearances around the lines must account for this, as well as wind, which causes the lines to sway. Second, electric utilities

usually prune or remove vegetation to a distance greater than the minimum clearances to account for future growth, movement of trees or power lines due to wind, conductor sag due to heat and line loading, and other factors.

Q: *The trees are in my yard. Why can't I stop the utility from cutting down or trimming my trees?*

A: An electric utility is granted an easement or a right-of-way on private property in order to build and maintain power lines. The terms of a utility right-of-way, defining the rights of the parties for building and maintaining electric lines, are specified in rights-of-way agreements. These agreements are usually attached to a property deed. **6328FH8-228B**

Workers who service utility lines should arrive in a marked vehicle and have proper identification. If you have any concerns, please call us at 309-833-2101. For more about electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

TRIMMED TREES = BETTER SERVICE



When you see us trimming trees near power lines, know that we are doing so because:

- **Tree and foliage overgrowth** can interfere with power distribution.
- **Power lines** can give off a spark or arc that may land on a nearby branch and ignite.
- The lights in your house may flicker when tree branches brush power lines during **high winds**.
- **Stormy weather** can cause nearby limbs to break off and land on power lines.
- Unobstructed power lines make it easier and **safer** for lineworkers to **maintain equipment** or **restore power**.



**Safe
Electricity.org**

Operation Round-Up

Continued from page 20A



Roseville Community Center, Inc. will receive \$2,500 toward flooring in their office, the Boy Scout and Girl Scout rooms as well as the YMCA Program Center. The RCC board strives to maintain and upgrade the facility, which benefits residents in Warren county.

Operation Round-Up provides financial assistance to local school programs, philanthropic groups, non-profit organizations, rescue squads, volunteer fire departments and other deserving causes that benefit members within McDonough Power's service area. The application deadline for the next round of funding is April 6, 2020. Visit www.mcdonoughpower.com to download the application packet.



**Spring forward
on March 8.**



Stay in the know

At McDonough Power, we are constantly striving to improve our operational efficiency so we can provide the most reliable electric service possible for our consumer-members.

We rely on data for nearly every aspect of our operations, which is why we need your help. By making sure we have your most accurate and complete contact information, we can continue to provide the high level of service that you expect and deserve. Accurate information enables us to improve customer service and enhance communications for reporting and repairing outages. It also allows co-op members to receive information about other important programs, events and activities.

Up-to-date contact information can potentially speed up the power restoration process during an outage. For example, the phone number you provide is linked to your service address in our member information system. This means when you call to report an outage after hours, our system recognizes your phone number and matches it with your account location. Accurate information helps our member information system predict the location and possible cause of an outage, making it easier for our crews to correct the problem.

While we always do our best to maintain service, we occasionally plan outages to update, repair or replace equipment. In these instances, we can

provide advance notification to affected members through automated phone messages, text messages or email, if we have your updated contact information and communication preferences.

Keeping the co-op updated with your information also helps us when there's a question about energy use or billing. Emails and text messages are also used to notify registered members of any changes in co-op event details. In addition, discrepancies on your account can be taken care of promptly if McDonough Power has accurate account information. **6414D2-226B**

Many of you have been members of the co-op for years, and it's likely that your account information hasn't been updated for some time. We recognize that many members now use a cell phone as their primary phone service, and we might not have that number in our system.

We want to emphasize that in providing your contact information to the co-op, we will never share this information with any third parties. It is only used by McDonough Power to send important information to you. Please take a moment to confirm or update your contact information by calling our office during business hours at 309-833-2101 or writing it on your remittance slip when paying your bill. By doing so, you will be helping us improve service and efficiency so we can better serve you and all members of the co-op.



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.