


MONROE ELECTRIC NEWS

Waterloo, Illinois • 618.939.7171 • 800.757.7433

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Alan W. Wattles

Across The President's Desk

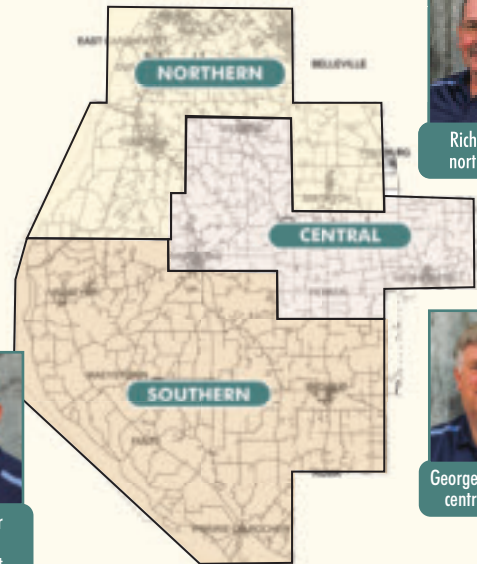
Petitions are available now at the office for directors in the north, central and south board districts of Monroe County Electric Cooperative. Petitions must be signed by no less than 20 members from the district you have primary residence in and must be received in the co-op's office by 4 p.m. on April 19, 2020.

One co-op member will be elected from each district to serve a three-year term. See a map of the districts at www.mcec.org, and click on "About Us" and then "Board of Directors" at the top. We recommend that you call our office and have one of our employees check your district as well. Seeking re-election are incumbent directors Richard Neff of Smithton, north district and George Obernagel of Waterloo, central district. Director Ross Mueller, from the south district, has decided not to seek re-election.

A good director must:

- Receive electric service from the co-op at their primary residence within the district, be a member in good standing and not have conflicting business interests. (They pay the same rates for service and follow the same policies as all other members.)
- Be able to spend adequate time on board work and attend most regular board meetings held the fourth Tuesday morning of each month for several hours at the co-op office.
- Attend our annual meeting each year and other special board meetings, committee meetings, director's conferences and educational seminars as necessary.

2020 Director nominating petitions available



Richard Neff
north district



George Obernagel
central district



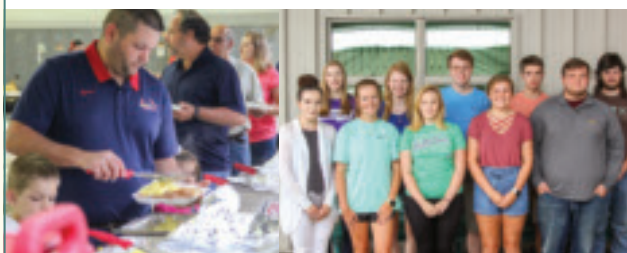
Ross Mueller
(retiring)
south district

- Be accessible to members within your district and willing to represent all members of the co-op.
- Acquire knowledge about the electric utility including finances, management and public issues. (It takes time to learn the system and for that reason our directors have made long-term commitments to serving the co-op.)
- Establish policies and employ a general manager who is responsible for all operational details.

Additional details can be found in our bylaws.

82nd ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday, June 13th
at the cooperative headquarters



Blood Drive



Mark your calendar for **Thursday, April 16** and stop by our office. The American Red Cross will be here from 2–6 p.m. Each unit of blood contains red blood cells for accident victims, plasma for burn patients and platelets for cancer patients.

Donations are welcome by everyone, but each MCEC member who donates will receive a \$10 bill credit. There will also be gifts given to all donors along with refreshments afterwards.

Liefer, Kraft and Mueller earn Gold Certification

Earlier this year, three of your board of directors reached a milestone by achieving their Director Gold Certificates. Past board chairmen Richard Liefer and Larry Kraft, along with board member Ross Mueller, were presented with their certificates.

Director Gold credential recognizes directors committed to continuing their education beyond the CCD (Credentialed Cooperative Director Certificate) and BLC (Board Leadership Certificate) and who desire a tangible credential that demonstrates their ongoing commitment to advancing their knowledge.

We congratulate and thank Rick, Larry and Ross for their ongoing commitment to your cooperative!



L to R: Directors Richard Liefer, Larry Kraft, Board President George Obernagel and Ross Mueller

Three ways to electrify your lawn care

Spring is just around the corner, and you can practically smell the freshly cut grass. If you're in the market to upgrade your lawn care equipment, you may want to consider electric or battery-powered options. Gas-powered mowers and trimmers may be your go-to, but times are changing. Electric lawn care equipment options are becoming popular, offering consumers faster charging times, longer battery life and quieter, greener products compared to gas-powered. Here are three ways you can electrify your lawn care.

Electric lawn mowers

Electric mowers have come a long way over the last few years. Early models required corded connections, which were tricky to manage—but the cord has been cut. Newer cordless electric mowers are more expensive than gas-powered mowers,

but much of the upfront cost can be recovered since electricity is a less expensive

fuel than gas, and electric engines generally require less maintenance. Cordless electric mowers typically cost \$200 to \$500.

Electric mowers are suitable for most lawn care needs, with batteries that require about one to two hours to fully charge, and most batteries can run for a full hour. That said, if you have a large yard (half an acre or larger), a gas-powered option may best to suit your needs.

Electric trimmers

Cordless electric string trimmers are a great option for most lawns. Traditionally, like lawn mowers, string trimmers have typically been powered by gas. But new versions of electric trimmers are improving and are now considered worthy competitors of gas-powered models.

Cordless electric trimmers are much quieter and easier to use, but most batteries last about 30 to 45 minutes. If you have a lot of space to trim, you may want to consider a back-up battery or plan to work in short bursts. If you're interested in purchasing an electric trimmer, the main factors to consider are the battery's life, charge time and power. Costs vary depending

on your needs, but you can find a quality version for about \$100.

Electric leaf blowers

After cutting and trimming your lawn, you'll need to clear off walkways and patios for the finishing touch. If you don't want to deal with the maintenance of a gas-powered blower or the restraints of a corded blower, a cordless electric version is a great option.

Cordless electric leaf blowers are lightweight and easy to maneuver, but they don't offer quite as much power as gas-powered and corded blowers. If your leaf blowing and clearing needs are minimal, a cordless electric leaf blower can get the job done. Costs for a cordless electric blower vary depending on power and battery quality, but you can purchase a dependable model for about \$150 and up.

If you're looking to electrify your lawn care equipment, be sure to do your homework. Search online for the latest reviews and check trusted websites like ConsumerReports.org. With a little research, you'll be well on your way to Lawn of the Month – with less maintenance, hassle and noise.



Meet the Employees



Gary Gilbert
Crew Foreman

Tell us about yourself:

I live on a cattle farm just north of Renault. I'm married to my wife Carrie, and we have two children: a 13-year-old son, Luke, and a 9-year-old daughter, Ava.

When I was a child, I wanted to be:

A professional bull rider

If I could have any meal to eat, it would include:

Steak and lobster

Describe the best vacation you ever took:

We took an awesome trip to Jamaica when I was younger.

Do you have a collection of something?

Old magazines

What was your favorite thing to play as a child?

G.I. Joe and cowboys

What do you see yourself doing after you retire?

Outside of my job as an electric lineman, I raise cattle and will probably do that full-time once I retire. I would also like to go to Hawaii someday.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Spring is nearly here! Now is the perfect time to test your A/C and ensure it's ready for summer. Remember to check the evaporator coil, which should be cleaned annually for optimal efficiency.

Source: energy.gov



MCEC line outages - January 2020

Date	Duration	# Out	Map Location	Cause Desc	Substation
1/11/2020	4:14	13	Powell Dr	Lightning	Poe
1/11/2020	3:26	29	Doyle Rd/Kalmer Ln	Lightning	Poe
1/11/2020	4:04	801	New Athens Area	Power Supplier	New Athens
1/11/2020	4:02	990	Smithton Area	Power Supplier	Smithton
1/17/2020	2:19	24	Imbs Station Rd	Trees And Ice	East Carondelet
1/18/2020	2:29	60	Saeger Rd/Wirth Rd	Trees, Other	Millstadt



www.mcec.org

6132 State Rt. 3 • P.O. Box 128 • Waterloo, Illinois 62298
618-939-7171 • 800-757-7433

Office hours: Monday through Friday 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Unruly trees and power lines: We're on it

We love trees. They beautify our landscape, provide shade and are an essential part of nature. When you see us out trimming trees, know that we are doing so to keep you safe and prevent service issues.

Too close for comfort

Although most trees do not present a problem, some of them grow into or crowd power lines or other utility equipment. When greenery becomes too close for comfort, we must address

it because overgrowth can interfere with power distribution and create a fire hazard.

Power lines can give off a spark or arc that may land on a nearby branch and ignite. Additionally, the lights in your house may flicker when tree branches brush power lines during high winds. Stormy weather can also cause limbs to break off and land on lines.

In fact, most power outages are caused by tree-related issues. It is our

job to ensure trees, branches and limbs are a safe distance from power lines.

Clear power lines make it easier and safer for lineworkers to access lines and fix problems that may occur. When clearing around lines, we make sure proper pruning techniques are used to preserve tree health as much as possible. Pruning is the first line of defense against unruly trees, although sometimes a tree must be removed. This is a last resort for certain scenarios: when a fast-growing tree is located directly under a power line or for trees that are leaning, in decline, or cracked or split.

In your own yard

When hiring someone to trim trees on **your property**, know that most tree-care workers are not qualified to work around energized power lines. By law, only OSHA-certified utility line clearance workers can work on trees or branches within 10 feet of a power line.

Contact **Chris Summers** at **939-7171** or **1-800-757-7433** with questions about trees around power lines. For more information 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