

Power On: October is National Co-op Month

As an electric cooperative, our top priority is always to provide reliable, affordable energy to you, the consumer-members we serve. Because we are a co-op, our mission is to enrich the lives of our members and serve the long-term interests of our local communities.

October is National Co-op Month, and electric cooperatives across the country are highlighting the many ways we “Power On.”

As an essential service, and to ensure reliability of your power supply, we modified our operations this year due to COVID-19 to safeguard business continuity. Our line crews and other employees worked staggered schedules to maintain separation. Some staff worked remotely. In the office, we limited and modified meetings and gatherings to allow for safe separation.

We also adjusted our walk-in office availability to ensure the health and safety of our employees and our valued members. We are finishing up a remodel of our front lobby that will enable us to provide safer



service into the future. Please see our Facebook Page for updates.

For our members impacted by COVID-19 who needed help with their electric bills, we waived late fees and worked with those hardest hit to make special payment arrangements.

We’ve seen other local businesses rising to meet similar challenges because that’s what communities do. We will continue to modify as needed in order to ensure we can Power On – to provide you with the reliable service you need.

Linemen aid power restoration after Hurricane Laura

When Hurricane Laura left mass destruction along Louisiana’s coastline in late August, Menard Electric did not hesitate to volunteer to aid a fellow co-op and its members. Several linemen crews assisted Jefferson Davis Electric Co-op in Jennings, Louisiana.

The co-op’s facilities were completely leveled and 100 percent of its members were without power; service restoration was slow due to the extensive damage of their facilities. As of the deadline of this publication (early September) a second wave of six linemen are being deployed to relieve the initial six-man crew.

Our hope is that as you read this all power has been restored. We encourage you to visit our Facebook Page where we will have posted our gratitude for our crews as they return.

Helping other co-ops is what we do. It is part of what makes us a cooperative and we celebrate that this month as part of Co-op Month.



Photos courtesy of Jefferson Davis Electric Co-op

Sharing Success 2020

One of the core founding principles that make us a co-op is Commitment to Community. Each year we ask organizations to submit projects for CoBank's Sharing Success program. Our Board of Directors selects projects and presents those to CoBank, a cooperative lending facility, who then matches those donations. These four organizations received 2020 Sharing Success donations; amounts noted are the full amount of donation, half from Menard Electric Cooperative and half from CoBank.



The Athens Area Food Pantry received \$1,000 to help supplement decreased community donation drives due to the COVID-19 outbreak. As a partner of Central Illinois Food Bank, the pantry purchases items at discounted prices to serve families in the Athens Community Unit School District.

The Community Action Partnership of Central IL (CAPCIL) received \$10,000 to expand their Food Pantry Co-ops located in Havana and Petersburg serving Mason and Menard counties. The pantries provide basic necessities, diminish food insecurity for families and build skill sets of individuals encouraged to volunteer at the co-op. From left, MEC Director Mike Patrick and General Manager Alisha Anker presented a donation to CAPCIL Food Pantry Co-op Coordinator Pam Sheppard and Director of Nutrition Services Becky Leamon.



The Tri-City Education Foundation received \$1,000 to meet teacher grant requests this school year after COVID-19 concerns depleted traditional fundraising opportunities. They provide educational resources for technology, classroom supplies and special education equipment for the Tri-City School District.

TC Tri-City
EF Foundation



Located in Petersburg, the Veteran's Memorial Park received \$3,500 to aid in its revitalization project that includes installing green fencing, paver areas, bench seating and landscaping. From left, MEC General Manager Alisha Anker presented the donation to Veterans Memorial Park Board members Eric Creviston, Karen Priddy, Sean Priddy and Damon Priddy.



ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIPS FOR HUNTERS

This hunting season, we encourage all members to be aware of electrical equipment and take necessary precautions while hunting. Keep these safety tips in mind as you enjoy the great outdoors.



Take notice of posted warning signs and keep clear of electrical equipment.



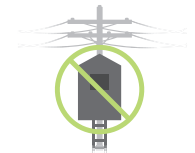
Do not shoot at or near power lines or insulators.



Know where power lines and equipment are located on the land where you hunt.



Be especially careful in wooded areas where power lines may not be as visible.



Do not place deer stands on utility poles or climb poles. Energized lines and equipment can conduct electricity to anyone who comes in contact with them, causing shock or electrocution.



Do not place decoys on power lines or other utility equipment. Any non-electrical equipment attached to a pole can pose an obstruction and serious hazards to our line crews.

LIHEAP

Funds are now available to help pay your electric bill through the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Program year 2021 is open. Contact your local agency as soon as possible to see if you are eligible.

MCS Community Services

Cass/Morgan County
217-243-9404

Community Action Partnership of Central Illinois

Logan/Mason/Menard County
217-732-2159 • capcil.info

Decatur-Macon County Opportunities Corporation

Macon County
217-428-2193 • dmcoc.org

Sangamon County

217-535-3120 • co.sangamon.il.us

Tazewood Community Services

Tazewell County
309-694-4391 • tazewoodcs.org

Employee Favorite

RECIPES



Sue Freeland, Assistant Accountant

“Yuck” (Mazetti)

- 1/4 cup chopped celery
- 1/4 cup butter or margarine
- 1 cup minced onion
- 1/4 cup minced green pepper
- 1 pound ground pork and beef, or all beef
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 1/2 8-ounce packages noodles (frozen Reams noodles work great)
- 1/4 cup butter or margarine
- 4-ounce can mushrooms
- 2 10.5-ounce cans condensed tomato soup, undiluted
- Grated Parmesan cheese

Sauté celery, onion, green pepper in 1/4 cup butter or margarine until tender. Brown ground meat in sautéed mixture, salt and pepper to taste. Cook noodles as instructed on package, drain and rinse. Turn into large mixing bowl, stir in 1/4 cup butter or margarine, stir in meat mixture, mushrooms and tomato soup. Mix well. Pour in casserole dish, sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Heat oven to 400 F for 1 hour 15 min, or until hot in center. You can also add whatever additional ingredients you like, such as corn or shredded cheddar cheese.



Sue says, “We call this dish Yuck because one day my brother is in the kitchen when Mom was mixing it up. He looked at it and said, ‘Oh yuck, that’s for dinner?’ You’ll understand that comment when you see what it looks like when you mix in the tomato soup. It’s been Yuck ever since.”

Board highlights

For full minutes visit menard.com or contact the office.

July 28, 2020

- Present were Directors Jay Frye, Warren Goetsch, Gary Holloway, Gary Martin, Donald McMillan, Michael Patrick, Dennis Ryan & Steven Worner. Director Jodine Tate was absent. Also present were Manager Alisha Anker & Attorney Charles Smith.
- Approved Station Power Agreement with Sugar Creek Wind One, LLC.
- Adopted Resolution authorizing access to RDApply Intake System.
- Anker: Discussed possible sale of capital assets.
- Anker: Discussed Broadband availability to members; will seek quotes to perform feasibility study.
- Anker: Reviewed operating statement, balance sheet & budget, member services report, update on payment policy waivers, operations & reliability reports, safety report & Connect newsletter.
- Appointed Patrick delegate to CFC Special Meeting.
- Approved providing gifts & accepting matching funds from CoBank's Sharing Success program.
- Goetsch: Gave AIEC Annual Meeting summary & solar facility program update.
- Martin: Gave Prairie Power Inc. report.
- Board entered into executive session; reconvened.
- Next Board Meeting 8/25/20 at 6:00 p.m.

Vanquish Energy Vampires

4 common items that suck electricity even when they appear to be off

1. Unplug phone and device chargers when not in use; they use a small amount of energy even when not in use.
2. Disable the instant-on feature of your television; it uses nearly the same amount of power even when turned off to avoid a warm-up period.
3. Turn off gaming consoles completely and disable automatic updates; some can use as much energy as a refrigerator.
4. Turn off your DVR when you don't have it set to record shows.



Ready to find more vampires? Look around for any power indicator lights or digital clocks – you are bound to notice a few. Some items are too inconvenient to unplug often but others could be a simple habit change.

New BudgetWise Budget Billing cycle begins soon

Sign up now and pay the same amount each month for 11 months.

The 12th month you will “settle up” with a credit if you used less than the estimated amount of electricity, or a balance due if you used more.

We'll periodically evaluate the account and apply a one-time adjustment if needed to keep you from having a large settlement amount.

Email info@menard.com or call 800-872-1203 with your account number. We'll let you know all the details and what your budget amount would be.

