


MONROE ELECTRIC NEWS

Waterloo, Illinois • 618.939.7171 • 800.757.7433

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 



Together We Serve & Together We Save Food Drive

Help us serve our local food pantry and
you could save on your electric bill!

Ten winners will receive a \$10 Bill Credit

Bring in four food items to our office between December 1 and 22, you'll receive one entry into a drawing for a \$10 bill credit. (Limit - four food items per membership) We'll draw ten winners on December 23rd. You'll also receive 2 - dimmable 60W equivalent LED light bulbs.

We'll donate collected items to the Monroe County Food Pantry. A manager of the food pantry says, "Anything we get is great and is used; canned fruits and vegetables in particular are always needed." Please check expiration dates on each item.

Our office is located at 6132 State Route 3, two miles south of Waterloo on route 3; hours are 7 a.m. - 4 p.m. Monday - Friday.

About the LED light bulbs

The LED Dimmable A19 light bulbs provide 25,000 hours of service - lasting 15 times longer than incandescents. These LED lights are energy efficient and use up to 80% less energy than standard incandescents. It is also equipped with a 300 degree beam angle that produces even light from the socket base in all directions. This lamp has a standard medium base which allows it to be easily installed into existing lamps, ceiling fixtures, recessed fixtures, sconces, pendants, and other decorative fixtures.

Office closings:

Monday, December 26 - Christmas
Monday, January 2 - New Year's



Season's Greetings

From the Directors and Employees of
Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, Inc.

Digital devices impact energy use

Ah, the Digital Age. We have gadgets galore, the ability to manage our homes in new and innovative ways, brilliant images and captivating sounds of modern entertainment options and of course, the internet. Clearly, digital devices reign supreme. Yet these cool new capabilities come with a couple of pitfalls; vampire loads and the issue of “technology reincarnation.”

Over the course of the Digital Age, electricity use has continued to increase. Families have multiple televisions.

Computer prices have plummeted, meaning many homes now have multiple computers. Everyone in the family needs a cell phone. Gaming consoles and set top cable/satellite boxes satisfy our desire for entertainment.

Major appliances aside, most digital devices do not use 120-volt power, which is the standard voltage of a home outlet. They actually use a lot less. So, trying to plug your brand new smartphone directly into an outlet is going to lead to a fried device and lots of tears from someone. This is why low-voltage devices come with a power adapter. These “wall warts” as some term them, take the 120-volt electricity supplied by MCEC and convert it to say, five volts. Unfortunately, most folks leave their adapters plugged in to make recharging easier. The problem with this approach is that the seemingly innocuous wall wart uses power even when it isn't charging a device.

This invisible energy consumption is often called “vampire load.” Studies show that 5 to 10 percent of the average home's energy use is



from vampire loads. The only way to stop this is to unplug the power adapter when it is not in use or employ smart power strips. These look like the typical power strip but with a twist—only one socket gets power all the time. When the device or appliance connected to it turns on and starts using power, the remaining sockets receive power too. This is perfect for entertainment systems, computer set ups and a variety of other situations.

Technological advances have steadily increased energy efficiency and reduced purchase prices. On its face, this seems like a good thing. Unfortunately, when replacing a product at the end of its life, the tendency is to go bigger, or continue to use the old tech. This is the second issue I noted—technology reincarnation.

For example, flat screen television prices have plummeted as technology has evolved—and so has the amount of electricity they use. Consumers wander into the big box store and are dazzled by walls of giant, brilliant televisions. What

they used to pay for the paltry 32” model now might net them a 50” giant. And who doesn't want to see their favorite show or sports event in near life size? But if you spring for the bigger TV, you won't benefit from the increased energy efficiency of the newer technology. The bigger model uses as much juice as the older, smaller TV, which likely ends up in another room (reincarnated in another setting) still using power.

Or refrigerators. These are the showpieces of the evolution of smart appliances. Many new

models include touchscreens and cameras; they communicate over the internet and probably even keep food cold and make ice. Yet what often happens is the old refrigerator ends up in the basement or garage, reincarnated as a dedicated beverage unit or overflow.

I'll offer a couple words of advice to help you avoid—or at least reduce—the effects of vampire loads and technology reincarnation. Invest in smart power strips or make a point to use outlets where you can conveniently unplug power adapters when not in use. Don't oversize your replacement appliances and entertainment gear unless family needs dictate the larger capacities. And recycle the replaced appliances and equipment to stem technology reincarnation. You will enjoy the Digital Age for a lot less.

Tom Tate writes on cooperative issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

Your Power – Your Plan – Your Choice

Real power solutions to fit your way of life

Have you ever wished you could take control of your energy consumption? Now you can with our **Prepaid Electric Service (PES)** program managed through our Smarthub application from Monroe County Electric Co-Operative (MCEC).

Our **Prepaid Electric Service (PES)** program works best for members wanting to take control of their electric use and monitor consumption. Research has found using this prepaid method of buying electricity can save you money by reducing your consumption.

PES allows you to:

- Control your energy use and budget

- Pay for energy as you use it
- Purchase electricity on your schedule
- Monitor and reduce energy use
- Pay as you go, no monthly bills
- Have greater flexibility with seasonal homes
- Receive low fund reminder alerts by phone, text or email
- Control your budget if you are on a fixed income
- Control and manage electric consumption on rental property
- Enjoy savings with reduced consumption
- No security deposit required, never pay late charges

PES prepay program from MCEC gives members the control to monitor their electric consumption on a regular basis which allows the member to notice patterns in their day-to-day use. The beauty of the PES Program is that it fits YOUR budget. You can buy enough electricity to last until payday or you can buy enough to last several months. The choice is yours!

Your service must be a single phase, 200 amp service or below to qualify.

Contact us to learn more about our prepaid option by calling 939-7171 or 1-800-757-7433.

To download the free mobile app for apple or android devices, search for "smarthub" in your app store.

To access Smarthub from your desktop, simply click "Access my account" at www.mcec.org and log in with your same email address and password.



Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, Inc.

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Office hours: Monday through Friday 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. • 800-757-7433

Statement of non-discrimination

Monroe County Electric Co-Operative, Inc. is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases

apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA

Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

Be energy smart in the kitchen

For many of us, the best holidays involve home-cooked meals and wonderful aromas of turkey, stuffing and baked goods wafting throughout the house. It means a busy kitchen and a bustling house full of family and friends.

In addition to being the “heart of your home,” your kitchen could pump savings back into your wallet. According to the Department of Energy, cooking accounts for 4.5 percent of total energy use in U.S. homes. This number, combined with the energy use associated with refrigeration, dishwashing and hot



water heating means that as much as 15 percent of the energy in the average American home is used in the kitchen. So, saving energy here can

have a significant impact on your household budget.

For example, when preparing side dishes, baked goods, soups and such, consider using small appliances like a crock pot, toaster oven, microwave or warming plate instead of your conventional oven or stovetop. These small appliances are a smart, energy-saving alternative, typically using about half the energy of a stove.

Practice using these tips this holiday season and carry them over into the new year for kitchen energy savings year round.

MCEC line outages - October 2016

Date	Duration	# Out	Location	Cause Desc	Substation
10/03/16	3:52	138	Country Club Ln	Vehicles Or Machinery	N. Waterloo
10/04/16	0:48	7	Trappers Creek Dr	Small Animals Or Birds	New Athens
10/16/16	2:06	94	Fountain Area	Other, Utilities	Fountain
10/19/16	1:37	4	KK Rd	Lightning	Waterloo
10/23/16	1:54	44	Imbs Station Rd	Other, Deterioration	East Carondelet
10/26/16	2:19	46	Grant/Fults Rd	Unknown	Fults
10/31/16	3:44	182	Wildwood Lakes Estates	Vehicles Or Machinery	Smithton