

Personnel changes



Julie Atwater, CPA, has been promoted to Director of Accounting & Finance. Julie started with the co-op in 2021 as our Controller/Accountant.

Jeremy Willis is our new Storekeeper Leadman. Jeremy has been with us for more than 13 years, moving from Lineman to Leadman.



Jason Beggs is our new Leadman. Jason has been a Lineman with us for 12 years.



New to the co-op is 3rd year Apprentice Lineman Carrigan McMahon. "I am happy to come back home to Greenview," he says. "I worked in the warehouse here at Menard Electric as summer help in 2018 and I enjoyed the comradery with the guys and knew this is where I wanted to be." Carrigan earned his Associate's Degree in Electrical Distribution from LLCC and worked as an Apprentice Lineman in Collinsville for Local 309. Carrigan also holds a Bachelor's Degree in Agribusiness from Illinois State University.



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Vegetation management

How our program improves safety and reliability



Ross Cloninger
Forester

Safety

Did you know tree limbs hold moisture? If a limb contacts a power line, that moisture provides a path down the tree into the ground, which can result in electrocution for anyone

in contact with the tree. Branches that seem far away from lines come into contact due to wind, broken limbs, or additional weight from individuals/snow/ice. Trees close to our lines are dangerous for linemen working on the lines, members working near trees, and even children playing in or around trees near lines.

Reliability

Tree limbs coming into contact with lines cause outages. This occurs not only during ice, snow and windstorms, but also on mild days when swaying branches cause multiple small interruptions that can be difficult to trace.

If you read February's Connect article regarding power outages in 2021, you may recall outage hours due to tree contacts has continued to drop.

2022 Vegetation Management Program

We work steadily to keep our lines and equipment clear of any vegetation that could prevent a safety or reliability hazard. Controlling vegetation across our 2,600 miles of line takes time. We seek to clear each area every five to six years; this requires us to manually or mechanically trim for adequate clearance against regrowth. When we cannot achieve adequate clearance due to incompatibility to our lines, the vegetation will be removed.

Brush and vines growing on or near our poles is also controlled. Vegetation

causes poles to rot quicker, growth under lines or around equipment prevents access for maintenance and outage repairs.

Property owners are responsible for maintaining trees near the service line (the electric line that runs from the main power line to the home). Please call us to have your service line temporarily disconnected so this work may be done safely by a qualified tree service.

Specifications

Our specifications are to clear the area on either side of our single-phase lines at least 15 feet and three-phase lines at least 25 feet from the center of the pole. Smaller trees and brush under and close to lines are removed to allow access and eliminate future growing problems.

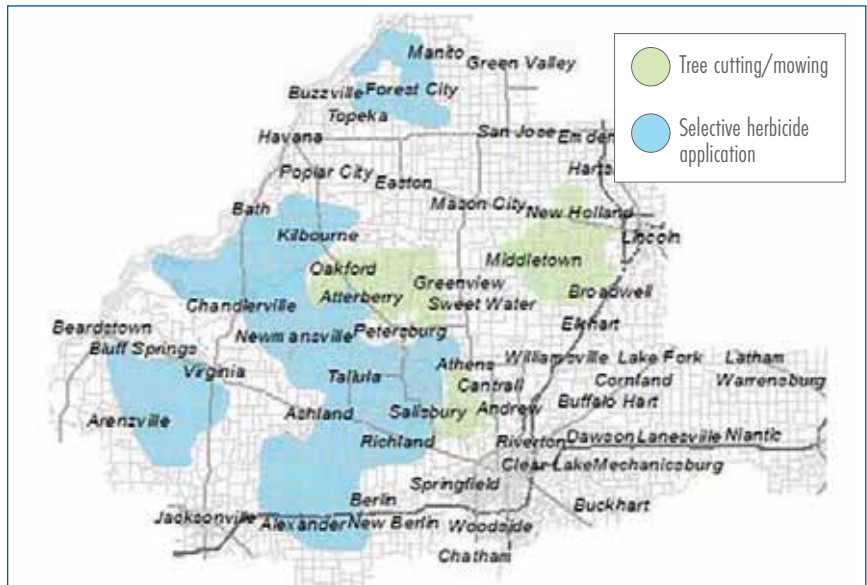
We direct all crews to trim trees to the requirements of the American National Standards Institute to assure the continued health of trees. These standards may not be viewed as the most visually appealing, but they are supportive to tree

health in the long term as well as safer for all members and employees.

2022 Schedule

We will partner with Spoon River Electric Cooperative's forestry department and employ contract crews to cut and mow vegetation on areas shown on the map in green, served by our substations in Oakford, Salisbury and Middletown.

Herbicide will be selectively applied to brush as needed in areas that were mechanically cleared in 2021. This is the most cost-effective step in right of way maintenance and allows us to extend our trimming cycle and reduce the amount of brush that would need cleared after regrowth. In 2022, these areas will include those shown in blue on the map, served by our substations in Bishop, Kilbourne, Oakford, Saidora, Bluff Springs, New Berlin, Petersburg and Salisbury.



We appreciate your support of our vegetation management program to help us continue providing safe, reliable service. Questions about our program? Contact Forester Ross Cloninger at rcloninger@menard.com or 800-872-1203.



Planting trees near overhead and underground utilities

Overhead lines: Discover the diameter of the tree when full grown, divide in half and add 15 or 25. That is how many feet away from lines to plant. When the tree is full grown you want the outer edge of branches (not the trunk) to be at least 15 feet from single-phase, or 25 feet from three-phase, overhead lines.

Underground lines: Tree roots generally grow 2-3 times beyond the edge of branches within just a few years of planting, and in some cases can grow laterally equal to the height of the tree. Roots can cause problems for underground utilities.

Keep our equipment clear

Bushes and vines growing on or near poles causes them to rot quicker and prevents linemen from accessing them. Never attach items such as planters, mailboxes or signs to poles.

Do not paint, enhance, landscape around or otherwise block or obstruct pad mounted transformers (green or gray utility boxes found in some yards/subdivisions). We require at least 10-ft clearance in front of, and 4-ft clearance on the other three sides. Teach children not to sit on, play around or open these transformers.



Photo source: Nancy Plagge



Planting to aid energy efficiency

Shrubs and ground cover planted around a home's perimeter can help reduce heat buildup. Evergreen trees planted on the north and northwest sides of a home can provide a wind-break. Leafy trees planted on the south and west sides of a home can provide shade on hot summer days yet allow the sun to warm the home in fall and winter.



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

You must call 811 or visit Call811.com 2-3 days before you dig so that all underground public utilities can be marked by this free service.

You will need to call a private locator to find privately-installed facilities such as sprinkler systems, invisible fences, data communication systems, private water systems, or gas piping to a garage.

Board highlights

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

JANUARY 25, 2022

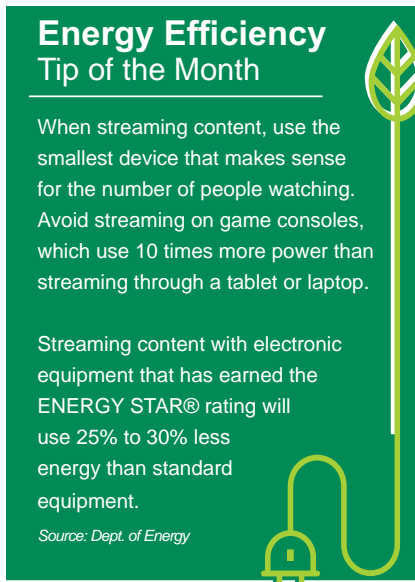
- All Directors present except Donald McMillan; also Manager Alisha Anker & Attorney Charles Smith.
- Approved Grant Agreement, Risk Assessment & Transparency Act Certificate for FEMA-3577-EM-IL, IEMA Public Assistance Program for reimbursement of 75% of eligible costs of restoration following tornado.
- Resolution adopted to amend existing 125 plan to include limited-use FSA benefit.
- Reviewed 2021 accomplishments.
- Anker reviewed monthly & YTD financial operating report, balance sheet & financial trends. Operating margins YTD as of 12/31 were \$679,603 compared to \$339,247 last year; equity at 43.13%; 12-mo TIER 3.36 & DSC 1.90.
- Anker discussed long term debt maturity schedule.
- Anker presented net metered kilowatt-hour banks schedule.
- Reviewed Operations Report w/119 incidents; largest & longest outages after Dec. 10 tornado.
- Martin presented Capital Credit Committee recommendations. Resolution adopted to retire \$250,000 in estates & \$1,000,000 in general retirements in 2022.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

When streaming content, use the smallest device that makes sense for the number of people watching. Avoid streaming on game consoles, which use 10 times more power than streaming through a tablet or laptop.

Streaming content with electronic equipment that has earned the ENERGY STAR® rating will use 25% to 30% less energy than standard equipment.

Source: Dept. of Energy




Seeking veterans for No Barriers Expedition

We are seeking veterans from within our co-op family to nominate for a once in a lifetime opportunity to attend a No Barriers Expedition fully paid by CoBank. Anyone interested should contact us as soon as possible for details at 800-872-1203 or info@menard.com. Find more details at www.menard.com.

Farmers: Look up while planting

- ▲ Take notice of our lines running along roads, field edges & at field entrances.
- ▲ Always maintain a 10-foot minimum distance (below, above & to each side) from our lines.
- ▲ Use a spotter to verify clearance.
- ▲ If your vehicle or machinery comes into contact with a power line, do not get out; stay where you are & call 911 to dispatch the appropriate utility to de-energize power.

safeelectricity.org




OUR OFFICE WILL BE
CLOSED APRIL 15TH
FOR GOOD FRIDAY