

MONROE ELECTRIC NEWS

Waterloo, Illinois • 618.939.7171 • 800.757.7433

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Alan W. Wattles

Across The President's Desk

Restoring power safely and efficiently

We do our best to avoid them, but there's no way around it: power outages happen.

For most MCEC members, outages are rare and only last a few hours. But when major storms, like in August 2020, when a derecho swept through our area, extended outages are unavoidable.

So, when the power goes out, how do MCEC crews know where to start working? How do you know if your outage has been reported? We've got answers to these questions and more, and it all starts with a safe, efficient plan for power restoration.

When the lights go out and it's safe for our crews to begin the restoration process, they start by repairing power lines and equipment that will restore power to the greatest number of people in the shortest time possible.

This process typically begins with repairs to the larger main distribution lines that service a great number of homes and businesses. After those repairs are made, crews work on tap lines, which deliver power to transformers, either mounted on utility poles (for above-ground service) or placed on pads (for underground service). Finally, individual service lines that run between the transformer and the home are repaired.



We can't control the weather, but we can prepare for it. MCEC keeps a supply of extra utility poles, transformers, and other equipment on hand so we can quickly get to work in the event of an outage. When widespread outages occur, multiple crews will be out in the field simultaneously working to repair damage at multiple locations. We also coordinate with nearby co-ops to bring in additional crews when necessary.

A proactive approach to maintenance helps minimize the chance of prolonged outages; this is why you see

MCEC crews continuously trimming trees and clearing vegetation near rights-of-way. We love trees too, but it only takes one overgrown limb to knock out power for an entire neighborhood. Trimming improves power reliability for our entire community. In addition to managing vegetation, we regularly inspect utility poles, power lines and other critical equipment to maintain a more reliable system.

If you experience a power outage, don't assume a neighbor reported it. It's best to report the outage yourself, and we make it easy to do. The quickest way to report an outage is through our app SmartHub; you can also call our outage reporting number at 1-800-757-7433.

If you have a medical condition that requires electrical equipment, please let us know, and always have a backup plan in place. This plan could include a portable generator, extra medical supplies or moving to an alternate location until power is restored. If you plan to use a generator for backup power, read all safety information and instructions before use.

Mother Nature can be unpredictable, but as a member of MCEC, you can feel confident knowing we're standing by, ready to restore power as quickly and safely as possible.



Work done to increase reliability

MCEC crews are currently working on a project along Nike Road, east of Hecker, that is part of a long-term project to upgrade and increase the capacity of our distribution circuit between our New Athens substation on IL Route 13 and our Poe substation on IL Route 3 west of Red Bud. Once the whole project has been completed,

it will give MCEC greater flexibility and options in getting more of our members back on from a backup source during outages and when completing system maintenance on our New Athens and Poe substations. This particular section of the project along Nike Road will also give MCEC greater accessibility and a reduced risk

for outages as we are relocating the existing line from private easement across cultivation in the Richland Creek bottoms to along the Nike Road from M Road to Kaiser Road. MCEC plans to complete two more sections on this system upgrade this year with the total project to be completed sometime by the end of 2023.



**MCEC
line outages
April 2022**

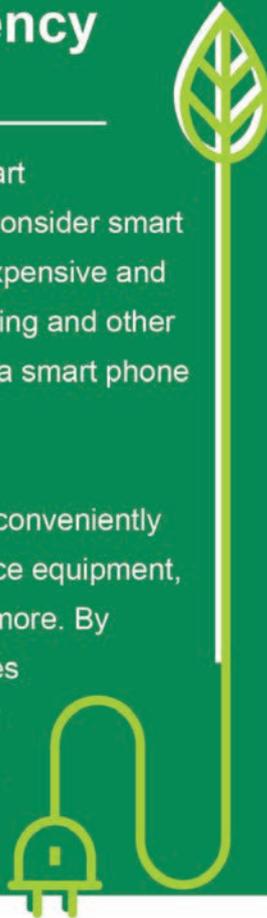
| Date | Duration | Map Location | Cause Desc | Substation |
|-----------|----------|-----------------------|----------------------|------------|
| 4/6/2022 | 2:16 | Wirth/Saeger/Zingg Rd | Trees, Other | Millstadt |
| 4/7/2022 | 1:10 | Lower Saxtown Rd | Other, Deterioration | Millstadt |
| 4/13/2022 | 0:43 | Sutterville Rd | Lightning | Fults |
| 4/13/2022 | 2:45 | Grant Rd | Trees, Other | Fults |
| 4/20/2022 | 0:27 | Millstadt Area | Power Supplier | Millstadt |

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

If you're looking to add smart technology to your home, consider smart plugs. Smart plugs are inexpensive and can be used to control lighting and other electronic devices through a smart phone app.

With smart plugs, you can conveniently manage lighting, home office equipment, video game consoles and more. By powering off unused devices when you're away, you can save energy (and money!).

Source: energystar.gov



BEFORE JUMPING IN

KNOW THESE 6 POOL SAFETY TIPS

Keep these electrical safety tips in mind before and during swimming season. These safety tips also apply to hot tubs.

- Keep anything that is plugged in at least 5 feet from the pool. The farther, the better.
- Have a licensed contractor inspect the pool/hot tub wiring to ensure it meets code requirements.
- Know where electrical switches and circuit breakers are and how to operate them.
- Keep pool skimmers and other far-reaching tools more than 10 feet away from overhead power lines.
- Make sure all outdoor outlets are GFCI protected. Test them once a month.
- Do not touch electrical devices when you are wet or in contact with wet surfaces.

Teach these tips to kids and teens, especially when it comes to using a cell phone that is plugged into an outlet.



Monroe County Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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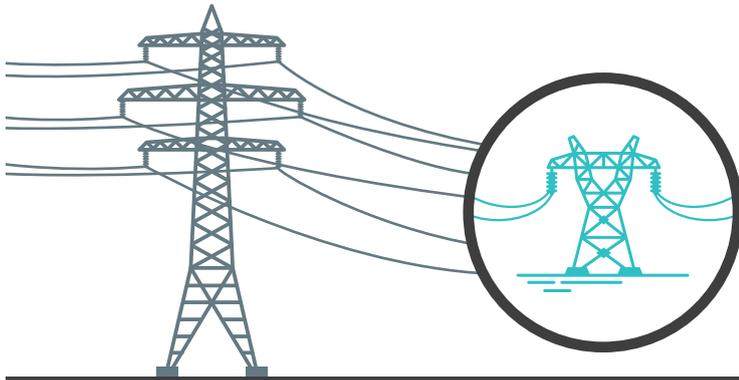
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Office hours:

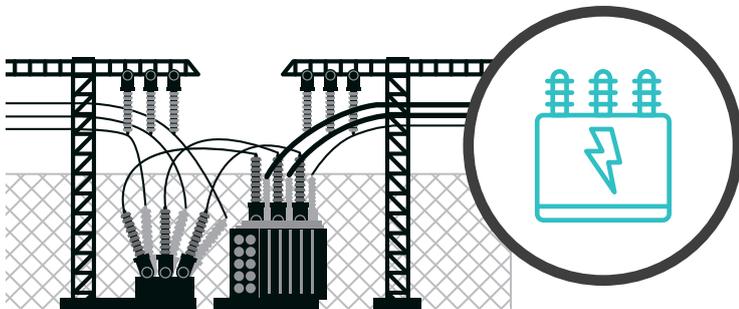
Monday through Friday 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The Steps to Restoring Power

When a major outage occurs, our crews restore service to the greatest number of people in the shortest time possible - until everyone has power.



- 1. High-Voltage Transmission Lines**
These lines carry large amounts of electricity. They rarely fail but must be repaired first.



- 2. Distribution Substations**
Crews inspect substations, which can serve hundreds or thousands of people.



- 3. Main Distribution Lines**
Main lines serve essential facilities like hospitals and larger communities.



- 4. Individual Homes and Businesses**
After main line repairs are complete, we repair lines that serve individual homes and businesses.