


MONROE ELECTRIC NEWS

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Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Alan W. Wattles

Across The President's Desk

83rd Annual Meeting held in "back to normal" fashion

A sunny Saturday morning did not stop Monroe County Electric Cooperative (MCEC) members from attending the annual meeting of members on June 11.

Members and guests gathered at MCEC headquarters to enjoy a delicious catered breakfast by Roy-el Catering. Premeeting activities for the kids included a petting zoo provided by Maeystown 4-H, a photo op station with a Clydesdale, a balloon artist station and two bounce houses.

Along with the free breakfast, each registered member received a \$25 bill credit, which was issued on their July 1 bills.

During the business meeting, which started at 10 a.m., members were informed about the organization's financial condition, and the co-op re-elected three area members to the board of directors: Joel Harres from the northern district, Gary Gregson from the central district and Amy Hoffmann-Rohlfing from the southern district.

MCEC Board Chairman George Obernagel reported on MCEC's strategic moves as they transition to green power. He spoke to the membership about the power supply and the transformation of the energy industry that is happening at an increasingly rapid pace, which is caused by Illinois' legislative ruling to close Prairie State Power Campus by 2045. He stated SIPC (Southern Illinois Power Cooperative) began taking early steps to navigate this transition by closing an uneconomic and environmentally challenged coal plant ahead

of mandates and rebalancing their generation portfolio. He concluded by saying, "MCEC's mission remains the same – to serve the members with safe, reliable and affordable power."

President/CEO Alan Wattles

gave a report on MCEC's lingering COVID-19 impacts, 2022 financials and the future of the cooperative. Due to high lead times on materials, early measures were taken to have

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materials in stock. This paid off as the 2022 snowstorms pushed their limits, but MCEC never had threatening issues. There is hope that things will return to normal in 2023.

“I appreciate your support to MCEC by coming today and participating in your annual meeting. Our goal was to have a normal June 2022

annual meeting, bring back breakfast, and all the accessories, and, hopefully, it has made it feel like a return to normal,” Wattles stated.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the winners of 14 \$500 scholarships were announced: Jared Beals, Austin Bedford, Meredith Britton, Connor Daley, Ryan Hanks, Aidan Karsten,

Klair Krebel, Ty Lenhardt, McKenzie Nail, Allison Shuler, Candice Stampfl, Kami Steffenaer, Chase Veto and Addison White.

Thank you to all our members that attended the meeting! We look forward to seeing everyone next year on June 10.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

An easy way to save energy is to seal air leaks and holes where plumbing pipes run through walls in your home. You can also check wall-mounted cabinets for plumbing holes or air gaps in the back.

Fill any holes or gaps with spray foam. Wear protective gloves and use a damp rag for cleanup.

Source: Dept. of Energy



Play it safe near grain bins.

When moving equipment, be aware of power lines and maintain at least a 10-foot clearance to ensure safety. Follow all guidelines set by the National Electrical Safety Code.



www.mcec.org

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

MCEC line outages June 2022	Date	Duration	# Out	Map Location	Cause Desc	Substation
	6/02/2022	0:48	4	Crook Dr	Construction	Poe
	6/13/2022	0:41	20	Beck Rd /Ll Rd	Maintenance	New Athens
	6/17/2022	2:23	10	Hern Dr	Wind, Not Trees	Fults
	6/17/2022	1:29	7	Lunch Rd	Trees, Other	Smithton
	6/19/2022	1:30	2	High Prairie School Rd	Small Animals Or Birds	Smithton
	6/24/2022	1:29	4	Bohleysville Rd	Unknown	Millstadt
	6/26/2022	1:03	2	Bluff Rd	Lightning	Fountain
	6/26/2022	1:06	2	Country Side Ln	Lightning	Smithton

Avoid distractions while driving

Some temptations are hard to resist. For some, it can be especially challenging to turn down that last piece of chocolate cake.

While driving, we typically hear that “ding” on our phone, alerting us to a text or call coming through, and we sometimes feel the urgent need to check it. We know we shouldn’t, but we reason that we’re going to make an exception—just this once.

So, why do we indulge in behavior we know to be wrong, dangerous and in many states, illegal? Call it hubris. According to AAA research, most people feel they are better-than-average drivers. After all, we have busy lives and are accustomed to multitasking. But mounds of research and thousands of deaths every year prove otherwise.

August is Back to School Safety Month. As a new school year begins with young drivers and school buses back on the road, I thought it would be a good time to remind folks, including myself, of the dangers of distracted driving.

The reality is that using a phone while driving creates enormous potential for injuries and fatalities.



Distractions take a motorist’s attention off driving, which can make a driver miss critical events, objects and cues, potentially leading to a crash.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, one of every 10 fatal crashes in the U.S. involves distracted driving, resulting in more than 3,000 deaths annually. This statistic is heartbreaking considering so many of these accidents could easily be avoided if we’d simply put down our phones while driving.

Distracted driving is considered any activity that diverts our attention, including texting or talking on the

phone, and adjusting the navigation or entertainment system. Texting is by far one of the most dangerous distractions. Sending or reading one text takes your eyes off the road for an average of five seconds. At 55 mph, that’s like driving the length of an entire football field with your eyes closed.

In addition to refraining from texting while driving, we can help keep the roads safe by moving over for first responders and other emergency vehicles. Additionally, if you see utility crews conducting work near the roadside, move over when possible and give them extra space to perform their work safely.

At MCEC, safety is foremost in everything we do—for our employees and the members of the communities we serve. We routinely remind our crews of the dangers of distracted driving, and we hope you’ll have similar conversations with your teens who may be new to the roadways and are especially susceptible to the lure of technology.

Let’s work together to keep everyone safe on the roads. Remember: that text can wait and waiting just might save a life.

Make Sure Your Phone Number Is Up to Date

Over the years, many members have done away with their landline telephones. Due to this, the co-op is sometimes unable to reach members without a current phone number in our system.

We ask that if you have changed your primary phone number or have a cell phone number that would be better to contact you through, please notify us.

It is important to have the current number in our system, so we can reach you in case of an emergency.

If you believe we may not have a current number to reach you, please give us a call at 1-618-939-7171.

Download the SmartHub app!

