



Mike Smith
President and CEO

Operation Round Up awards \$6,000

Continuing the mission of concern for the community, McDonough Power Cooperative Operation Round Up awards local nonprofits with grants to support the work they do in the community. Recently, the Operation Round Up trustees awarded three grants, totaling \$6,000 to the following organizations.

Shepherd's Gate Clothes Closet, under the umbrella of Macomb Foursquare Church, received \$1,000 to help provide new underwear and socks to those in need. "The closet," run by a group of vivacious volunteers, provides donated in-season clothing and accessories to the entire family free of charge. **422D3-1106C**

families. Funds from this grant will be used to pay for a portion of travel expenses to connect with the residents they serve in our area.

The Operation Round Up program allows McDonough Power Cooperative members to reach out to worthy causes in their community and work together to help others. Thank you to those members who round up their electric bills to the next highest dollar each month and to the McDonough Power Cooperative Operation Round Up trustees for making these donations possible. You have helped donate \$178,000 to organizations in the community!



Warren Achievement Center received \$2,500 for their Achiever Medical Fund. The center provides many opportunities for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities to learn and be active members of the community. Their fund assists achievers with uncovered medical costs.

Alternatives for the Older Adult Inc. received \$2,500 to help them connect with residents in McDonough County. The agency promotes the independence and quality of life of older adults and their

The next round of grants will be awarded in April. Charitable organizations within the McDonough Power Cooperative service territory are eligible to apply. The organization does not have to be a member of McDonough Power. Applications can be picked up at McDonough Power Cooperative or downloaded at mcdonoughpower.com.





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Only certified workers can trim trees near power lines

Can anyone trim trees near power lines? The answer is no. Specialized tree trimmers, certified by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in utility clearance, are the only persons legally allowed to trim within 10 feet of power lines.

OSHA requires this certification because electricity is a serious and widespread hazard to tree workers. According to the Tree Care Industry Association, electricity is the leading cause of death in the tree care industry, causing about 15 percent of all industry fatalities. Tree care industry workers do not have to directly contact a power line to be electrocuted; about half of all electrocution fatalities are the result of indirect contact.

Qualified line-clearance trimmers must be specially trained in how to safely work in proximity to energized lines. They must understand how an electrical grid functions, the effects of tree growth patterns and tree damage and how to implement directional pruning, as required by the American National Standard for Arboricultural Operations' safety standards.

According to OSHA, the duties of line-clearance certified tree trimmers typically include the following:

- Undergoing annual evaluations by licensed professionals to ensure continuous adherence to industry best practices.
- Requesting job briefings from employers and other crew members before starting a job or when environmental conditions change.
- Properly wearing approved personal

protective equipment, including fall protection equipment when needed.

- Complying with material handling and mechanical equipment requirements.
- Working with a second line-clearance tree trimmer within voice range.
- Determining the voltages of lines before work begins or assuming that the line is operating at the highest possible voltage if it is not possible to determine voltage.
- Ensuring body parts and any ladders, platforms or aerial devices being used remain outside the minimum approach distance from any energized equipment. **8431A8-680C**
- Using only insulated tools and equipment to remove branches and limbs that are in contact with or are within the minimum approach distance of energized lines or equipment.
- Determining if weather conditions are no longer safe to work in, such as the presence of high winds, ice, thunder or lightning that would make the work hazardous.
- Beginning work on storm restoration efforts in the aftermath of a storm if they have been trained in the special hazards involved with this type of work.

Please contact your power provider if you have any questions about line-clearance tree trimmers or tree trimming near power lines. For information on electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

10 dos and don'ts when using portable generators

Storm season is upon us, which means greater potential for power outages. If you're planning to use a portable generator in the event of an outage, McDonough Power Cooperative reminds you to play it safe.

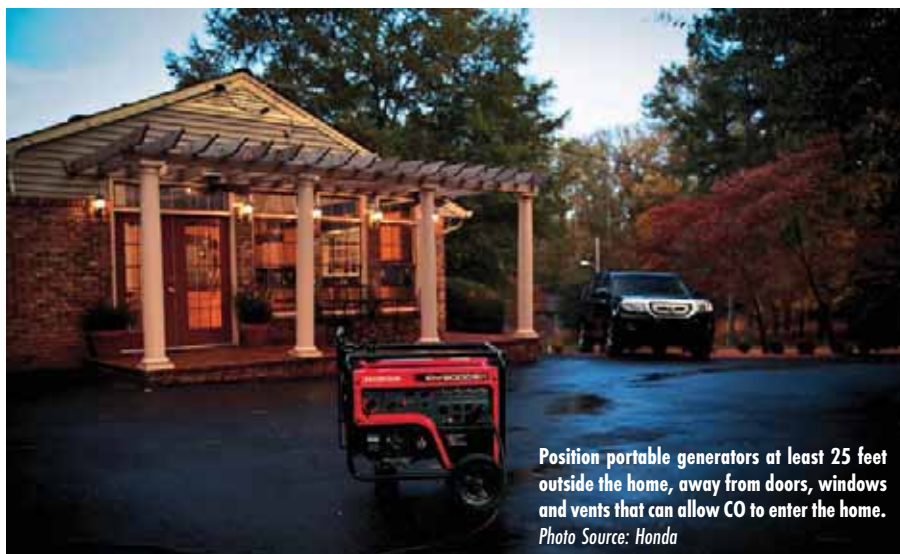
With proper use and maintenance, portable generators can provide great convenience during an outage. However, when generators are used incorrectly, they can be extremely hazardous. In a 2022 report, the Consumer Product Safety Commission estimated 85 U.S. consumers die every year from carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning caused by gasoline-powered portable generators.

Here are 10 dos and don'ts to keep in mind when using portable generators:

1. **DO:** Install backup CO alarms.
2. **DO:** Keep children and pets away from portable generators at all times.
3. **DO:** Position generators at least 25 feet outside the home, away from doors, windows and vents that can allow CO to enter the home.
4. **DO:** Ensure your generator is properly grounded. Use a portable ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) to prevent electric shock injuries.
5. **DO:** Use three-pronged extension cords that are rated to handle the load of the generator. Inspect extension cords for cuts, frays or other damage before use.
6. **DON'T:** Operate a generator inside your home or an enclosed (or partially enclosed) space. Generators

produce high levels of CO, which can be deadly.

7. **DON'T:** Open windows or doors while the generator is running.
8. **DON'T:** Rely on generators as a full-time source of power. They should only be used temporarily or in emergency situations to power essential equipment or appliances.
9. **DON'T:** Overload generators. They should only be used to power essential equipment. Make sure your generator can handle the load of the items you plan to power.
10. **DON'T:** Connect generators directly into household wiring unless you have an appropriate transfer switch installed. If a generator is connected to a home's wiring without a transfer switch, power can backfeed along power lines and electrocute utility lineworkers making repairs.



Position portable generators at least 25 feet outside the home, away from doors, windows and vents that can allow CO to enter the home.
Photo Source: Honda

While generators provide convenience during power outages, they can quickly become hazardous — even deadly — if improperly operated. Before you operate a portable generator, be sure to thoroughly read the owner's manual for important safety information and tips.

If you have questions about the proper use of portable generators, we're here to help. **715A2B-862A** Give us a call at 309-833-2101 or contact us at memberservices@mcdonoughpower.com.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Washing windows and screens is a great way to practice energy efficiency during spring cleaning. Clean windows and screens make your home brighter by allowing more sunlight in, reducing the need for lamps and fixtures. Clean screens also allow more fresh air in the home when the windows are open to recycle indoor air. Natural light and clean air are energy savers, and they enhance overall health and productivity.

Source: energy.gov



Member Prizes

Every month we will have four map location numbers hidden throughout The Wire. If you find the map location number that corresponds to the one on your bill (found above the usage graph), call our office and identify your number and the page that it is on. If correct, you will win a \$10 credit on your next electric bill.



TALK TO YOUR CHILDREN

about safe outdoor play

Warm days beckon the child in all of us to go outside to play. Children may not recognize hazards, so make sure they can spot them and know how to stay safe.

Point out electrical equipment like overhead power lines and service lines connected to homes. They should never try to reach them with a stick or long object.

Ensure they understand to climb trees and fly kites safely away from overhead lines.

Explain that green metal boxes contain electrical equipment and are not platforms or toys. Teach them to never go into a substation to retrieve a toy or for any other reason. Point out “Danger High Voltage” signs.

Learn more at



Play it safe around power lines

Digging holes, climbing trees, flying kites — outdoor play often creates beautiful childhood memories. Before hitting the great outdoors, discuss electrical safety with your children.



Flying fun

While flying kites, model airplanes, remote-controlled flying toys and drones, stay in large, open areas (such as parks or fields), far away from power lines. If an item gets caught in a power line, teach children to never try to retrieve it. Instead, an adult should call their electric utility for help.

General outdoor safety tips

Other important safety guidelines for kids and adults alike include:

- Never throw objects at power lines.
- Stay far away from downed, damaged or low-hanging power lines. An adult should call 911 to report a downed or damaged line.
- Be cautious after a severe storm that caused a power outage. Downed power lines could be hidden under water, snow or storm debris. Wait to go outside until power has been restored.
- Do not climb, sit or play on padmount transformers (green boxes). **10333A2-356B**
- Do not climb trees that have overhead power lines near or running through them.

Poolside

When spending time by the pool, look overhead when using pool skimmers or other long objects to be sure you are not getting close to an overhead power line. If you are swimming and feel a prickly or tingling sensation, do not stay in the pool. There could be a stray electric current from a downed power line or a damaged electrical device. Also, never play in a flooded street or ditch; a downed power line could be hidden by the water and fallen debris.

Prevention is key

Electric shock and injuries are often preventable. Empower your family with electrical safety knowledge to avoid preventable electric injuries. For more information about electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.