


MONROE ELECTRIC NEWS

Waterloo, Illinois • 618.939.7171 • 800.757.7433

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Alan W. Wattles

Across The President's Desk

CEO Update to Rates

I hope all is well for the start of 2023 for everyone. MCEC is seeing a 4% rate increase on both its energy and KW demand charges from SIPC (Southern Illinois Power Cooperative) for 2023. You will see some of the increase starting on your April 1st bill for your March usage. The only

change for now will be the energy charge for all rates. MCEC is planning on a rate restructuring later in 2023 or early 2024 to coincide with SIPC's planned rate change to better help with the ever-changing power markets. MCEC believes the necessary rate structure change from SIPC

will allow us to offer opportunities for members to control and change usage habits, therefore having more control over their monthly electric bill.

A Notice of Rate Change flyer will be included in your March 1, 2023 electric bill that will show the change for the energy charge block on your bill.

**SAVE
THE
DATE**

**JUNE
10**

Annual Meeting of Members

Saturday, June 10, 2023





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.
- 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.

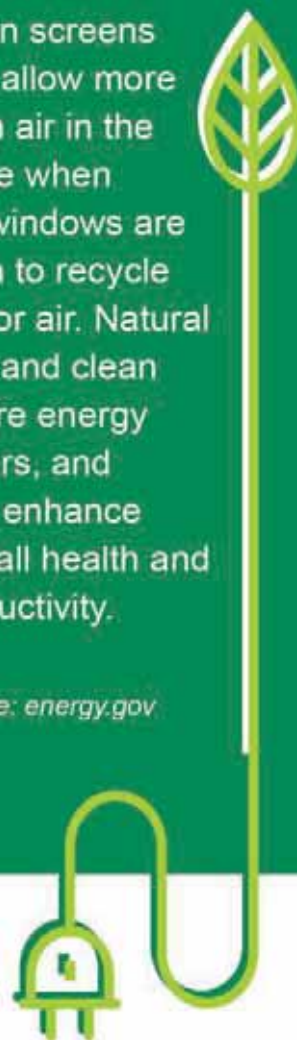
For information on electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

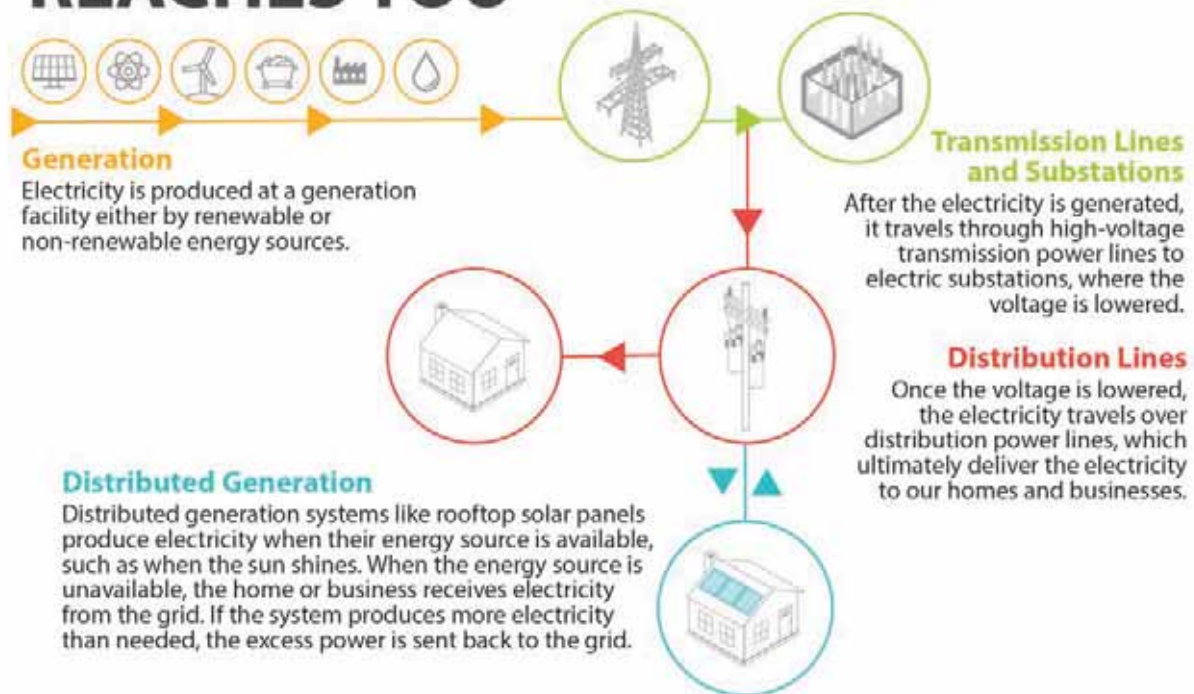
Washing windows and screens is a great way to practice energy efficiency during spring cleaning. Clean windows and screens make your home brighter by allowing more sunlight in, reducing the need for lamps and fixtures.

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



HOW ELECTRICITY REACHES YOU



MCEC line outages January 2023

Date	Duration	# Out	Map Location	Cause Desc	Substation
1/1/2023	1:40	15	Heck Dr	Other, Faulty Equipment	Waterloo
1/12/2023	1:13	12	Old Farm Rd	Trees, Other	Millstadt
1/12/2023	1:18	34	Old Farm Rd	Trees, Other	Millstadt
1/18/2023	2:40	539	Fults Area	Power Supplier	Fults
1/18/2023	2:40	1189	Red Bud Area	Power Supplier	Poe
1/18/2023	2:38	928	Waterloo Area	Power Supplier	Waterloo
1/21/2023	3:21	816	New Athens Area	Power Supplier	New Athens
1/21/2023	3:20	1013	Smithton Area	Power Supplier	Smithton
1/25/2023	1:21	5	Dobbin Hill Ln	Ice, Sleet, Frost	Fults
1/25/2023	0:39	54	Sportsman Rd	Trees And Ice	Poe
1/25/2023	0:41	1	Woodpecker Ln	Ice, Sleet, Frost	Waterloo
1/25/2023	1:08	1	Brandt Rd	Ice, Sleet, Frost	Fults
1/25/2023	0:26	3	Amberwood Ln	Trees And Ice	Poe
1/25/2023	1:05	50	Old Orchard Ln/Trout Camp	Ice, Sleet, Frost	Waterloo
1/28/2023	1:11	2	Knab Rd	Small Animals Or Birds	Smithton
1/31/2023	1:41	26	Nelson Ln/Mueller Rd	Other, Deterioration	East Carondelet



www.mcec.org

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

Area schools and teachers benefit from MCEC grants

Monroe County Electric Cooperative (MCEC) awarded 17 \$500 Touchstone Energy Empowerment grants to area teachers/administrators who submitted applications. The applications were judged by cooperative employees from neighboring electric co-ops.

This is the 15th consecutive year that the cooperative has awarded school grants to area schools.

Alan Wattles, president/CEO of MCEC, said, "We strongly encourage as many teachers as possible to apply for these grants. We try to reach all of the schools in our service territory as we know there is a need everywhere. Teachers have projects they want to implement but the funds aren't available; we want to be able to support those projects which ultimately benefit the students."

We want to congratulate all the area teachers on the grants and commend those who took the time to submit an application. We look forward to seeing their projects and awarding more grants next year!



- Julie Lewis, Science Teacher, Red Bud High School
- Kelli Rakers, Perandoe Special Education School, Red Bud
- Elizabeth Hess, Director of Marketing/Marketing Instructor, Gibault High School, Waterloo
- Jennifer Downing, ELA Teacher, Dupo Junior High
- Karen Bicklein & Trevor Metzger, Science Teachers, Waterloo Junior High School
- Kerstin Schmitz, Teacher, Waterloo High School
- Jenny Kehrer, 5th Grade Science Teacher, Millstadt Consolidated School
- Andrea Sattler, Teacher, Trinity Lutheran School, Red Bud
- Richard Fitzgerald, Teacher, Red Brick School, Red Bud
- Sarah Lanham, Principal, St. John the Baptist, Smithton
- Rhonda Niemeier, Principal, St. John the Baptist, Red Bud
- Emily Meyer, 2nd Grade Teacher, Immaculate Conception School, Columbia
- Shari Murphy, Kindergarten Teacher, Immaculate Conception School, Columbia
- Anthony Thoel, Industrial Arts Teacher, Freeburg High School
- Nick Bambrough, Mathematics Teacher, New Athens High School
- Tony Meyer, Science Teacher, New Athens Junior High School
- Elizabeth Landeck, Computer/Business Teacher, New Athens High School