

## Ameren Illinois makes upgrades, increasing MCEC reliability

Ameren Illinois is actively enhancing grid reliability through the deployment of cutting-edge IntelliRupters, smart switches designed to detect instances requiring power rerouting from alternate sources. Positioned strategically, these IntelliRupters have been installed on Ameren's transmission lines that feed our Smithton and New Athens substations.

The primary objective behind implementing these switches is to establish a loop-feed mechanism, leveraging the advanced capabilities of the breakers to promptly isolate faults. This approach should significantly strengthen the overall reliability of the transmission lines, thereby increasing reliability to our substations.



### NEWS RELEASE

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#### For Immediate Release

### Ameren Illinois Enhancing Electric Grid in Metro East with Smart Switching Devices

COLLINSVILLE, Ill. (NOVEMBER 8, 2023) – Ameren Illinois announced today that the company is adding advanced technology to enhance the resiliency of the energy delivery system in the Metro East and to reduce the frequency and duration of power outages.

Crews are strategically installing six fiberglass power poles along a route south of Belleville to Smithton, east to Freeburg and then south to New Athens. Once the new poles are set, crews will add smart switches, known as IntelliRupters, on those poles. These smart switches can detect problems on the electric system and determine whether power needs to be re-routed from another source. They work in tandem with other outage detection devices to isolate the outage and reduce the length of the disruption while reducing the number of customers who experience an outage. Six smart switches will be added to Ameren Illinois' subtransmission (34,500-volt) system.

Additional crews have started work in East St. Louis to install eight IntelliRupters to the system. Ameren Illinois plans to install 300 IntelliRupters to the subtransmission grid over the next 10 years.

"The IntelliRupters we are installing in St. Clair County allows us to re-route power when there is a problem, and minimize how many customers are affected by the power outage. It is virtually instantaneous," said Jason Klein, director of Electric Operations for Ameren Illinois serving St. Clair County. "This upgrade is part of our overall statewide plan to build a more flexible, reliable and resilient grid capable of supporting the delivery of cleaner, greener energy from sources like wind and solar."

#### About Ameren Illinois

Ameren Illinois delivers energy to 1.2 million electric and more than 800,000 natural gas customers throughout central and southern Illinois. Our service territory covers more than 1,200 communities and 43,700 square miles. Our mission is to power the quality of life. For more information, visit [AmerenIllinois.com](http://AmerenIllinois.com). Follow us on Twitter @AmerenIllinois and Facebook.

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Alan W. Wattles

## Across The President's Desk

# Director petitions available now

Petitions are available now at the office for directors in the north, central and south board districts of Monroe County Electric Cooperative. Petitions must be signed by no less than 20 members from the district you have primary residence in and must be received in the co-op's office by 4 p.m. on Thursday, March 28.

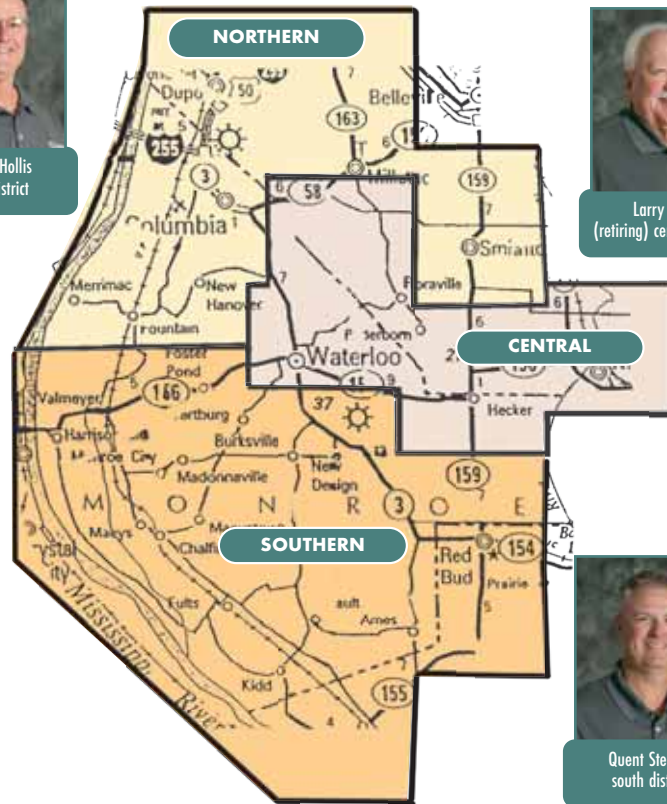
One co-op member will be elected from each district to serve a three-year term. See a map of the districts at [mceec.org](http://mceec.org), and click on "About Us" and then "Board of Directors" at the top. We recommend that you call our office and have one of our employees check your district as well. Seeking re-election are incumbent directors Richard Hollis of Columbia, north district and Quent Stenzel of Red Bud, southern district. Larry Kraft of Smithton, central district will be retiring after serving 30 years on the board.

A good director must:

- Receive electric service from the co-op at their primary residence within the district, be a member in good standing, and not have conflicting business interests. (They pay the same rates for service and follow the same policies as all other members.)
  - Be able to spend adequate time on board work and attend most regular board meetings held the fourth Tuesday morning each month for several hours at the co-op office.
  - Attend our annual meeting each year and other special board meetings, committee meetings, director's conferences and educational seminars as necessary.
  - Be accessible to members within your district and willing to represent all members of the co-op.
  - Acquire knowledge about the electric utility including finances, management and public issues.
- (It takes time to learn the system and for that reason our directors have made long-term commitments to serving the co-op.)
- Establish policies and employ a general manager who is responsible for all operational details.
- Additional details can be found in our bylaws, which are located on our website at [mceec.org](http://mceec.org)



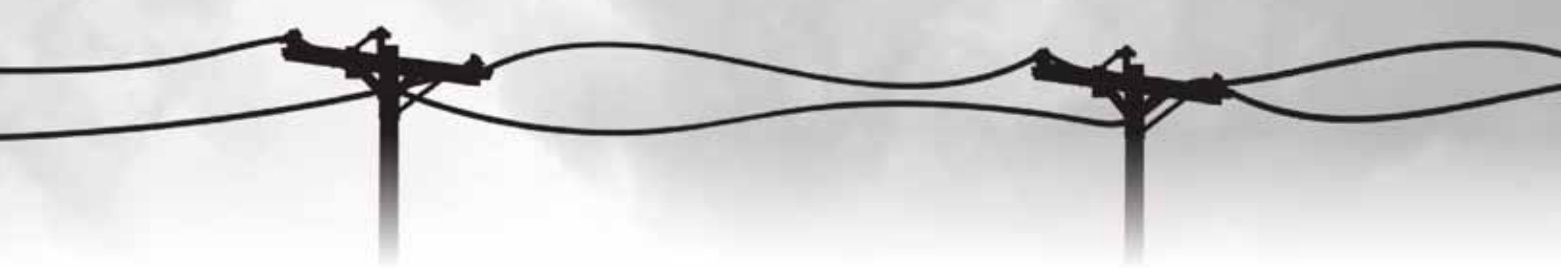
Richard Hollis  
north district



Larry Kraft  
(retiring) central district



Quent Stenzel  
south district



# Horses gallop — and so can power lines

How can galloping lines impact power transmission and distribution?

Gallop power lines are typically caused when ice and high winds occur at the same time. Freezing rain creates icicles and odd-shaped ice formations on power lines and conductors. The ice buildup changes how wind and air impact the now misshapen, ice-covered line. This change in airflow can cause the power line to start to bounce.

Once the lines get going, they can bounce and buck enough to hit another line, damage themselves enough to cause a power outage or even fall to the ground.

There is not much a power company can do to alleviate galloping lines, since the wild motion is caused by Mother Nature. To help prevent this, many power lines have special mechanisms, such as twisted wire or round or angular pieces of metal, attached to the line. While they can help, sometimes they are no match for severe ice and whipping winds.

Aside from ice storms, year-round storms can cause damaging winds, which can knock down power lines and blow trees and limbs onto power lines. Keep the following safety tips in mind:

- When you see power lines on the ground, stay away, warn others to stay away and contact the electric utility or 911. Lines do not have to be arcing or sparking to be live.
- Any utility wire, including telephone or cable lines that are sagging or down, could be in contact with an energized power line, also making it dangerous. Do not try to guess the type of line — stay away from all lines.
- Be alert to the possibility that tree limbs or debris may hide electrical hazards. Downed power lines can energize objects around them, such as chain-link fences and metal culverts.

- Keep in mind that a dead line could become energized during power restoration efforts or with improper use of generators.
- Never drive over a downed line. It could start a chain reaction and cause additional poles or other equipment to collapse.
- If you are in a car that has contacted or is near a downed power line, stay in your vehicle. Wait until the utility crew has arrived and deenergized the line. Warn others not to approach the car.
- Only exit a car or cab near or on downed lines if there is a fire. If this happens, cross your arms over your chest and make a solid jump out and away from the car with both feet together. Then hop away at least 50 feet or more while continuing to keep both feet together.

For more electrical safety information, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

## MCEC line outages December 2023

Date	Duration	# Out	Map Location	Cause Desc	Substation
12/01/23	0:47	50	Nike/Beck Rd	Small Animals Or Birds	New Athens
12/02/23	1:00	15	Ames Rd	Small Animals Or Birds	Poe
12/03/23	1:18	63	Imbs Station Rd/ Nevois Ln	Other, Faulty Equipment	E. Carondelet
12/08/23	0:23	37	Brand Woods/ Brand Lake	Small Animals Or Birds	Poe
12/14/23	0:35	5	Douglas Rd	Fire	Smithton
12/16/23	1:23	4	Crook Dr	Other, Faulty Equipment	Poe
12/18/23	0:59	148	Schmidt Ln/ Roachtown Rd	Conductor Sag	Smithton
12/20/23	0:29	2	Keim Rd	Unknown	Millstadt
12/25/23	1:53	799	E. Carondelet Area	Public Accidents, Other	E. Carondelet
12/25/23	0:32	351	Columbia Area	Public Accidents, Other	Columbia
12/30/23	1:41	3	Schmidt Ln/ Roachtown Rd	Small Animals Or Birds	Smithton



## Dangers of Balloon Release



*Lineman Matt Kish responded to an outage caused by mylar balloons that were entangled in the power lines on Nov. 18 off Levi Road.*

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Area rugs are an easy, cost-effective solution to cold floors. Adding area rugs to hard-surface flooring can add warmth to any room and keep your feet cozy on cold winter days.

Choose rugs made from wool or other natural fibers and plush or high-pile textures for the most insulation. Place rugs in areas where you need additional warmth, like the foot of a bed or under a coffee table. Area rugs can enhance the aesthetic of your home and keep you cozier.



[www.mcec.org](http://www.mcec.org)

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