

THE GRID

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1-888-661-CMEC (2632)

Office hours:
Monday-Friday
7:30a.m. - 4:30p.m.

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To Report an Outage
call #888-661-2632

Find Your Name and Win \$50

Find your name hidden inside this issue of The Grid and receive a **\$50 bill credit**. Credit must be claimed by the end of each month in which this newsletter is published.



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Local Student Wins IEC Scholarship

Coles Moultrie Electric Cooperative (CMEC) is proud to announce that Austin Fehrenbacher of Charleston is one of 16 winners of this year's Thomas H. Moore Illinois Electric Cooperatives (IEC) Memorial Scholarship. He is the child of Troy and Sarah Fehrenbacher of Charleston. Austin competed for the scholarship with 285 other students from across the state. This fall, Austin will attend Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, majoring in Chemical Engineering.



Safe Electricity Wins Video Award



Congratulations to CMEC Lineman Bob Schafer and Safe Electricity on winning the Viddy Platinum Award for putting together a storm series. This competition had over 2,500 entries and recognizes outstanding achievement in video and digital production. You can watch the video at <https://youtu.be/UmNGg8RAdb4>.

Join us on Friday, Oct. 4 for our
2024 Member Celebration & Annual Meeting at Peterson Park, Mattoon.



Vegetation Management

As part of our commitment to ensuring the reliability and safety of our electric distribution system, we want to inform you about upcoming vegetation management activities scheduled in the near future according to our six-year trimming cycle.

What to Expect

During July, our vegetation management crews will be working diligently along the rights-of-way of our power lines. This proactive measure is essential to mitigate the risk of outages caused by trees and vegetation encroaching on power lines, especially during extreme weather conditions.

Why It's Important

Effective vegetation management helps minimize the occurrence of power outages, enhances system reliability, and ensures the safety of our members and employees. By trimming or removing trees and vegetation that pose a threat to our lines, we can prevent potential hazards and maintain the integrity of our electrical infrastructure.

Safety First

We prioritize safety in all our operations. Our crews are trained professionals equipped with the necessary tools and expertise to carry out vegetation management safely and efficiently. We kindly ask for your cooperation and understanding as they work in your area.

Member Support

Your support and cooperation are vital in helping us maintain a reliable and safe electrical system. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the vegetation management activities scheduled for July, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. We value your feedback and are here to address any inquiries you may have.

Stay Informed

For updates and additional information about our vegetation management program and other cooperative initiatives, please call our office at 217-235-0341 or follow us on Facebook. **Richard Mercer**

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation as we work to enhance the reliability of your electric service. Together, we can ensure a safer and more resilient energy future for our community.

Congratulations to Ty Lytle, promoted to Journeyman Lineman



WELCOME

*Welcome Kaylee Reedy,
our newest Member
Service Representative*



“ YOUR OPINION COUNTS ”

CMEC will be participating in a member survey. You may receive an email or postcard to take the survey online. Members who complete the survey will be entered for a chance to win a \$250 bill credit. This survey helps us serve you better.

Cooperative Donations

One of our Seven Cooperative Principles is Concern for Community. CMEC demonstrates this by supporting local members in our surrounding communities. Donations in 2024 have been made to the following organizations with matching funds from CoBank: Lake Land College, One Stop Community Christmas, Sarah Bush Lincoln, and Mattoon YMCA. CoBank is a national cooperative bank serving vital industries across rural America.



Pictured: Carla Bradbury, CMEC Communications Coordinator (left), and Amanda Allen, Director of Annual Giving & Alumni Relations, Lake Land College



Pictured: Aimee Boswell, CMEC Controller (left), Renee Fonner, Cromwell Radio Group, and Carol Craig, Volunteer (right)



Pictured: from left Amy Card, SBL Foundation Director, Amy Borntreger, CMEC President & CEO, Carla Bradbury, CMEC Communications Coordinator, and Kim Uphoff, SBL President & CEO

Words of Thanks

“I cannot thank you enough for attending and presenting your scholarships to such hardworking students.”

From Charleston High School Counselor Allison Meeker

CHARGE™ POWERED BY CO-OPS

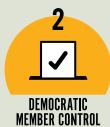
CMEC has joined Charge EV, LLC. We are helping to create a national EV charging network powered by electric cooperatives. Charge EV was created in 2020 by 31 electric co-ops to raise awareness of electric vehicles. They plan to be at our Member Celebration on Friday, Oct. 4th at Peterson Park. For more information, go to www.charge.coop.

Committed to You

At CMEC, we are here to serve you, our members. This is your co-op, governed by the Seven Cooperative Principles. We care about you and aim to improve the quality of life and economic health of our communities while providing reliable quality service.



VOLUNTARY AND OPEN MEMBERSHIP



DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL



MEMBERS' ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION



AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE



EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INFORMATION



COOPERATION AMONG COOPERATIVES



CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY

Cyber Goals

Thanks to our Information Technology (IT) Director David Welsh and his team, we completed all 10 goals of the first phase of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Cyber Goals Program. NRECA had 292 registered to participate with 58 completing all 10 goals. These cyber goals are high priority fundamental cybersecurity measures intended to help co-ops establish solid foundations that future cybersecurity efforts can build upon.

10 Things You Might Not Know About Power Restoration

Have you ever watched a video or TV show where a person is cooking a meal, then suddenly, they snap their fingers, and the meal is plated and ready to eat? That's called a jump cut.

While we wish we could "jump cut" from a power outage to power restoration, it can often take a lot more effort and people to make it happen.

As our CEO Amy Borntreger says, "I'm accustomed to members' questions about power outages and why it can take time to get the lights back on. Given our reliance on electricity, there's simply never a good time to be without it."

This month, I'd like to shed light on our restoration process to help our members understand what may be happening behind the scenes. Here are 10 things you might not know about restoration:

- 1. We need you.** When your power goes out, it might be just at your home or a small section of a neighborhood. There is a chance we may not know about it, and no one has reported it. We rely on you to let us know if your power is out. Call 217-235-0341 or 888-661-2632.
- 2. Our employees might be affected, too.** Because CMEC is a local electric cooperative owned by the members we serve, our employees are local, too. They are your neighbors, friends, and familiar community volunteers. When you're without power, our people might be, too.
- 3. It's a team effort.** Every one of our employees is working to get your power restored as soon as possible. Our member services representatives are taking your calls, engineers and field staff are surveying damage, our vegetation management team is clearing hazards, dispatchers are organizing crews, and communicators are keeping everyone informed of progress or potential dangers. When your power goes out, we all work together as quickly and safely as possible to get you back to normal.
- 4. We assess the situation first.** Every outage is different, and we don't know how dangerous it is or what equipment might need to be replaced. When responding to outages, we first need to see what happened, then figure out what materials we need and a plan for how to fix the problem(s) without compromising electric flow for the rest of our members.
- 5. Restoration is normally prioritized by the largest number of members we can get back on in the shortest amount of time.** Our crews focus on responding first to public safety issues and critical services like hospitals. Then we complete work that impacts the largest number of people first.
- 6. Our employees face many dangers.** Besides working around high voltage electricity, our crews are on alert for wild animals, weather elements, falling trees and fast-moving cars. (If you ever drive past one of our vehicles, please do so slowly.)
- 7. Flickering lights are a good thing.** Some folks mistake flickering lights for outages, but these "blinks" are important because they indicate our equipment worked and prevented a possible outage likely caused by wayward animals or stray tree limbs on the lines.
- 8. You need a backup plan.** We do our best to help those who need it, but if you depend on electricity for life support purposes, you must have a back-up plan — remember, we don't always know how long restoration efforts will take. If you're unsure what to do, call us so we can help you prepare an emergency location.
- 9. Our employees have to plan and eat.** If you ever see our trucks in a restaurant parking lot while your power is out, know that sometimes our employees huddle in a safe, common area to map out their plan for getting your power back on. Also, our crews work long hard hours during outages and need to take time for meals just like everyone else.
- 10. Sometimes it's a waiting game.** Our portion of the power grid is connected to other electric utilities, and we maintain positive relationships with power providers interconnected to our system. If our outage is due to an issue from their feed into our system, we must let them do their repairs and be mindful of what they're going through to fix it.

We do our best to avoid power disruptions, but they are inevitable from time to time. If the lights go out, know that your co-op team is working as quickly and safely as possible to restore power. Report outages by calling **217-235-0341 or 888-661-2632**.

Monthly Board Meeting Minutes can be viewed on our website: cmec.coop