

The Wire

McDonough Power Cooperative • Macomb, Illinois 61455



Mike Smith
President and CEO

It's capital credit time!

At the end of each year, once all bills are settled and expenses are accounted for, the remaining funds are referred to as a margin. These margins contribute to the cooperative's equity and are distributed to members based on their electricity usage throughout the year. This distribution is not a direct payment but rather a record of your investment in the cooperative's electric system according to your consumption. These records, known as capital credits, represent your share of the margin. Capital credits are allocated each year and are retired according to the cooperative's bylaws.

In August, the board of directors allocated the 2023 margins at \$834,114.

Additionally, the board approved the retirement of \$305,002 in capital credits. Members who received electric service from McDonough Power in 2003 and 2004 will be eligible for a capital credit refund. If you qualify, please watch for your refund soon. Since capital credits are retired for past years, it's essential to keep your current mailing address updated with McDonough Power Cooperative, even if you're no longer a member. To update your address, please contact our office.

THE CO-OP ALLOCATES YOUR CREDITS



You pay your electric bill, and the co-op uses the money as working capital to run and maintain the co-op.

McDonough Power tracks how much electricity you buy and how much money you pay for it throughout the year.



The Board of Directors looks at the year's finances, and allots any funds remaining after all expenses are paid. These funds are allocated to your membership.

YOU GET YOUR CREDITS



When the co-op's financial condition permits, the Board of Directors decides to retire, or pay, capital credits from previous years' allocations.

You get your capital credits! The co-op will let you know when your capital credits are coming your way.



MCDONOUGH POWER HAS PAID MILLIONS BACK TO MEMBERS OVER THE YEARS.

Capital Credits
How you get your slice of the pie.





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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative
The power of human connections



October is National Cybersecurity Awareness Month.

Let's work together to build a safer digital world. Whether at home, work or school, we can increase our online safety with the following tips.

- 🔒 Recognize and report phishing attempts.
- 🔒 Use strong, unique passwords.
- 🔒 Enable multi-factor authentication.
- 🔒 Update software regularly.

Cybersecurity tips for a safer digital world

Did you know the average household with internet access owns about 17 connected devices? That figure covers a wide range of electronics, including smart phones, computers, streaming devices, smart speakers, home assistants and more. Given our increasing reliance on internet-connected technologies, the likelihood of new cyber threats is ever-present.

McDonough Power is deeply committed to ensuring our local system is safe and secure. We routinely monitor and manage cyber risks, and we work together with other co-ops to share the latest advancements in cybersecurity measures that make us stronger. You can help, too.

When we all work together to stay safe online, we lower the risk of cyber threats to our systems, online accounts and sensitive data.

October is National Cybersecurity Month, and while good cyber hygiene should be practiced year-round, we'd like to share a few cybersecurity tips to help you bolster your online safety.

■ **Learn how to spot and report phishing attempts.**

Phishing occurs when criminals use phony emails, direct messages or other types of digital communications that lure you to click a bad link or download a malicious attachment. If you receive a suspicious email or message that includes urgent language, offers that seem too good to be true, generic greetings, poor grammar or an unusual sender address, it could be a phishing attempt. If you spot one, report it as soon as possible — and don't forget

to block the sender. (If you receive a suspicious work email, report it to the appropriate IT contact. Suspicious messages that are delivered to your personal email or social media accounts can also be reported.)

■ **Create strong, unique passwords.** When it comes to passwords, remember that length trumps complexity. Strong passwords contain at least 12 characters and include a mix of letters, numbers and symbols. Create unique passwords for each online account you manage and use phrases you can easily remember. **10113A1A-408C**

■ **Enable multifactor authentication when available.** Multifactor authentication (also known as two-factor authentication) adds an extra layer of security to your online accounts. These extra security steps can include facial recognition, fingerprint access or one-time codes sent to your email or phone.

■ **Update software regularly.** Software and internet-connected devices, including personal computers, smartphones and tablets, should always be current on updates to reduce the risk of infection from ransomware and malware. When possible, configure devices to automatically update or notify you when an update is available.

Let's all do our part to stay cyber smart and create a safer digital world for all. Visit staysafeonline.org to learn about additional cybersecurity tips. **532RM3-900C**

National First Responders Day

National First Responders Day, observed annually on Oct. 28, is an excellent time to recognize and honor the vital role of first responders. They make it their business to take immediate action when disaster strikes. **5319C4-255B**

First responders play a crucial role in protecting public safety and responding to emergencies. These dedicated professionals include firefighters, police officers, emergency medical technicians and paramedics. They face numerous challenges and make significant sacrifices to safeguard our communities.

It's important to note that utility workers, including those in the electricity sector, are also considered first responders. In 2003, President George W. Bush officially recognized public works professionals as first responders, highlighting the critical role utility workers play in emergency response and recovery efforts.

Utilities and first responders — an important partnership

Utility companies and traditional first responders often work hand in hand during emergencies. When natural disasters strike or accidents occur, utility workers are frequently among the first on the scene, working alongside firefighters, police and medical personnel to ensure public safety and restore essential services.

When traffic accidents, high winds, ice storms and other events involve downed power lines or power outages, they can cause both visible and hidden hazards that can put everyone at risk. It's important for utility workers and other first responders to work together to minimize risk. **6134D7-168B**

First responders have a critical role in keeping communities safe. National First Responders Day serves as a reminder of the importance of collaboration, preparedness and mutual support in times of crisis.

To all who selflessly serve as first responders to keep us safe — we share our gratitude on National First Responders Day and every other day of the year. Learn more at SafeElectricity.org.



FIRST RESPONDERS

Electrical hazards can threaten the lives of first responders. Follow safe practices every time when it comes to electrical hazards:

- Evaluate the scene and identify all potential and existing hazards.
- If electricity is involved, call the electric utility immediately.
- If there are downed lines, consider them energized, secure the scene and wait until the utility crew has deenergized the scene before proceeding/approaching.
- Coordinate and communicate with the utility crew on the scene.

Don't take chances. It is difficult to wait, but approaching an energized area puts you and fellow first responders at risk of electrocution. Always wait for the utility to confirm the lines are deenergized.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

If you recently made or plan to make energy efficiency improvements to your home, you may be eligible for federal tax credits. The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) of 2022 empowers homeowners to save money on energy efficiency improvements and upgrades. Homeowners can save up to \$3,000 annually to lower the cost of efficiency upgrades by up to 30%.

A few upgrades covered through the IRA include new exterior doors, windows, insulation, heating/cooling equipment and other major appliances. If you completed an upgrade this year or you are considering one, visit www.energystar.gov/federal-tax-credits.gov to learn if you qualify for a tax credit.

Safe
Electricity.org®

Member
Prizes

Every month we feature 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.

POWERING YOUR FUTURE

17 SCHOLARSHIPS
\$2,500 EACH

The electric cooperatives of Illinois are proud to offer scholarships to deserving students in our co-op family. Whether you're a high school senior planning to attend college or interested in a career as a lineworker, there's a scholarship opportunity for you.

Applications are now open for the 2025 Illinois Electric Cooperatives Memorial Scholarships. Apply by December 31, 2024, for most scholarships, or by April 30, 2025, for the lineworker scholarship. Scan the QR code or go to <https://bit.ly/IECScholarships> for more details.



**IEC MEMORIAL
SCHOLARSHIPS**

