



Alan W. Wattles

Across The President's Desk

Balancing electricity supply and demand

Electricity is essential for nearly every aspect of daily life — so essential that we rarely think about how it's produced and delivered to our homes. You might be surprised to learn that behind the scenes, a network of experts is working daily (and even by the minute) to anticipate how much electricity you need before you even use it.

We're all connected to the electric grid, so ensuring the right amount of electricity for all involves a complex process of forecasting energy demand, planning for capacity and securing enough supply to meet Americans' needs.

Powerful sources

First, electricity must be generated at a power plant using either traditional sources, such as coal, natural gas or nuclear energy, or from renewable sources, such as solar, wind or hydropower.

At Monroe County Electric Cooperative, we work closely with Southern Illinois Power Cooperative, our wholesale power partner, to secure enough electricity for our communities, using a diverse mix of energy sources to generate the power we deliver to your home or business. By maintaining a diverse energy mix — Monroe County Electric Cooperative has options to ensure reliable power at a competitive cost.

On a larger scale, across the country, electricity supply and demand are managed through a market that includes long-term planning agreements, where electricity is bought and sold just like other common goods and services. Because MCEC works with our

wholesale power partner, which is also a cooperative, we are able to pool resources and expertise to deliver affordable power to our local communities.

Electricity supply changes throughout the day, because demand fluctuates based on consumers' needs. For example, MCEC knows that we need to ensure more electricity in the mornings when you're starting your day, and in the evenings, when you're cooking dinner, running appliances and watching TV. Demand also increases when weather patterns change, such as extremely warm or cold temperatures.

Managing supply and demand across the grid

Across the country, other electric utilities are managing the same task of balancing supply and demand, which is why we have a larger network of key players in place to ensure enough power is delivered across the grid.

In most cases, the amount of electricity generated and how much is sent to specific areas are coordinated and monitored by regional transmission organizations (RTOs) and independent system operators (ISOs). In other areas, individual electric utilities perform these tasks.

RTOs, ISOs and electric utilities act as air traffic controllers for the electric grid. They forecast when you, your neighbors and communities across a large region will need more power. These organizations take measured steps to ensure there's enough supply to meet demand.



Looking ahead

As the energy sector undergoes rapid change, it's important for all consumers to understand the basics of electricity supply and demand.

Electricity use in the U.S. is expected to rise to record highs this year and next, with the demand for electricity expected to at least double by 2050. At the same time, energy policies are pushing the early retirement of always-available generation sources, which will undoubtedly compromise reliable electricity.

Monroe County Electric Cooperative remains committed to providing affordable, reliable energy for the members we serve. That's why we are preparing now for increased demand and other challenges that could compromise our local electric supply.

Managing the balancing act of electricity supply and demand is a complex job, which is why we have a network of utilities, power plant operators and energy traffic managers in place to direct the electricity we need and keep the electric grid balanced.



Data centers, new manufacturing facilities and our daily lives are requiring more and more electricity. U.S. power consumption is expected to rise to record highs this year and next, and the demand for electricity in the U.S. is expected to at least double by 2050. (Image provided by Pexels.com)

The future of reliable electricity

As our country's economy continues to grow, so too does the demand for reliable electricity. Data centers, new manufacturing facilities and our daily lives are requiring more and more electricity. In fact, U.S. power consumption is expected to rise to record highs this year and next, and the demand for electricity in the U.S. is expected to at least double by 2050.

Meanwhile, our supply of electricity is already decreasing as always-available power plants are being prematurely shut down. The North American Electric Reliability Corporation has warned that 19 states could see rolling blackouts during times of high electrical usage over the next five years. We all know what happens when supply can't meet demand — prices go up, and the lights go off.

As we prepare for this rising demand, Monroe County Electric Coop. is planning ahead to ensure local families and businesses have access to an affordable, reliable supply of electricity.

Meeting the challenge

To meet these challenges, MCEC is utilizing a balanced mix of always-available energy sources as a safeguard to maintain a reliable energy supply. We're also investing in innovative technologies to bolster grid resilience and enhance data management to improve operational efficiency, expedite outage response times and minimize service disruptions.

As electricity demand in the U.S. continues to rise, upgrading and building new infrastructure will be critical. That's why MCEC is collaborating

with other electric co-ops by pooling resources and expertise on projects that advance technology, security, infrastructure and innovative energy sources to meet the increasing needs of our communities.

As a co-op, this collaborative approach is a core strength of MCEC and enables us to deliver affordable energy to local families and businesses. Our priority is ensuring energy solutions are tailored to the unique needs of our community to help it thrive now and in the future.

Monroe County Electric Coop. was built by the community it serves, providing essential services that drive growth and pave the way for an energy future that prioritizes reliable electricity at a cost local families and businesses can afford.

MCEC line outages November 2024	Date	Duration	# Out	Map Location	Cause Desc	Substation
	11/04/24	1:11	9	J/K Rd	Unknown	Poe
	11/05/24	1:03	29	Chas Young Rd	Trees, Other	E. Carondelet
	11/06/24	0:46	2	Old Beck Rd	Small Animals or Birds	New Athens
	11/07/24	0:58	17	C Rd & Ivy Ln	Trees, Other	Waterloo
	11/07/24	1:18	17	C Rd & Ivy Ln	Trees, Other	Waterloo
	11/08/24	0:34	4	Rt 3	Small Animals or Birds	Poe
	11/10/24	2:01	2	Christopher Lake Dr	Other, Faulty Equipment	Millstadt
	11/15/24	0:50	2	Mullins Rd	Trees, Other	E. Carondelet
	11/17/24	1:51	650	North Waterloo/ Country Club Ln	Power Supplier	N. Waterloo
	11/22/24	0:32	4	Rt 156	Small Animals or Birds	Waterloo
	11/22/24	0:55	2	Keim Rd	Vehicles or Machinery	Millstadt



New Year's resolution: Be energy efficient year-round

Seal in comfort and savings

As energy consumers, we can all play a part in conserving resources and reducing our bills. Here are some practical tips to boost your home's energy efficiency throughout the year.

Know your energy consumption

Start by reviewing your energy bills for the past 12-24 months. Calculate your average monthly usage to establish a baseline for measuring your energy-saving efforts.

Adopt no-cost ways to save energy

Small changes can lead to significant savings:

- Turn off lights and unplug electronics such as chargers when not in use.
- Close or lower window coverings to regulate the temperature indoors.
- Change your air filters regularly as recommended.
- Use ceiling fans strategically — counterclockwise in summer and clockwise in winter to force warm air down.
- Grill outdoors during the summer to keep heat out of the kitchen.

Insulate your home

Weatherproofing is key to maintaining comfort and reducing energy use:

- Check for air leaks around windows and doors using the wet finger or tissue test.
- Apply caulk or weatherstripping to prevent drafts.
- Remember to keep doors closed to maintain indoor temperature.

Get smart with your thermostat

Optimize your heating and cooling by using your programmable thermostat's features — many homeowners never use them — and allow it to adjust the temperature when you're asleep or away.

- Consider upgrading to a smart thermostat for automatic adjustments.
- In general, adjust the thermostat a few degrees up or down for energy savings.

Explore renewable energy

Consider harnessing the power of natural energy sources:

- Look into installing solar energy panels for your home.
- Research local community solar programs that may be available.

Consult your electricity provider early in the process. They can provide valuable information regarding:

- Grid connection requirements.
- Cost considerations.
- Potential rebates available for renewable energy installations.

By implementing these tips, you'll not only save on energy costs but also contribute to a more sustainable community. For more tips on building a resilient and efficient home, visit SafeElectricity.org.



www.mcec.org

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Office hours:

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

Underground digging and professional excavation: safety first with 811

In this article, you will learn about:

- The importance of contacting 811 before any digging project
- Utility color codes
- Best practices for digging
- Legal requirements
- Commitment to safety

For professional excavators such as construction workers and contractors, ensuring safety is crucial. Beneath every site lies a network of utility lines — electric, water, gas and telecommunications. Striking these lines can cause:

- Costly delays
- Expensive repairs
- Service disruptions to the community
- Serious injury or death

Contacting 811 before digging helps prevent these risks.



Contacting 811

When you contact 811, they will notify relevant utility companies to mark underground lines, free of charge, using colored flags or paint. This process usually only takes a few days.

Different colors are used to mark underground utilities, and each color is universal:

- Red – electric
- Orange – communications, telephone/CATV
- Blue – potable water
- Green – sewer/drainage
- Yellow – gas/petroleum
- Purple – reclaimed water
- White – premark site of proposed excavation

Best practices for digging

After receiving utility markings, follow these practices:

- Respect the marks. Dig carefully around them.
- Maintain markings. Refresh if they fade or are removed.

- Verify responses. Ensure all utilities have reported.
- Hand dig in tolerance zones. Use hand tools within 18-24 inches of marked utilities.

Remember, 811 does not locate private utilities. Hire a private locator for systems including underground sprinklers, invisible fences, data communication systems or gas piping to a garage.

Training and communication

Train your team on excavation procedures and the importance of contacting 811. Regular toolbox talks can reinforce safe practices and potentially save lives.

Failing to contact 811 is unsafe and often illegal. Many states have laws requiring excavators to use the 811 system and to premark proposed sites, with potential fines for noncompliance.

Your responsibility

Always contact 811 before any excavation, no matter what the project size. Once utilities are located, wear proper protective gear before digging.

Whether you're digging a foundation for a skyscraper or installing a fence post, check before you dig. It's free, easy and helps keep your crew and the community out of harm's way. Prioritizing 811 reflects your commitment to safety and professionalism. Stay informed, stay prepared and stay safe!

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Taking steps to help your home heating system run more efficiently can reduce energy use and lower your winter bills. Check to see if any air vents around your home are blocked by furniture, curtains or other items. Obstructed vents force your heating system to work harder than necessary and can increase pressure in the ductwork, causing cracks and leaks to form. If necessary, consider purchasing a vent extender, which can be placed over a vent to redirect air flow from underneath furniture or other obstructions.

Source: energy.gov





Mark your Calendar!

86TH ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS

SATURDAY, JUNE 14TH

COOPERATIVE HEADQUARTERS

Board petitions can be picked up starting February 7th.

Mark your calendars! The **2025 Annual Meeting of Members** will be held at the cooperative office headquarters on **Saturday, June 14th, 2025**. The cooperative office is located at **6132 State Route 3, Waterloo**. We will have **additional parking near our back entrance off Old Red Bud Road**.

Eighteen \$500 scholarships will be drawn for high seniors who are sons or daughters of cooperative members. Visit our website for the application and future publications!



2025 Board of Directors Nominating Procedure:

(Sections taken from official cooperative by-laws)

Section 4.06 Nominations. It shall be the duty of the Board to appoint, not less than ninety (90) days nor more than one hundred fifty (150) days before the date of each meeting of the Members at which Directors are to be elected (“Voting Meeting”), a Credentials and Election Committee (“C & E Committee”) consisting of five (5) Members in good standing from each Area in which a Director’s term expires or vacancy occurs; provided that no such committee need be constituted to fill a vacancy in accordance with Section 4.02 (d).

(d) Nominations to be by Petition. Candidates (including incumbents whose terms are expiring) who desire to run for election for a Director position scheduled for election at the next Annual Meeting shall deliver to the President/CEO, or his delegate, at least sixty (60) days before the Annual Meeting,

- (i) lists, on each page of the Nominating Petition, the name of the candidate (“Nominee”);
- (ii) indicates, on each page of the Nominating Petition, the Area in which the Nominee resides (or in which the Entity Member designating such Nominee pursuant to Section 4.02(a) is located), and the Directorate District position for which such individual is being nominated, which must be the same; and
- (iii) contains the printed names, addresses, and telephone numbers, and original dated signatures signed within sixty (60) days of the first signature, of at least twenty
- (iv) Members who reside in the Directorate Area for

which the Nominee is being nominated.

- (v) No Member may sign a Nominating Petition for more than one (1) Nominee in a single election. If a Member does sign a Nominating Petition for more than one (1) Nominee, the Member’s signature shall not be valid on any of the petitions signed by the Member.
- (vi) If a membership is jointly held, all of the persons holding such joint membership shall be treated as one Member and only one of such persons may sign a Nominating Petition for any single election. If more than one such person signs a Nominating Petition, for different Nominees, none of the signatures for such Member shall be counted. If more than one such person signs a Nominating Petition, but all for the same

Nominee, only one of such signatures shall be counted.

(e) Display of Petitions. After verifying that a Nominating Petition complies with this Bylaw, the C&E Committee shall display the Nominating Petition in public view at the Cooperative’s headquarters and on the Cooperative’s website. Such display and listing shall be arranged by Directorate Area and listed within each Directorate Area in the order received in qualifying form by the Secretary of the C&E Committee.

(f) No Nominations from the Floor or Written-In. Nominations of an individual to run for election to a Director position scheduled for election at an Annual Meeting will not be accepted from the floor at such meeting, nor will write-in votes naming persons not properly nominated in accordance with the foregoing be counted.

Members may pick up a written Petition of Nomination form at the co-op office starting Feb. 4, 2025.

Efficiency Tip

Seal in comfort and savings with weatherstripping. Check for air leaks around your windows and doors and install weatherstripping where needed. Prevent drafts to reduce energy loss and lower your heating and cooling bills, improving energy efficiency year-round.



Safe
Electricity.org®

MONROE COUNTY ELECTRIC CO-OPERATIVE, INC.

POLICY 130

MEMBER IN GOOD STANDING

OBJECTIVE:

To develop a standard of defining what is accepted as a "Member in Good Standing" as stated in the cooperative by-laws and policies. These standards will be used in determining the ability of members to qualify for director elections, participate on advisory committees, continued service from cooperative and any future action that the board of directors deem appropriate.

PROCEDURE:

1. These guidelines will be used to determine the status of members in participating in any actions as follows:
 - A. Member must have taken service for at least three (3) years before eligibility to qualify for running for a director seat.
 - B. Member must have a credit rating point total of eight (8) points or less. This point total references Policy 303 regarding credit rating for security deposits.
 - C. Member must have paid all appropriate fees and any services provided for by the cooperative. No outstanding invoices.

Adopted: August 25, 2015
Amended: March 24, 2020

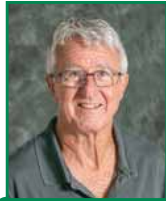
Gary Gregson, Secretary

Policies Referenced Herein: 303

2025 Nominating Procedure

Directors whose 3-year terms are due to expire in 2025 represent districts 1 (North-Area 1), 2 (Central-Area 2) & 3 (Southern-Area 3), and the district areas are illustrated below.

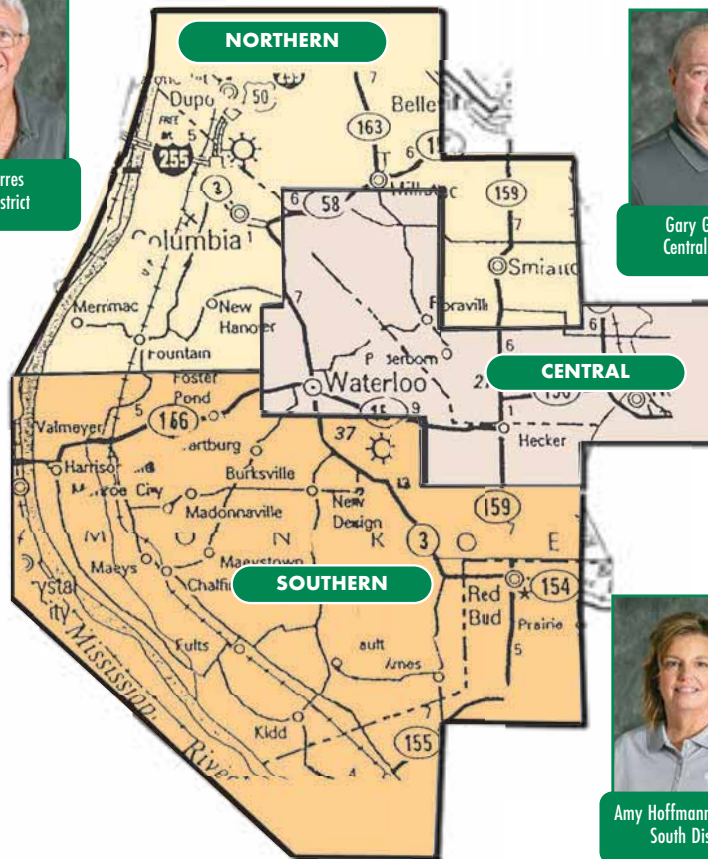
If you are interested in running for a board seat and are not sure of the district your account is in, just call our office at 618-939-7171 or 1-800-757-7433 and ask one of our member service representatives.



Joel Harres
North District



Gary Gregson
Central District



**Northern District –
Joel Harres**

**Central District –
Gary Gregson**

**Southern District –
Amy Hoffmann-Rohlfing**



Amy Hoffmann-Rohlfing
South District

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 mcec.org