



Alan W. Wattles

## Across The President's Desk

## Honoring Emma: A bittersweet day at the 4-H auction

What began with heavy hearts turned into a day of hope, community and support at the local 4-H auction. Just days before the event, our community suffered a heartbreaking loss with the tragic passing of Emma Schultheis — a vibrant, kindhearted young woman who embodied the true spirit of 4-H. Emma's passion, leadership and smile left a lasting impression on everyone who knew her, and her absence was deeply felt.

We are proud to have played a small part in supporting these incredible kids and look forward to continuing this tradition.



Emma Schultheis  
July 27, 2010 — July 21, 2025

In honor of Emma, many came together with a renewed sense of purpose — not just to purchase animals, but to support the youth who are carrying on the traditions that Emma loved so much. The auction was filled with emotion, but also with pride for the dedication and hard work these kids put into their projects.

This year, we were proud to purchase a sheep from Janella Neary, a pig from Kehrington Schultheis, chickens from Kate Jones, and a steer from Jared Niebrugge. Each animal represents more than just a project—it's months of care, learning and growth for these young people.

Supporting the 4-H auction is more than just buying livestock. It's investing in the future of agriculture, in the development of responsible and resilient youth, and in the strength of our community.



◀ Janella  
Neary



▲ Kehrington  
Schultheis



▲ Kate Jones

Jared Niebrugge ▶



# ENERGY EFFICIENCY




## TIP OF THE MONTH

Take advantage of "shoulder months," which refer to the transitional periods between peak heating and cooling seasons. During the fall, these milder weeks typically occur between September and November. Shoulder months offer a great opportunity to reduce home energy consumption as the need for extensive heating or cooling is reduced. Look for simple ways to boost indoor comfort without running your heating and cooling system. Use ceiling fans and open windows on breezy days to ventilate your home. On cooler days, add a layer of clothing and avoid running the heat.



## DO NOT TAMPER WITH YOUR ELECTRIC METER

***Meter tampering is not only illegal, but also incredibly dangerous!***

-  **Never break a meter seal.**
-  **Never open a meter base.**
-  **Never remove a meter or alter an entrance cable in any manner**



### MCEC line outages July 2025

Date	Duration	# Out	Map Location	Cause Desc	Substation
07/02/25	3:00	3	Klein School Rd/ Sunset Ln	Vehicles or Machinery	New Athens
07/05/25	1:45	2	Edinburg Ct	Other, Faulty Equipment	N. Waterloo
07/06/25	1:10	9	Stemler Rd	Small Animals or Birds	Millstadt
07/06/25	1:13	2	Imbs Station Rd	Lightning	E. Carondelet
07/09/25	0:40	3	Beck Rd	Other, Faulty Equipment	New Athens
07/17/25	1:09	2	Robinson School Rd	Lightning	New Athens
07/19/25	1:15	9	Holcomb School Rd	Small Animals or Birds	Smithton
07/26/25	0:40	3	MM Rd/R Rd	Lightning	Poe
07/26/25	0:59	29	Doyle Rd/Powell Rd	Unknown	Poe



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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

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# Keep food safe before, during and after a storm



## At a glance: Benefits of energy storage

- Keep appliance thermometers in your fridge and freezer.
- Limit the opening of appliance doors.
- Use coolers and ice for outages longer than 4 hours.
- Never taste food to check safety. When in doubt, throw it out.

Storm season can bring power outages, putting your food at risk of spoiling. You can keep your groceries safe and reduce waste with a little preparation.

## Before the storm

Take a few precautions:

- Use appliance thermometers in your fridge and freezer. Safe temps: 40 F (fridge), 0 F (freezer)
- Freeze water containers to help maintain cold temperatures.
- Keep coolers, ice packs or ice ready in case of long outages.
- Consider filling plastic containers with water, leaving an inch of space inside each one, to help keep food cold if the power goes out.

Stock up on ready-to-eat foods that don't need refrigeration, including:

- Bottled water
- Canned goods such as veggies, fruits, beans and tuna (Don't forget a manual can opener.)
- Instant mashed potatoes or oatmeal for carbs and energy
- Crackers and nuts
- Dry cereal and powdered milk

## During an outage

In the event of a disaster, it is important to follow a specific sequence for using your available food supply. Start

with perishable foods and items from the refrigerator. Following that, turn your attention to the freezer, then begin using nonperishable foods and essential staples.

Losing a fridge full of food is costly, inconvenient and can be dangerous if you're running low on rations. While you may not be able to save everything, here are ways to preserve food as long as possible:

- Keep doors closed. A fridge keeps food safe for up to 4 hours; a full freezer, up to 48 hours.
- Use a cooler if the power is out for more than 4 hours. Layer frozen items with fridge foods and ice for a more consistent temperature.
- If you don't have a cooler, you can use your freezer. Put ice in bowls and place them around the food to prevent melting ice from flooding your freezer. Use blankets to insulate the freezer, but ensure that air vents are unobstructed.
- Monitor temperatures with a thermometer. Food must stay below 40 F to stay safe.
- Never taste food to test safety. If it smells, looks or feels off — throw it out.
- Don't use food that touched floodwater unless it is in waterproof packaging.

## After the power returns

- Frozen food is safe if it still contains ice crystals or has stayed under 40°F.
- Don't refreeze or cook food that got too warm.
- Throw out anything questionable.

Use the U.S. Department of Agriculture's guide to learn more about foods you can keep or should throw out after a power outage: [www.foodsafety.gov/food-safety-charts/food-safety-during-power-outage](http://www.foodsafety.gov/food-safety-charts/food-safety-during-power-outage).

Staying prepared can help you avoid illness, waste and added stress during a storm.