

Coles-Moultrie Electric Cooperative

THE GRID

P.O. Box 709
(104 Dewitt Ave., East)
Mattoon, Illinois 61938

Phone: 217-235-0341
or Toll-Free:
1-888-661-CMEC (2632)

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

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Secretary

Andrew Fearn.... Charleston

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**To Report an Outage
call #888-661-2632**

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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 

How will you
MAKE YOUR MARK?



ILLINOIS YOUTH TOUR

YOUTH DAY & YOUTH TOUR 2026

CMEC will once again sponsor area sophomores, juniors, and seniors from high schools in our service territory to attend Youth Day in Springfield on **March 25, 2026**. Participants will tour the State Capitol, meet elected officials, and learn about the cooperative difference.

Two Youth Day attendees will be selected for Youth Tour, a weeklong, all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., **June 15-22, 2026**. During the weeklong trip, students will have the opportunity to visit Capitol Hill and meet with their elected officials, visit historical and cultural sites, including Gettysburg, Arlington National Cemetery, the Supreme Court, memorials, and museums, all while building leadership skills and learning how to make a positive impact on the future. Along the way, participants will connect with students from across the country and form lifelong friendships, all sponsored by CMEC. Apply today for the trip of a lifetime!

For more details or to apply, please contact our office at 217-235-0341 or visit our website at cmec.coop/youth programs. **Applications are due February 20, 2026**. Don't miss this opportunity!

Capital Credits



Notice of Retirement of Capital Credits

Please take note that on Oct. 30, 2025, the Coles-Moultrie Electric Cooperative (CMEC) board declared the intent to retire capital credits for the years 1988 and 1989. Checks were mailed to all members of record for said years on Dec. 15, 2025. Any person or entity who has not received payment and believes they were a member of CMEC at any time during those years and are entitled to payment for their capital credits should contact the co-op at 217-235-0341, or email info@cmeccoop.

What if a member is deceased?

If a member is deceased, their heirs or beneficiaries have the option of retiring the member's entire capital credit account, also called an estate retirement. Estate retirements are paid out at a discounted rate. If you need to initiate an estate retirement, please call our office at 217-235-0341, email us at info@cmeccoop, or visit our website.

Required Documentation for Estate Retirements

Required documentation will differ for the legal representative versus the designated beneficiary.

The legal representative of the estate of a deceased member shall need to provide the following:

- Death Certificates for any and all people named as a member-owner of the Capital Credits;
- Letters of Office OR a small estate affidavit that is notarized, lists Coles-Moultrie Electric Cooperative, lists all heirs with their addresses and percentages of distribution, and states whether or not there is a Last Will and Testament;

- Last Will and Testament, if available; and
- Discounted Payments Form

The designated beneficiary shall provide the following:

- Death certificates for any and all people named as a member-owner of the Capital Credits;
- State Photo Identification; and
- Discounted Payments form
- The beneficiary form must be completed and signed while the member is still living. For joint memberships, signatures from both members are required.

Estate retirements must be approved by the CMEC Board of Directors in order to be paid out. The Cooperative shall not be obligated to retire capital credits prior to the time when such capital credits would otherwise be retired or under any circumstance where the retirement of capital credits would impair the financial condition of the Cooperative.

Want to Designate a Beneficiary for Your Future Capital Credit Payouts?

If you would like to designate a beneficiary, you will need to fill out

our Designated Beneficiary Form and turn it into our office at 104 Dewitt Ave. E, Mattoon, IL 61938. We will stamp the form as received, scan it into your account, and give the form back to you for your records. Please contact our office or visit our website for more information.

Do You or Someone You Know Have Unclaimed Capital Credits?

You or someone you know may have unclaimed Capital Credits. CMEC distributes Capital Credit checks when our Board of Directors determines whether it is feasible for our co-op. Former members cannot always be located if they have not kept their current address up to date. You can search for your name on the list on our website. Go to cmeccoop - My Membership - Capital Credits - "How can I check if I have unclaimed capital credits?" in the FAQs. These funds can be claimed by having the member or the member's family contact the cooperative and provide the proper paperwork to claim the funds. Contact our office if you have any questions or find your name!

CAPITAL CREDITS
Your slice of the cooperative pie!

- 1**
We keep track of how much electricity you purchased throughout the year.
- 2**
At the end of the year, we complete a financial analysis and determine operating margins.
- 3**
Excess revenues are allocated to members (based on electricity use) as capital credits.
- 4**
When financial conditions permit, our board elects to pay (retire) the capital credits.

Cooperative Principal #3: Member Economic Participation

One of the key differences between traditional for-profit accounting and not-for-profit cooperative accounting is the distribution of profits (margins) to members rather than investors, known as Capital Credits. Capital credits (member equity): A co-op's equity is primarily built through "capital credits," which are allocations of the co-op's margins to members based on their usage or patronage. These are not dividends but represent a member's ownership stake.

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of CMEC. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the cooperative. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing the cooperative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the cooperative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

Capital credits are the primary source of equity for most cooperatives and allocating and retiring capital credits are two of the practices that distinguish CMEC from other businesses. Adopting and implementing the capital credit policy are key responsibilities of CMEC's Board of Directors and management staff. As the elected representatives of the members, directors should understand CMEC's capital credit policy and be able to explain why it was adopted and how it works to members who have questions. The management staff is responsible for executing the board's policy.



Aimee Boswell
Director of
Finance

CMEC generally allocates capital credits to patrons each year and maintains records sufficient to reflect the equity of each member in the assets of the cooperative. Allocating these credits makes the funds available for CMEC to use during the routine course of business each year.

There are good business reasons to retire, or pay out, capital credits. It provides tangible evidence of members' ownership in CMEC and demonstrates the difference between cooperatives and other organizations. Since the funds that members invest in the cooperative do not earn dividends or other financial incentives, retiring capital credits is a way to ensure that each generation of members pays their own way by providing their own equity.

Kyah Minnich
The Board of Directors and management staff determine when the cooperative is in sound financial position to retire capital credits and, if so, the dollar amount to retire in a given year. That decision is influenced by numerous factors, including: the cooperative's financial performance, its equity management plan, rate competitiveness, and oversight of regulatory bodies.

Other considerations include lender requirements and the views of the financial markets, both of

which influence the cooperative's ability to obtain funds in the future. The board may choose to retire a percentage of the previous year's margins, capital credits allocated for specific years or a specific dollar amount.

FIFO (First-In, First-Out) continues to be the most commonly used method. This means that electric cooperatives pay back members' equity allocations starting with the oldest years first. This ensures that those who have been invested the longest are paid back first.

Last December, CMEC members received the retirement of capital credits for the years 1988 and 1989 in the amount of \$1,187,182.89. The CMEC Board of Directors, in recent years, has placed a priority on the retirement of capital credits when it is economically feasible to do so. If you have any further questions about member economic participation, please reach out to the office, and you will be connected with someone who will be happy to answer your questions.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Mid-winter is a great time to ensure you're making the most of your home heating system. Replace or clean filters to keep your furnace or heat pump running efficiently. Listen for strange noises and check for uneven heating—these signs indicate that the system may need servicing. Ensure vents and radiators aren't blocked by furniture or rugs as proper airflow helps your system work less and saves energy. A little maintenance along the way can prevent costly repairs and keep your home cozy through winter.

Rebates

CMEC will once again offer two rebates for 2026: the Electric Water Heater rebate for electric water heaters with a capacity of 30 gallons or higher, and the Energy Efficiency and Conservation rebate for purchases or projects that conserve electricity. Stop by our office, visit our website, or call 217-235-0341 for details and forms.

Safety Tip

During a power outage, unplug and turn off electrical devices to avoid power surges when power is restored. Leave one light on so you know when the power comes back on. While the power is out, use flashlights instead of candles to reduce fire risk.



Safe
Electricity.org®

Coles-Moultrie Electric Cooperative Scholarships

CMEC will once again be awarding six \$500 scholarships, as well as the \$1,000 Randall Beasley Memorial Scholarship in 2026!

Rules to Apply

- Applicants must be either a CMEC member or under 21 years of age and a legal dependent of a CMEC member.
- Applicants must also be enrolled in a 2- or 4-year degree program at an accredited institution, including vocational/technical schools.
- Applicants cannot have previously received a CMEC scholarship, and CMEC employees, directors, and their dependents are ineligible.
- **Deadline for applying is March 31, 2026.**

For more information or to apply, you can visit our website at cmec.coop/community/scholarships or contact Communications Coordinator Summar Smith at 217-235-0341 or 888-661-2632 or by email at ssmith@cmec.coop.

Don't miss this great opportunity!

The Randall Beasley Scholarship honors long-time CMEC employee and Navy veteran Randall Beasley. The scholarship was founded and funded by his daughter and cooperative member, Sue Meyer. Thank you, Sue, for continuing to honor your father's legacy and for pouring into the future of our community. Preference for this scholarship will be given to an individual attending lineman school or majoring in the electrical or engineering field of study.



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