

# THE GRID

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**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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**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

## Capital Credit Checks

Cooperative staff visited several key accounts in our service territory to hand deliver Capital Credit checks. Our Board of Directors approved the retirement for the years 1988-1989. Checks were mailed to members on Dec. 15, 2025. Any person or entity who has not received payment and believes they were a member of CMEC at any time in those years should contact the co-op at 217-235-0341 or email [info@cmeccoop](mailto:info@cmeccoop).



Charleston Stone Company: Pictured left is Dustin Campbell of Charleston Stone Company, and pictured right is David Welsh, Director of IT of CMEC.



Coles County Memorial Airport - MTO: Pictured left is Anita Hoene, CMEC Director of Human Resources, and pictured right is Andrew Fearn, Manager of the Coles County Memorial Airport.



Lake Land College: Pictured left, Dr. Josh Bullock, President of LLC, pictured center, Steven Baldwin, Director of Operations & Engineering at CMEC, pictured right, John Woodruff, Vice President for Business Services of LLC.



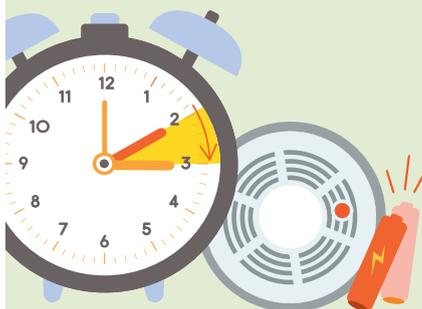
Sarah Bush Lincoln: Pictured left, Mark Livingston, Facility Services Director, Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center, Erica Stollard, VP of Operations, Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center, and right, Kellie Moore, Director of Member Services, CMEC.

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

As spring arrives, take advantage of milder temperatures to save energy at home. Open windows on pleasant days to bring in fresh air instead of running your HVAC system. It's also a great time to replace dirty air filters, which helps your system run more efficiently and improves indoor air quality. As daylight increases, turn off unnecessary lights and rely on natural sunlight when possible. Small seasonal adjustments like these can reduce energy use, lower monthly bills and help keep your home comfortable as winter transitions into spring.

## Spring Forward is March 8th!

Remember to set your clocks forward & to replace the batteries in your CO and Smoke Detectors.



## Having a backup plan for medical devices can be lifesaving

*Backup safety tips include the following:*

- ♥ Have an emergency plan in place with friends and family that outlines places you can go in the event of a long-term outage.
- ♥ Before an outage occurs, find out if the medical equipment safely runs on a backup power source and for how long (see manufacturer's recommendations).
- ♥ Keep a full charge on battery-powered devices or have extra batteries available.
- ♥ If recommended by the manufacturer, consider purchasing a portable battery pack to power devices.
- ♥ Gather related resources that will last for two weeks, including batteries, supplemental equipment, and prescriptions.
- ♥ Realize that local shelters and hospitals that are also experiencing an outage may be at capacity and have limited resources, including auxiliary power.
- ♥ Think about the other special equipment you might need, such as coolers for refrigerated medicine. Like any important device, keep up regular maintenance.
- ♥ Keep a file that includes the device's manufacturer, serial numbers, and photos of the device.



# From the President & CEO's Desk

By Jim Wallace, CMEC President & CEO



**Jim Wallace**  
CMEC President  
& CEO

Each year, CMEC determines various projects that will be initiated/completed that will improve the capabilities of the electric distribution system. I would like to

list some of the planned projects for 2026.

## **Bruce Substation Transformer**

— CMEC has 14 distribution substations. One is a dedicated pumping station, but 13 of them have the capability to tie together with other subs when a particular substation goes down or needs to be taken down for maintenance. Twelve of those subs can tie together via a “closed transfer,” meaning the members on those feeders do not even see a blink when the transfer occurs. The 13th sub, our Bruce Substation, is fed by a different transmission voltage (34,500 volts) than the other 12 subs (69,000 volts). Anytime CMEC needs to take down the sub for maintenance or there is any storm switching required, the members on the sub see a brief outage of up to a few minutes. The voltages between Bruce and the 12 other subs are the same distribution voltage (7,200 volts), but Bruce is “out-of-phase” with the others, requiring an “open transfer.” Because the load is growing on Bruce Sub, it’s necessary to increase the capacity of the transformer from its present 5 MVA to 7.5 MVA. In order to align the phase angles, the transformer will be required to be wound 30 degrees “out-of-phase.” This is called a “zig-zag” transformer. This will allow a “closed transfer” between Bruce

and the other subs, eliminating the brief outages that are required anytime switching is performed on Bruce. Our hope is that the transformer will arrive by year-end. The estimated cost of the project will be approximately \$800,000.

## **Sullivan Substation Feeder 3-1**

This feeder runs east from the sub located on the Cadwell Road. It is attached to the 69,000-volt transmission line poles that are maintained and operated by Prairie Power, Inc (PPI), CMEC’s generation and transmission cooperative. PPI is replacing the poles and transmission conductor from the substation to the Arcola Breaker Station, located approximately 2 miles south of Arcola on Route 45. The distance is approximately 11 miles. CMEC will be responsible for the cost of replacing our 7,200-volt distribution feeder along the full distance of the project. It’s estimated that the cost will be \$2.6 million dollars. The conductor size will be increased, allowing for less voltage drop as the distance

from the sub increases as well as increased reliability due to new conductor and poles. It’s expected to be completed in the last quarter of the year.

**P13A & P14 Miles** – This line is on the Westfield blacktop running from the 5 Mile House to the Hutton Road, just southeast of Charleston. The current line is a single-phase line and will be upgraded to a three-phase line to be able to spread the load in the area it serves. It will allow for better voltage support as well as reducing the number of members affected by outages when they do occur. The project is expected to cost approximately \$200,000.

In addition to these specific projects, CMEC personnel are continually inspecting the system to find poles and conductor that need replaced to ensure the system remains as reliable as possible. It’s a continual effort that we at CMEC are dedicated to performing to provide the best value possible for the membership of CMEC.

## Accurate Outage Reporting is Critical

As the storms roll in, our crews are ready to roll out! Remember that accurate outage reporting is critical! Saying there’s a line down when there isn’t can delay restoration while crews search for a problem that doesn’t exist. Honest reports equal faster power restoration for everyone. Thanks for helping us help you! You can report an outage by calling our office at 217-235-0341 or 888-661-2632 or by logging into Smarthub.



# Safety first

## Coles-Moultrie Electric recognized for outstanding workplace practices

Safety leadership and training were the focus of the 2026 Safety and Energy Conference, held Jan. 28-29 in Springfield. The two-day event brought together electric cooperative professionals, safety leaders, and industry partners for educational sessions, networking, and recognition of outstanding safety performance.

The conference, which was held by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives, covered a range of topics focused on leadership, safety, and workplace culture, including personal influence and leadership, technical safety training, and the

role of safety culture in the workplace.

Safety awards were also given, recognizing cooperatives for exemplary safety performance over the past year. Coles-

Moultrie Electric Cooperative earned the 2025 Best Loss Time Rate and the 2025 Best Incident Rate Certificates of Achievement.

The Best Loss Time Rate Award is given to cooperatives with the lowest amount of lost work time due to workplace injuries, relative to the number of hours worked. The Best Incident Rate Award recognizes the



CMEC employees, pictured left to right: Grant Cooper, Drew Pals, Koty West, Anita Hoene, Steven Baldwin, and Shane Ruppert.

cooperatives with the lowest overall number of recordable workplace incidents, including minor injuries.

As the electric industry continues to evolve, safety remains a top priority. Coles-Moultrie Electric Cooperative will always be committed to a strong safety culture for both employees and cooperative members. **Kendra Schooley**

## 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](http://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](mailto: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](http://cmec.coop)