


MONROE ELECTRIC NEWS

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Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Alan W. Wattles

Across The President's Desk

Co-op students engage lawmakers during annual Youth Day

On March 25, 168 students sponsored by 24 electric and telephone cooperatives across the state gathered in the Illinois State Capitol for Youth Day, an annual event designed to introduce young leaders to state government and the cooperative principles that serve their communities. Students met with elected officials, explored historic sites and experienced the workings of state government firsthand.

Representing MCEC included Makenna Esker from Freeburg High School and Brodie Stenzel from Red Bud High School.

“As cooperatives, we’re committed not only to providing reliable service but also to investing in the next generation,” said Brooke Gross, member services manager at the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives and facilitator of its youth programs. “Youth Day helps students understand the

cooperative difference and the impact they can have as informed citizens.”

State Senator Terri Bryant met with the students representing MCEC.

In addition to meeting elected officials, the students also learned more about their cooperative’s role in their own communities and had the opportunity to tour the Capitol Building and the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum.

During lunch, Illinois State Treasurer Michael Frerichs addressed the students. He shared his journey from a small town in Illinois to his current role, emphasizing the importance of finding interesting and challenging opportunities. He encouraged students to pursue their passions, participate and become lifelong learners.

“You have found time to participate here today by coming to Youth Day,” Frerichs said. “You’re talking to

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TIPS TO AVOID ENERGY SCAMS



If you receive a call from someone stating you have overpaid your energy bill and you should provide your banking information or a credit card number to receive a refund, hang up because it's likely a scam. If you overpay your bill, your utility will apply the overpayment credit to your account balance or mail a check. They will not call and request your banking information to issue the refund.

Source: Utilities United Against Scams



ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

As temperatures start to rise, many homeowners focus on staying cool. Don't forget about the small gaps around windows and doors. While air sealing is often associated with keeping cold air out during winter, it's just as important during summer. Tiny cracks and worn weatherstripping allow cool, conditioned air to escape and hot, humid air to seep indoors. This forces your air conditioner to work harder than necessary and increases energy costs. Take a few minutes to check for drafts, replace weatherstripping and seal leaks. A tighter home keeps you more comfortable and helps manage energy use.

Source: energy.gov



MCEC line outages March 2026

Date	Duration	# Out	Map Location	Cause Desc	Substation
03/31/26	0:23	3	Ahne Rd	Small Animals Or Birds	Waterloo
03/29/26	1:25	3	Reichman Rd	Unknown	Fountain
03/27/26	1:04	3	R Rd	Trees, Other	Poe
03/26/26	0:38	2	Rt 3	Unknown	Poe
03/22/26	1:32	10	Roachtown Rd/ Wessel Ln	Vehicles or Machinery	Smithton
03/21/26	0:56	17	Douglas Rd	Vehicles or Machinery	Smithton
03/15/26	0:03	819	New Athens Area	Power Supplier	New Athens
03/15/26	1:00	24	Griggs Rd	Wind, Not Trees	Poe
03/07/26	0:48	25	Moredock Lake	Lightning	Fountain
03/07/26	0:49	2	Stemler Rd	Lightning	Millstadt
03/06/26	0:57	3	Concordia Church Rd	Trees, Other	E. Carondelet
03/04/26	1:05	2	Farm Creek Ln	Lightning	Waterloo
03/03/26	0:31	3	VV Rd	Small Animals or Birds	Poe



www.mcec.org

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




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PEAK POWER
REWARDS

Get rewarded for reducing electricity use during peak demand periods!

-  \$1 per kWh saved during events
-  24-hour advance notice given
-  2-4 hour event durations

-  No penalties for partial or non-participation
-  Utilize simple ways to cut energy use and earn credits



LEARN MORE & ENROLL TODAY!
Visit mcec.org/peak-power-rewards or call
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Join us for our 2026 Annual Meeting!

Mark your calendars for **Saturday, June 13, 2026**, and join us at Monroe County Electric Cooperative for our 2026 Annual Meeting! This is a great opportunity to connect with your cooperative, stay informed, and enjoy a fun morning with family and friends.

Event schedule:

- Registration begins at 7:30 a.m.
- Breakfast: 7:30-9:30 a.m.
- Kids' activities: 7:30-9:30 a.m.
- Scholarship drawing: 9:45 a.m.
- Business meeting: 10 a.m.

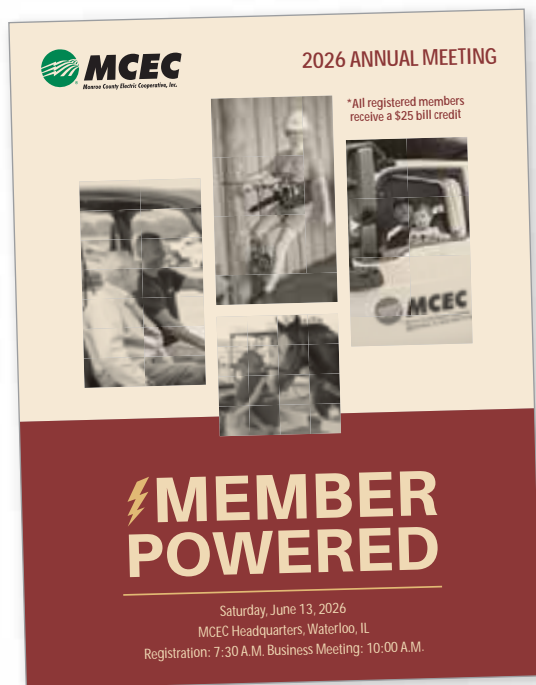
During the business meeting, members will hear important updates about the cooperative, including a review of financials, the election of directors, and reports from Chairman Obernagel and President/CEO Alan Wattles. Topics will include our new Peak Power Rewards program, and other key initiatives impacting our membership.

From 7:30 to 9:30 a.m., families can enjoy a variety of activities for kids, including:

- Bounce houses
- Balloon artist
- Pole climbing demonstration
- Petting zoo
- Clydesdale horse photo opportunity

High school seniors: Interested in applying for our Annual Meeting Scholarship? Simply scan the QR code or visit <https://mcec.org/annualmeeting/>.

All registered members will receive a **\$25 bill credit**, which will be applied to your July 2026 electric bill.



Be on the lookout for your official Annual Meeting Notice — bring it to the Annual Meeting to get registered quicker!

We look forward to seeing you there for a morning of food, fun and cooperative connection!



Annual Meeting Scholarship

Youth Day continued from 18A

people. You are learning. And I'll tell you that learning never stops. It only stops when you decide you don't want to learn anymore. ... If you decide to push yourself and become a lifelong learner, you'll grow from it."

Participants also met Micah Anderson, the 2025-26 Illinois Youth Leadership Council representative, who was sponsored by Adams Telephone Co-Operative during the 2025 Youth Day and Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. He spoke of his experiences over the past year, saying that representing Illinois has been one of the most fulfilling things he's done in his life.

"Throughout the year, I've grown in many ways that I could have never imagined," Anderson said. "I never thought that I would be able to see

myself as a leader. I never thought that I would be confident enough to get in front of a crowd and deliver a speech. ... But here I am in front of all you today. I'm a testament to the growth that you can undergo if you take advantage of the opportunities that are placed in front of you. I challenge you all to do the same."

In addition to Youth Day, Makenna and Brodie were also selected to participate in Youth Tour, an annual trip to Washington, D.C., sponsored by Illinois electric and telephone cooperatives. This year's trip will be held June 15-22. They will represent MCEC on the weeklong trip to see historic sites,



Left to right: Makenna Esker, State Senator Terri Bryant and Brodie Stenze

learn firsthand how cooperatives work and gain valuable leadership skills.

"From touring Washington, D.C., to learning the cooperative difference, Youth Tour is much more than a trip," said Gross. "It's an experience they will carry long after high school."