

Sharing Success

Through participation in CoBank's Sharing Success Program, we were able to again provide donations to support four organizations. CoBank matches our donations made to local nonprofit charitable organizations selected by our board of directors. The amount below reflects the total donation, half from Menard Electric and half from CoBank. An application was available on our website in the spring, and organizations are encouraged to look for the program to be available again next year.

Ashland Fire Protection District

A \$6,000 total donation to support the fixing and replacement of the roof of the Ashland Fire Protection District building. The district covers 300+ square miles in Cass and Morgan counties. Members are trained for fires, extrication, search and rescue, and can provide some medical services.

From left: MEC Director Gary Martin, General Manager Alisha Anker and Fire Chief Tyler Latham.



Ashland Fire Protection District

Athens Area Food Pantry

A \$4,000 total donation to support purchasing of items to serve income-eligible households in the Athens Community School District. The pantry relies heavily on community support and has had a recent increase in need.

From left: Volunteers Tom Brune, Rich Reed, MEC President Warren Goetsch, Marie Basso, Sue Brune, MEC General Manager Alisha Anker, Deb Weil, Pennie Robinson, Karon Dugger and Margaret Oliver.



Athens Area Food Pantry

Camp CILCA (Central Illinois Lutheran Camp Association)

A \$4,000 total donation to purchase and upgrade materials for a newly redesigned outdoor education program. The camp began in 1950 and currently serves 400-500 youth campers each summer along with 20-25 adults with developmental disabilities and more than 200 students from public and parochial schools in fall and spring outdoor education programs.

From left: CILCA Program Director Lauren Rodgers and Executive Director Joshua Theilen and MEC General Manager Alisha Anker and President Warren Goetsch.



Camp CILCA (Central Illinois Lutheran Camp Association)

Cooperative Family Fund

A \$6,000 total donation to the Cooperative Family Fund, a newly formed national organization formed to support the minor children of electric co-op employees when a parent dies while employed at a cooperative.

From left: MEC Director Gary Martin, Cooperative Family Fund Director Alan Wattles, MEC Manager Alisha Anker, and MEC Directors Warren Goetsch, Dennis Ryan and Don McMillan.



Cooperative Family Fund

New fleet addition
is **ELECTRIC**



In June we added an electric vehicle to our fleet. After extensive research we chose a Volkswagen ID.4 Pro S. The model is an all-wheel drive SUV that we felt had the range and size we required.

Interesting facts about our new EV:

- ⚡ The ID.4 has an estimated 255-mile range, which will vary depending on ambient temperature and driving style.
- ⚡ The EPA estimated fuel economy is 104 MPGe for city driving, 93 MPGe for highway and 99 MPGe combined. (The term MPGe is Miles Per Gallon equivalent, an EPA calculation comparing consumption energy to traditional gas-powered cars.) The ID.4 will consume about 34 kWh per 100 miles driven, costing \$4.21 if charged at our current standard rate of 12.4 cents per kWh.
- ⚡ When compared to a gas-powered car, the VW ID.4 claims it can provide up to \$4,500 in fuel cost savings across 5 years.
- ⚡ An 82-kWh battery pack powers the 295-horsepower dual engine.
- ⚡ Acceleration is smooth and immediate; it will go 0-60 mph in less than 6 seconds.
- ⚡ The motor is so quiet a light humming sound was added for awareness.
- ⚡ The motor is located above the rear axle; under the hood houses the radiator, 12-volt battery, washer fluids and air conditioning components.
- ⚡ A large all-glass panoramic roof lets in plenty of light, and a cover can be closed if desired.
- ⚡ We haven't experienced winter driving yet but are looking forward to the standard heated windshield, washer nozzles, side mirrors, seats and steering wheel.
- ⚡ The ID.4 has all the safety features you'd expect, plus semi-automated driving assistance, assisted lane changing, emergency assist, adaptive cruise control, blind-spot monitors, rear traffic alert, and forward collision and autonomous emergency braking with pedestrian and cyclist monitoring.
- ⚡ A 12-inch touchscreen display provides access to vehicle settings such as air temperature, radio, navigation and more. It is simple to use once you have experienced it.
- ⚡ Interior lights can be customized, and a light strip running below the windshield pulses to provide prompts to the driver as needed.
- ⚡ Our vehicle was assembled in Chattanooga, Tenn., and purchased locally at Volkswagen of Peoria.
- ⚡ A level 1 charger came with the vehicle and can be plugged into a standard 12-volt outlet (the kind you'd already have in your garage). This level of charging is slow. It can add 2-3 miles per hour. We installed a level 2 charger that uses 240 volts in the warehouse that can fully charge the car overnight, and we feel more secure gaining 22-33 miles per hour charged. Note that level 3 chargers are what you find at fast-charging stations, they require a great deal more power to run and can charge a vehicle in about 30 minutes. For most users, 90% of charging is done at home.

Electric vehicle FAQs

Q: Why does MEC have an EV?

A: Our new Volkswagen ID.4 electric SUV is helping us gain insights into how EVs operate and what infrastructure is needed to support them. We want to raise awareness and promote understanding of EV technologies. We want our members to stay informed and be prepared for the future. We are excited to have the opportunity to let members learn about our EV firsthand with a test drive — so that you can form your own opinion.

Q: Can I charge an EV using an existing outlet or would I need a special outlet?

A: All EVs come with a 110-volt-compatible (Level 1) charging unit, which can be plugged into any standard 120V household outlet. For an eight-hour overnight charge, this will enable traveling around 36 to 40 miles a day. If you typically drive longer distances or are in a hurry, a Level 2 charger takes about half the time and provides about 180 miles of range over an eight-hour charging period. A Level 2 charger requires a 240V outlet, which we suggest be installed by a licensed electrician.

Q: Does the outside temperature affect the range of an EV?

A: Ambient temperatures, particularly colder weather, can impact the range of an EV. Unlike a gas-powered vehicle, where the heat is mostly coming from the engine, an EV must produce cabin heat and manage an optimal battery temperature with energy that comes from the battery, which can reduce battery range.

Q: Will an EV meet daily driving needs?

A: If you are like most Americans and drive an average of 30 miles a day, an EV can meet your daily needs.

Q: What kind of incentives are available for EVs?

A: There are a variety of tax credits, rebates and other incentives that could be available for EV purchases.

Q: Should I let my co-op know if I purchase an EV?

A: If you purchase an EV, please let us know so we can better serve you. As more MEC members buy EVs, it's helpful to know where they're located in our area so we can ensure we have the necessary infrastructure in place to meet charging needs and provide reliable power to our local homes and businesses.

TAKE A TEST DRIVE!



Curious about electric vehicles? Skeptical? Excited? The technology is so new you may not know what to think. We want our members to form their own opinions. To help you do that, we are offering the opportunity to visit our office to view and test drive our Volkswagen ID.4 AWD Pro S. We want you to be able to take a good look at the car, ask questions of an employee, and experience it yourself with a test drive.

Test drives are up to two hours in length and available by appointment only.

Submit your request at www.menard.com/EV.



National Drive Electric Week™
Sept. 22-Oct. 1, 2023

Board highlights

June 30, 2023

- All Directors present except Steve Worner; also present General Manager Alisha Anker and Attorney Charles Smith.
- Approved Board Meeting dates for July 2023 - June 2024.
- Anker reviewed monthly & YTD financial operating report, balance sheet & financial trends. Operating margins as of 5/31 were \$1,788,316 compared to 1,207,073 last year; equity at 42.35%; 12-mo TIER 2.95 & DSC 2.06. Reviewed confirmation for draw from RUS Loan.
- Reviewed Operations Report w/77 incidents; longest outage duration 374 minutes affecting 1 member & largest # affected by single outage 103, both caused by downed trees in May 7th storm.
- Selected 4 Sharing Success applicants: \$3,000 Ashland Fire Protection District, \$2,000 Athens Area Food Pantry, \$2,000 Camp CILCA, \$3,000 Cooperative Family Fund; to submit matching funds application to CoBank.
- 2023 Capital Credit General Retirement reviewed.
- Next mtg 7/31/23 @8:00 a.m.

For full minutes visit menard.com or contact the office.



Assignment of 2022 margins as capital credits

Assignments of 2022 margins to members doing business with Menard Electric Cooperative have been calculated. A total of \$1,968,911 in margins was earned in 2022 and has been allocated as capital credits for the year. Of this amount, \$906,617 was spread to members as cooperative capital credits, and \$1,062,294 was spread as G&T capital credits. The G&T credits reflect the amount that was allocated to Menard Electric from our Generation & Transmission power supplier, Prairie Power Inc.

Allocation notices will appear as a message on the September billing statement. These notices will inform you of your share of the total margins. The amount is only an accounting credit. It cannot be claimed at the present time, nor can it be applied against your current bill.

In accordance with the bylaws, your board of directors reviews the financial condition of the cooperative before determining whether and when cooperative capital credits will be returned to the members. In July of this year,

approximately \$900,000 in cooperative capital credits were returned to members who received service during 2000, 2001 and 2002. The return of G&T credits is determined by the board of our power supplier and may be on a different cycle.

Please remember you must be a member and have service in your name to be allocated capital credits. If you are receiving electric service under someone else's membership or the service is in the name of a deceased individual, capital credits will only be allocated to the member. All capital credit checks are issued in the name of the member(s) or to the estate of a deceased person. Also important is to update your forwarding address with us if you ever move off the cooperative's lines so that we can send your future capital credit checks.

Finally, we are excited to soon be offering the option for members to assign a beneficiary to their capital credits account. Look for details in future issues of Connect. We invite you to contact our office at info@menard.com or 800-872-1203 if you have any questions or need to update your membership.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Did you know fall is the perfect time to schedule a tune-up for your heating system? Home heating accounts for a large portion of winter energy bills, and no matter what kind of system you have, you can save energy and money by regularly maintaining your equipment.

Combining proper equipment maintenance and upgrades with recommended insulation, air sealing and thermostat settings can save about 30% on your energy bills.

Source: Dept. of Energy

Employee position change



Audra Sturgeon is Assistant Billing Clerk. She joined MEC in 2021 as Receptionist.

Be aware of power lines



On the farm

- Keep equipment 10 feet from power lines in all directions.
- Use a spotter when operating large machinery near power lines.
- Inspect the height of machinery and use care when raising augers and the beds of grain trucks.
- If you have low or sagging lines, let us know.
- Stay aware of guy wires on poles.

At home

- Always be aware of power lines near your home and keep yourself and equipment 10 feet away.
- Carry ladders horizontally.
- Never use water, or a blower extension, to clean gutters near overhead lines.
- If you are trimming trees near lines, call us first to disconnect power.
- Call JULIE at 811 before you dig to locate underground lines.



What to do if you make contact with a line inside a vehicle/farm equipment

- Stay in the vehicle/equipment.
- Call 911 and warn others to stay away.
- Do not leave until the utility crew tells you it is safe to do so.
- The only reason to exit the vehicle/equipment is if it is on fire. If that is the case, jump off the equipment with your feet together and without touching the ground and equipment at the same time. Keeping feet together, shuffle/hop to safety.