

Reminder

Annual Meeting is Thursday, August 5, 2021

4:30-6:30 Registration

Receive an extension cord for attending—must be registered to be entered into drawing for bill credits

4:30-6:45 Pork Chop Dinner

by Mason County Pork Producers to-go style this year for quicker service

7:00 Business Meeting

Learn more about and participate in voting for directors and bylaw amendments

7:45 Drawing for Bill Credits

From names of members registered at the meeting; do not need to be present to win

Bring the Registration Card from your Official Notice for quick and easy registration!



Cheryl retires

Cheryl Milstead has been dispatching line crews at Menard Electric since she was hired in 2000. She says, “I chose this job because I wanted to be close to home. My youngest daughter was just beginning kindergarten and I wanted to be nearby. I had no experience talking on a radio, but I learned quickly and more duties were soon added.”

Cheryl communicates with the linemen, sending them out for outages, new service connections, security lights and more. Though her basic duties have not changed over the years, the way she performs them have modified a bit.

Service orders to the crew are now electronic and several years ago the co-op implemented an electronic outage management system. This system allows members to report outages through our MyMEC app and website, view outages on a map and receive restoration times when

available; it also provides us access to historical data and more. Service changes and outages are dispatched electronically now but there is nothing like personal communication and Cheryl also continues to connect verbally with linemen. “Speaking with and working with the crews has always been the best part of the job,” she says.

Director of Member Services Trish Michels says, “Cheryl was a very dependable employee and always worked well with our Area Servicemen. She worked efficiently at getting service orders issued in a timely manner and working outages. We will miss Cheryl but wish her the best of luck in her retirement.”

As Cheryl begins her retirement this month, she is most looking forward to more flexibility in travelling to visit her daughters, grandchildren and mother.



Visit us at the Farm Progress Show

August 31 – September 1 & 2

The Farm Progress Show, the nation's largest outdoor farm event, will be held at Progress City in Decatur on August 31 and September 1 - 2. Look for the Illinois Touchstone Energy® Cooperative's exhibit in our new location on Lot 217 on Second Street between Central Progress and East Progress Avenue, near Gates 7 and 8. Find us next to the Grain System Inc. display.

Representatives from Menard Electric Cooperative and several other Illinois electric cooperatives will be on hand to share information about

cooperatives, safety, energy efficiency, and much more.

Charge your phone at one of our charging stations and play a game for a chance to win a prize. Present your Co-op Connections card or show the Co-op Connections app to receive a gift.

Be sure to also catch pole climbing demonstrations and the Live Line Safety Demo. Weather permitting, you'll see the Touchstone Energy Hot Air Balloon flying the American flag each morning, and in the air late afternoon on the first two days.

For 70 years, The Farm Progress Show has celebrated agriculture by bringing tradition and business together. It is where people from all over gather to meet, observe and learn. Major manufacturers roll out their newest offerings, and agricultural families take a break from their daily routines to immerse themselves in the wider ag community. The show rotates annually between Decatur, Illinois and Boone, Iowa.

Check out Prairie Farmer Magazine or visit farmprogressshow.com to learn more about the 2021 Farm Progress Show.

Understanding power surges and blinks

Have you ever noticed your lights blink during a thunderstorm? Or perhaps a flashing microwave clock when you arrive home? When this happens, you have likely experienced a brief disruption to your electric service, which could result from a power surge or blink. While the symptoms of surges and blinks can appear similar, what is happening behind the scenes can be quite different.

What is a power surge?

Power surges are brief overvoltage spikes or disturbances of a power waveform that can damage, degrade or destroy electronic equipment within your home or business. Most electronics are designed to handle small variations in voltage; however, power surges can reach amplitudes of tens of thousands of volts—this can be extremely damaging to your electronic equipment.

Surges can be caused by internal sources, like HVAC systems with variable frequency drives, or external sources, like lightning and damage to power lines and transformers.

Menard Electric encourages all members to install surge protective devices (such as surge protector power strips) to safeguard your sensitive electronics. If you are experiencing frequent surges in your home or business and you believe the cause is internal,

contact a qualified electrician to inspect your electrical system.

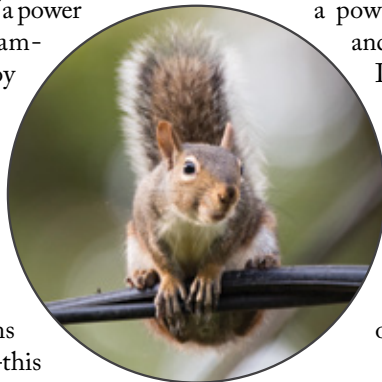
What is a power blink?

Power blinks are also brief service interruptions, but they're typically caused by a fault (short circuit) on a power line or a protective device that's working in reaction to the fault. Faults can occur through a variety of instances, like squirrels, birds or other small animals contacting an energized power line; tree branches touching a power line; or lightning and other similar events.

In fact, when it comes to power disruptions caused by critters, squirrels reign supreme. In 2019 alone, squirrels were responsible for more than 1,200 outages nationwide.

Any of the events noted above can cause your power to blink, but you may also experience a brief interruption when protective devices that act like circuit breakers are working to detect the fault. Believe it or not, these brief power blinks caused by protective devices are actually good because that means the equipment is working as it should to prevent a prolonged outage. If you experience repeated disruptions to your electric service, please let us know.

Source: NRECA

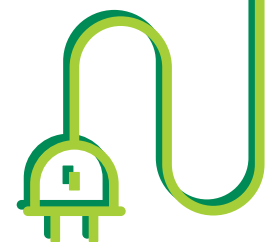


Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

When shopping for new light bulbs, know the difference between lumens and watts. Lumens measure the amount of light produced by the bulb. Watts measure energy consumption.

Energy-saving LEDs come in a variety of colors and brightness levels and last 15-25 times longer than incandescent bulbs.

Source: energy.gov



8/11 is National Safe Digging Day



Know what's below.
Call before you dig.

Call 8-1-1 If any landscaping projects will involve digging remember to always call JULIE at 811 or visit illinois1call.com two to three days in advance so that all underground utility lines can be marked.

Board highlights

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

May 25, 2021

- All Directors present; exceptions Jodine Tate & Steven Worner. Present General Manager Alisha Anker, Manager of Accounting & Information Systems Chris Hinton & Attorney Charles K. Smith.
- Motion carried to approve 2020 Audit after review remote by auditor Kelso.
- Adopted schedules & resolutions to update authorized users/representatives at Alliance Community Bank & Petefish Skiles & Co.
- Anker reviewed monthly & YTD financial operating report, balance sheet & financial trends. Operating Margins YTD as of 4/30 were \$552,851 compared to \$352,444 last year; equity at 42.98%; 12-mo TIER 2.53 & DSC 1.63.
- Reviewed Member Svcs report w/161 May cutoff tickets generated; \$1,360.62 in write-offs.
- Operations report w/45 incidents, incl. 5 tractor/vehicle accidents, top 2 causes power supplier (56%) and tree contacts (14%); longest duration outage 206 minutes-bad transformer affecting 1 member; largest # affected by single outage 271 caused by squirrel at a substation & lasted 82 minutes.
- Informed of new irrigation Rate 51 vendor FieldWise.
- Goetsch appointed voting delegate to CFC Annual Mtg.
- Determined to send Bylaw amendments to membership for approval at Annual Meeting.
- Discussed IL legislative issues & a revised 2019 cost of service study to include proposed carbon tax & accelerated depreciation effects of coal-plant closures.
- Next Mtg 6/22/21.



BudgetWise

Take the guesswork out of monthly budgeting with our BudgetWise program options.

See details at www.menard.com, email info@menard.com or call 800-872-1203 for details.

Contact us today to be added to our Budget Billing summer cycle!

TAKE ACTION NOW!

We need your help!

SEE PAGE 4 to Take Action Now and send a message to your State Legislators and Governor Pritzker concerning proposed legislation mandating the closure of coal-fueled power plants.

Ways to pay

A lot of things are stressful. Paying your electric bill shouldn't be one of them. We offer several easy options so you can choose the one that is best for you right now.

Automatic Payment

Deduct your bill from your savings or checking account automatically on the 10th, 17th or 24th of each month, your choice. See the back of your payment stub or www.menard.com for the form.

Online



Visit www.menard.com or use our MyMEC App to open our secure online bill pay site and pay by debit/credit card or e-check; you can also select to receive an email when your bill is ready to view and/or select paperless billing to eliminate your mailed statement.

Phone

Call us anytime at 800-872-1203 to pay by debit/credit card or e-check.

Drop Off

Use our drop box at our office at 14300 IL St Hwy 97, Petersburg.

Mail In

Allow adequate time for delivery to PO Box 200, Petersburg IL 62675.

TAKE ACTION NOW!

Help send a message to State Legislators and Governor Pritzker that keeping your power affordable and reliable is important to you. You can take action now to send a letter to let them know you oppose the proposed legislation mandating closure of coal-fueled power plants by 2035.

Plants like the highly efficient Prairie State Energy Campus should be exempt from such legislation given it is only 10 years into its expected 30-plus year life. We oppose legislation that reduces grid reliability, creates a dependency on energy from neighboring states, exports good-paying energy jobs and tax base across state lines, and increases our rates by 20 to 25 percent.

By 2035, cooperatives will still have \$188 million in long-term debt owed on the Prairie State Energy Campus. That debt, coupled with the cost of replacement energy and capacity, could result in increased costs to our consumer-members.

Menard Electric Cooperative is committed to keeping energy affordable and reliable while we invest in a cleaner energy future, but we cannot let policy get ahead of technology. Let's work towards improving and expanding that technology before we reliably power the grid with no carbon emissions.

To find a link where you can submit a digital letter visit www.menard.com/takeaction. Or you may return the form here to our office without delay and we will submit a letter on your behalf.

TAKE ACTION!

Return by mail to: Menard Electric Cooperative, PO BOX 200, Petersburg, IL 62675 or
email us the same information at info@menard.com

FIRST NAME _____ LAST NAME _____

E-MAIL _____

STREET (OR P.O. BOX) MAILING ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

I authorize Menard Electric Cooperative to communicate on my behalf regarding Illinois' energy challenges.

SIGNATURE _____

