

# Director Nominating Petitions

**Due Monday, April 30, 2018**

Petitions are available now at the office for directors in Districts 2, 5 and 9 on the Board of Directors of Menard Electric Cooperative. Petitions must be signed by no less than 10 members and must be received in the co-op's office by 4:30 p.m. on Monday, April 30, 2018.

One co-op member will be elected to represent each district and serve a three-year term at this year's annual meeting Thursday, June 14, 2018.

Seeking re-election are incumbent directors Gary Martin of Alexander, District 2; Jay Frye of Easton, District 5; and Donald McMillan of Williamsville, District 9.

Below are a few details about directors, and you can find more in our bylaw book, available at [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com); call us if you need a copy. Stop by the office to pick up a petition.

**Director's must:**

- Establish policies and employ a general manager who is responsible for all operational details of the co-op.
- Receive electric service from the co-op



**Gary Martin**  
*Alexander*  
*District 2*



**Jay Frye, President**  
*Easton*  
*District 5*



**Donald McMillan**  
*Williamsville*  
*District 9*

at their primary residence within the district, be a member in good standing and not have conflicting business interests. (They pay the same rates for service and follow the same policies as all other members.)

- Be able to spend adequate time on board work and attend most regular board meetings held the fourth Tuesday evening of each month for several hours at the co-op office.
- Attend our annual meeting each year and other special board meetings,

committee meetings, director's conferences and educational seminars as necessary.

- Be accessible to members within the district and willing to represent all members of the co-op.
- Acquire knowledge about the electric utility industry including financial, management and public issues. (It takes time to learn the system, and for that reason our directors have made long-term commitments to serving the co-op.)

## MyMEC keeps you informed!

**Away from home and wondering if power has been restored?**

**You can select to receive a push notification to stay informed!**

**At work during a storm?**

**You can check to see if our system has your service included in an outage!**

**Haven't downloaded the MyMEC App yet?**

**Search for Menard Outage in the Google Play or App store on your phone/tablet.**

**The app is free, and it's easy to set up - find detailed instructions on our website.**

**We also have a link on our website to an outage web portal, and of course, you can continue to call in outages as in the past.**



# Safe and reliable service

## Our vegetation management program



**Brady Smith,**  
Engineering  
Manager

Trees are a beautiful and important part of our area's landscape. But when trees grow too close to our power lines and poles, they can cause safety and/or reliability issues.

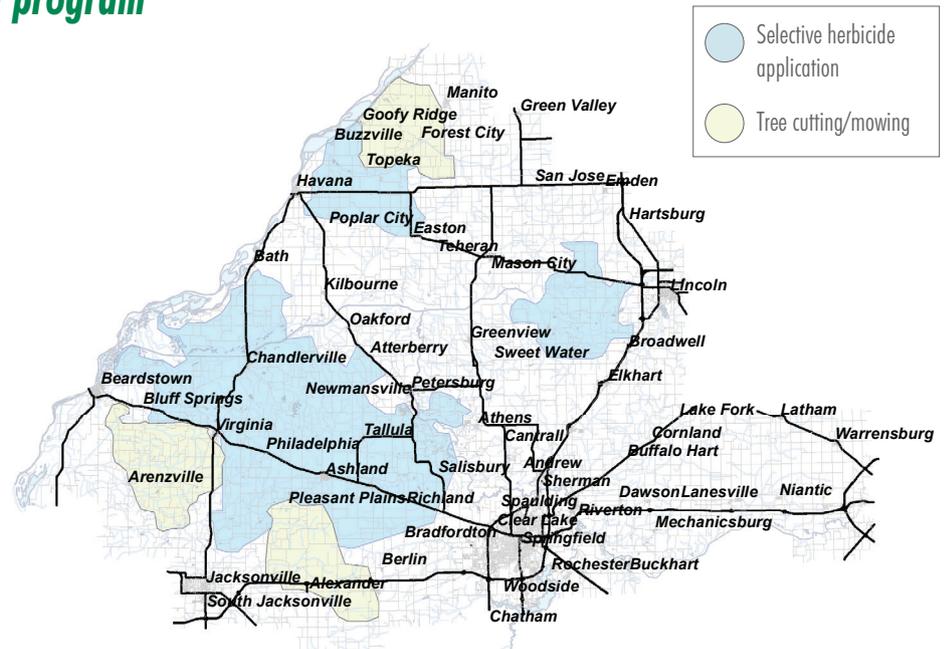
Trees grown too close to our lines are dangerous to our linemen working on power lines, members working in or near trees, and children climbing trees near lines. Even if branches seem far enough away, additional weight, winds or broken limbs can cause them to unexpectedly contact energized lines. Safety is one of the major reasons for our vegetation management program.

Tree branches are also a leading cause of outages during any weather, and especially during storms producing high winds, snow, or ice. Branches also contact our lines on mild days due to light winds, small animals, or age causing them to break or fall. A swaying branch contacting a line can cause multiple short service interruptions for members, and be difficult to find.

To provide our members with safe and reliable service, we must control vegetation within the right-of-way along our 2,600 miles of distribution lines.

### 2018 Right-of-Way Clearing Schedule

We partner with Spoon River Electric Cooperative's forestry department and employ contract crews to control vegetation throughout our



service territory. We seek to clear each area of our territory every five to six years.

Throughout the rest of 2018, crews will cut and mow vegetation on circuits branching out from our substations in Virginia, New Berlin, Bluff Springs and Bishop (see map).

Our specifications are to clear the area on either side of our single-phase lines at least 15 feet and three-phase lines at least 25 feet. Smaller trees and brush under and close to lines are removed to allow access and eliminate future growth concerns. We direct all tree trimming crews to trim to the American National Standards Institute requirements to assure the continued health of trees. Some members may not view these standards as the most visually appealing, but they are healthier for the

tree in the long term and safer for all members and employees.

In addition to trimming and mowing, contract crews will also selectively apply herbicide to brush as needed in areas that were mechanically cleared in 2017 to control problematic re-growth. In 2018, this will include the areas served by substations in Middletown, Petersburg, Saidora and a portion of New Berlin substations (see map).

Using this selective herbicide application allows us to extend our trimming cycle and reduce the amount of brush needing cleared during our normal trimming cycle. It is the most effective and cost-effective method of right of way maintenance.

For questions about our vegetation management program, please contact Forester Ross Cloninger at our office.



*We use forestry mowers to clear small evasive vegetation located under and around our lines in areas difficult for our crews to access. Keeping these areas clear makes it easier and faster for our linemen to repair or maintain lines, particularly in bad weather.*

*Tackling steep terrain is no problem for these mowers that grind down vegetation into smaller, mulch-like pieces and cut trimming time in half. To further save time and costs, we maintain the area using herbicides, returning after one growing season, and later as necessary, to apply herbicide as needed to areas where undesirable vegetation has regrown.*

## Co-op Corner

# Members can help keep lines safe

*By Ross Cloninger,  
Forester/Field Technician*

Safety is the major reason for our right-of-way clearing program. Moisture within a tree's limbs provides electricity a perfect path to ground, causing electrocution if contact is made. Tree limbs too close to our lines can become very dangerous for our linemen and our members.

When looking at our service territory, you can see that we cover a large area and it takes several years to complete a full cycle of tree trimming. This is why we require adequate clearance until the next time the forestry crews are in the area. When we cannot trim a tree for adequate clearance, the tree will be cut down to prevent safety and reliability issues.

Even bushes and vines growing near or on our poles can cause them to rot quicker and prevent linemen from accessing them to perform maintenance.

### Proper planting

A common issue we face are members not realizing how far away from our lines they may plant a tree. The outer edge of the branches (not the trunk) need to be at least 15 feet from our power lines at mature growth. It is important to know just how tall and wide the tree you are planting will get when it reaches maturity. The best way to figure out how far away to plant is to take the predicted diameter of the tree (when fully grown), divide it in half, and add at least 15. This will give you the proper number of feet to measure away from our lines.

### Secondary lines

I spend a majority of my time with members inspecting the overall health and location of trees on their property.

Many times, a member will call in asking us to trim or take down a tree. In most cases the tree is too close to a building or too far from our primary lines; it might be located in close proximity to a secondary service wire. Due to the size of our system, we do not clear secondary wires. We focus our efforts on the high-voltage side of the transformer.

When a member needs to trim or remove a tree that is too close to overhead secondary wires, I contact the Area Serviceman to take down the wire so the work can be done safely. Once the work is completed, the Serviceman will put the secondary wire back up, even on the same day.

*For questions about our Vegetation Management program, contact Ross at 800-872-1203 or email [rcloninger@menard.com](mailto:rcloninger@menard.com).*

# Board highlights

For full minutes visit [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com) or contact the office.

## December 19, 2017

- Present were Directors Jay Frye, Warren Goetsch, Gary Martin, Donald McMillan, Michael Patrick, Dennis Ryan, Roy Seaney, Jodine Tate & Steven Worner, Manager Alisha Anker, Manager of Accounting & Information Systems Chris Hinton & Attorney Charles K. Smith.
- Approved Resolution to terminate Co-op's participation in the Illinois State Renewable Energy Program.
- 2018 Financial Budget approved; included 2017 inventory adjustment; included PPI deferred revenue during 2015-16 for use in 2018-19 of additional \$300,000.
- Anker: Reviewed balance sheet, budget, rebate, outage, safety, operations, security, work orders, capital credit estates & OMS update.
- Anker: Gave irrigation report, advised approx. 90 members executed new Rate 51; expecting at least 10 more.
- Anker: Reviewed 2017 sick leave bonus program; motion carried to adopt for 2018.
- Board adopted Rate Rider NM for Net Metering.
- Board selected Youth to Washington Scholarship Program to replace Youth Day program.
- Anker: Gave November financial report. Year to date margins \$2,631,451 compared to \$2,618,726 last year. End of November equity 40.57%, Served 10,895 member accounts. Net utility plant \$47,409,921 compared to \$45,760,792 last year. Co-op meets requirements of RUS, FFB, NRCFC & CoBank.
- Martin & Anker: Gave Prairie Power, Inc. report.
- Martin named NRECA Annual Meeting Delegate; Anker named Alternate.
- McMillan named NRTC Meeting Delegate; Anker named Alternate.
- Board entered into executive session; reconvened.



## Annual Meeting

Take the night off preparing dinner and bring the whole family to meet with co-op employees, directors, neighbors and friends at our Annual Meeting of Members on Thursday evening, June 14, 2018, at PORTA High School. The evening will include dinner, prizes, a director election and news from your co-op. Mark your calendar now and stay tuned for more details in future issues.

# Call JULIE before digging

It's the law! You must notify JULIE before you dig. The depth of utility lines can vary for many reasons – that's why digging even just a few inches can cause problems. Striking a line can cause injury, repair costs, fines and outages.

Plan ahead and call 8-1-1 or visit [www.illinois1call.com](http://www.illinois1call.com).

Call Before You Dig  
**JULIE**  
ILLINOIS ONE-CALL SYSTEM

**MENARD** ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE **Prairie Power, Inc.**

**10** Serves co-op members  
having **78,000** retail co-op members

from **839** miles of transmission through **145** substations

with **1,000** kw pv solar, **20** MW wind energy,

**130** MW coal @ Prairie State, & **20** MW oil-fired @ Pearl

**169** natural-gas MW @ Alsey, @ Pearl

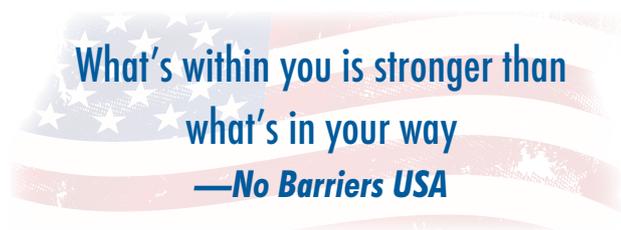
# Attention Veterans - No Barriers USA Opportunity from



**We are seeking veterans from within our co-op family to nominate for a No Barriers USA Expedition or Summit experience fully paid by CoBank.**

Menard Electric Cooperative is a member of CoBank, a cooperative bank serving industries across rural America. CoBank has partnered with No Barriers USA to sponsor the first 50 qualified veterans nominated by its membership in 2018 at one of three experiences.

We are honored to be able to nominate veterans from among our membership for this life changing opportunity. Please contact us without delay if you are interested; deadline is April 1.



No Barriers USA expeditions are designed to push participants mentally and physically in some of nature's most incredible wilderness to help them connect with fellow veterans and break through barriers in their life.

## Interested? Contact us!

Menard Electric Cooperative  
General Manager, Alisha Anker  
800-872-1203  
aanker@menard.com

## Is a CoBank No Barriers USA Expedition for you?

- ★ Are you a combat or training-wounded veteran from any branch of the U.S. armed forces?
- ★ Do you suffer from a service-related disability, whether visible or invisible (i.e., PTSD)?
- ★ Do you have a VA disability rating?
- ★ Are you interested in challenging limitations and overcoming obstacles?
- ★ Are you a member or immediate family of a member in good standing at Menard Electric Cooperative?

## CoBank Sponsored 2018 No Barriers Experiences

### July 5-9 & 19-23, 2018

Two moderate-level expeditions in Colorado involving rafting, rock climbing and trekking activities specifically designed to accommodate veterans with a wide array of disabilities.

### August 3-7 & 17-21, 2018

Two difficult-level expeditions in Colorado involving physically challenging, backcountry itinerary and a mountain summit attempt.

### October 5-6, 2018

No Barriers Summit in New York suitable for veterans of any disability level that allows a caregiver or family member to attend as well.