



October is Cooperative Month

This month more than 30,000 cooperatives across the U.S. are celebrating National Co-op Month.

Like all co-ops, we are guided by seven cooperative principles that embody the values and spirit of the cooperative movement.

1. Open and Voluntary Membership: Co-op membership is open and voluntary for those you wish to use the co-op's services.
2. Democratic Member Control: Members make decisions that shape the cooperative. Why? Because co-ops are created by the members, for the members.
3. Members' Economic Participation: Members contribute money to the co-op to make sure it runs smoothly now and in the future.
4. Autonomy and Independence: Co-ops are independent and can operate on their own, which ultimately benefits the members.
5. Education, Training and Information: Co-ops continuously focus on education to ensure employees have the training and information they need.
6. Cooperation Among Cooperatives: Co-ops share with and learn from other cooperatives, and we help each other out in times of need.
7. Concern for Community: All cooperatives work for the greater good of the local communities they serve.



Fall to-do list for energy savings

- Schedule HVAC maintenance and change filters.
- Inspect fireplace chimneys, flues and dampers
- Cover drafty windows; consider using plastic window film and heavy drapes.
- Set fans to run clockwise in cool weather to circulate warm air.
- Seal out air leaks.
 - Check the weather-stripping and seals on all doors and windows. Try this trick: Shut windows/doors on a piece of paper, if you can pull the paper out without it tearing, air can probably get through. Many weatherstripping options are available.
 - Check all holes for pipes and faucets for gaps. Look for leaks at exterior corners, siding and chimney junctures; the joints between foundation and exterior brick or siding; and for cracks in the mortar, foundation or siding.
 - Consider using caulk for cracks under ¼ inch; consider if spray foam might be better for larger gaps.
 - Check outlets and wall switches on exterior walls. Consider installing gaskets behind plates, caulking around openings and inserting child safety plugs.

Follow our new Facebook page

Have you seen our new Facebook Page at www.facebook.com/MenardElectricCoop? You may be thinking to yourself, "Wait a minute! I already followed Menard Electric's Facebook page! Is this legit?"

The answer is **YES!**

Unfortunately, Facebook's automation unpublished our page. Why? We aren't totally sure, but we believe our page was "spoofed" and then reported. Whatever the reason, we are

unable to prove it is our page. That's the trouble with automation — there is no real person to talk to.

It's another reminder of one of the things we love most about being your local electric co-op — that our employees live right here in your community and work hard to serve you in the field and in the office. In an increasingly automated world, we are proud to have real people answering the phone, responding to emails ... and even writing this newsletter. 😊

ARE HOME ELECTRONICS AND APPLIANCES DRAINING YOUR ENERGY?

If you collect your spare change in a jar, all those coins add up over time, usually to a larger amount than you expect.

Small amounts of consumed energy throughout your home add up as well, so plug "energy vampires" into a smart power strip that detects dormant devices or unplug items when not in use, especially those with illuminated controls.

TOP NINE ENERGY VAMPIRES



Safe **LEARN MORE:**
Electricity.org®

Be Fire Prevention Smart – don't overload electrical outlets. Learn more about keeping your home safe at [SafeElectricity.org](https://www.SafeElectricity.org).



NATIONAL FIRE

PREVENTION *week*

Oct. 6-12 is National Fire Prevention Week. Take a moment to review your home's fire safety measures. Check smoke detectors and develop (or review) your household escape plan. Let's prioritize safety together!

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

If you recently made or plan to make energy efficiency improvements to your home, you may be eligible for federal tax credits. The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) of 2022 empowers homeowners to save money on energy efficiency improvements and upgrades. Homeowners can save up to \$3,000 annually to lower the cost of efficiency upgrades by up to 30%.

A few upgrades covered through the IRA include new exterior doors, windows, insulation, heating/cooling equipment and other major appliances. If you completed an upgrade this year or you are considering one, visit www.energystar.gov/federal-tax-credits to learn if you qualify for a tax credit.

Source: [energystar.gov](https://www.energystar.gov)



TEEN DRIVER SAFETY WEEK IS OCT. 14-18

Safety Tip

In the U.S., nine people are killed each day in crashes that are reported to involve a distracted driver. When you drive, just drive. Distracted driving not only puts you and other drivers at risk, but it also endangers roadside crews, bikers and pedestrians.



 Safe Electricity.org®



LIHEAP

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) could help pay your electric, gas and propane energy bills. Contact your local agency to confirm income eligibility requirements and application timelines.

- MCS Community Services-Cass/Morgan County, 217-243-9404
- Community Action Partnership of Central Illinois-Logan/Mason/Menard County, 217-732-2159
- Sangamon County, 217-535-3120
- Tazwood Community Services-Tazewell County, 309-266-9941

Board highlights

July 23, 2024

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

- All Directors, General Manager & Attorney present except Director Gary Holloway.
- Approved 7/10/24 Organizational Mtg Minutes.
- Approved 2024-25 Committee Member & Chairman appointments.
- Goetsch authorized to execute Certification of FEMA Small Project Completion letter & Subgrant Closeout for Project #78-738222.
- Collective Bargaining Agreement with Local Union 51, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, approved. Approved policy changes affected by Agreement.
- General Manager Alisha Anker reviewed June monthly & YTD financial trends. Operating margins \$2,069,876 compared to \$2,083,068 last year; equity at 40.61%; 12-mo TIER 1.84 & DSC 1.65.
- Anker reviewed Annual Mtg registration & proxy summary; members registered by Board Districts & county; mtg costs.
- Reviewed operations report w/91 incidents, longest duration of an outage 313 min affecting single member due to tree; largest # affected by single outage 518 from loss of PPI transmission due to animal.
- Determined candidate to support in CoBank Director Election.
- Approved \$500 donation to Cass County CEO Program.
- Reviewed AT&T data breach.
- Reviewed correspondence from Ameren Illinois Renewables Team.

October is National Cybersecurity Awareness Month.

Let's work together to build a safer digital world. Whether at home, work or school, we can increase our online safety with the following tips.

- 🔒 Recognize and report phishing attempts.
- 🔒 Use strong, unique passwords.
- 🔒 Enable multi-factor authentication.
- 🔒 Update software regularly.

MAKE PAYING YOUR ELECTRIC BILL EASY

Sign up today for our Automatic Payment, BudgetWise, and Paperless Billing programs and rest easy knowing your electric bills are taken care of.



AUTOMATIC PAYMENT

Pay your bill automatically from a Credit Card, Debit Card or Bank Account on the 10th, 17th or 24th of each month. Visit www.menard.com/ways-to-pay to download the form.

BUDGETWISE

Sign up for Average Billing or Budget Billing to eliminate large fluctuations in your monthly bills due to season changes.

AVERAGE BILLING: The monthly payment amount is based on a 12-month rolling average use of electricity. This spreads any dramatic changes in bills across several months.

BUDGET BILLING: This sets a specific payment amount based on the past 12 months' usage to be paid each month of the cycle. On the once yearly true-up month (June or November) a credit or additional amount due is applied based on actual electric usage for the cycle.

PAPERLESS BILLING

Eliminate paper clutter and view your monthly bill online. Sign up through our online bill payment system in the MyMEC app or at www.menard.com.

