

Congratulations!

Director of Member Services Trish Michels Retires

After more than 23 years of service at Menard Electric and 33 years in the cooperative industry, Trish Michels is retiring, leaving behind a legacy of unwavering commitment to our members and employees.

Trish began her co-op career spending 10 years in the Engineering Department at the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives before moving to Menard Electric as Assistant to the General Manager. In 2008 her role changed to Director of Member Services and her duties grew to encompass a range of essential member and employee focused functions.

In her current role, Trish has supervised five employees across member services, billing, dispatch and communications. Her responsibilities have included managing human resources,

payroll and employee benefits; overseeing member services and billing operations; leading communications efforts; and planning the cooperative's Annual Meeting each year. She also played a key role in managing the customer information system and guiding the cooperative through multiple software conversions and process improvements.

Throughout her career, Trish has been a steady presence and trusted resource — known for her knowledge, attention to detail, and deep understanding of both our members' needs and the cooperative's operations.

General Manager Alisha Anker says "We will certainly miss Trish's spunk and the energy she brought to our team every day. Her contributions have been deeply valuable."



Trish and her husband Kim live in Springfield and have a daughter, son-in-law and two young granddaughters in Michigan.

New Director of Member Services



We are thrilled to announce the promotion of Kimberly Kyes to the position of Director of Member Services at our cooperative, coinciding with her 15-year anniversary. Kimberly's journey began as a Clerk, followed by her role as Billing Operator. Over the years, she has demonstrated strong growth potential, an innate understanding of our numerous rate structures, and a gentle patience when working with our members.

In her new role, Kimberly is stepping into a leadership position,

managing a talented team responsible for reception, dispatch, communications and billing duties. Over the past few months, she has been diligently preparing to lead the department. "I am excited to take on this new challenge and work alongside such a dedicated team," Kimberly stated. "I look forward to continuing to serve our members and contribute to the cooperative's success."

Please join us in congratulating Kimberly on her well-deserved promotion!

“Why was my power out?”

2025 Outage Cause Review



Dalton Whitley
Operations Manager

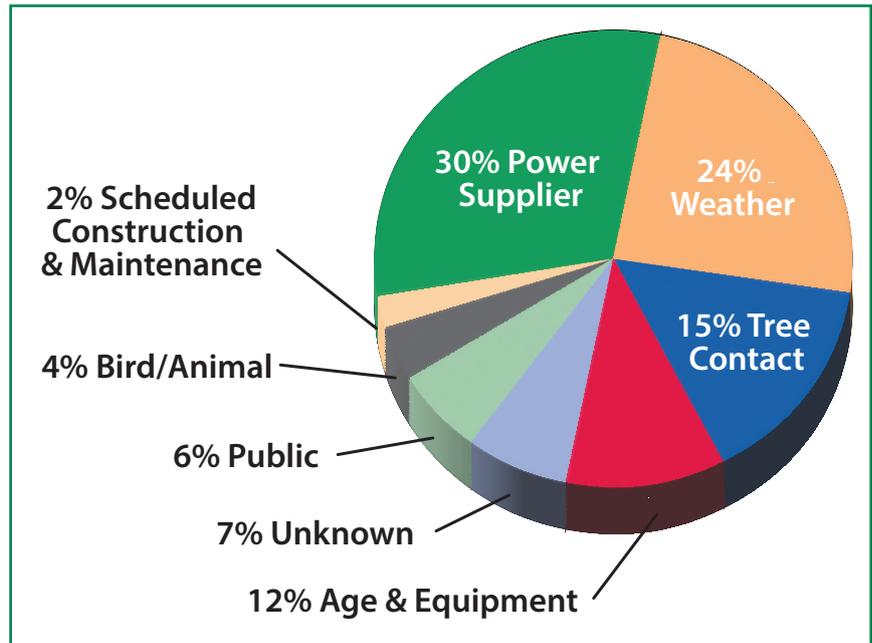
We understand how important reliable electric service is to you. That’s why we are always working to improve the reliability of our system. A key part of that effort is reviewing what causes outages, and we’d like to share a breakdown of our 2025 outage causes with you.

30% Power Supplier (aka Transmission)

These outages are our most frustrating as they are ultimately out of our control. They occur when our power supplier loses transmission service to one of our substations, or equipment within a substation fails. This could be due to the same outage causes we’ll discuss later, such as weather, tree contact or equipment; however, as a distribution supplier we must track and report these outages as being related to a lack of power supply. We have made improvements to our system so that during most of these outages we are able to backfeed power from another substation; this enables us to quickly restore power to our membership. Outages in this category from the Prairie Power system accounted for 38% of its total hours, whereas Ameren transmission line outages represented the remaining majority.

24% Weather

All kinds of weather incidents can cause outages, and this category as a percentage of total outage hours increased last year. The majority of this slice in 2025 was due to wind at 55%; lightning was second at 33%, and trees brought down by weather was less than 9%. It certainly was a windy year, but we are thankful that once again we did not have any significant weather events, and we cross our fingers that 2026 is the same.



15% Tree Contact (aka Vegetation)

This cause lowered by nearly half since last year. Our ongoing vegetation management program of right-of-way clearing is essential to protecting our equipment and reducing these outages. Thank you for your patience and understanding as line clearance personnel work in your neighborhoods.

12% Age & Equipment

Our equipment is exposed to the elements day and night, therefore it experiences continuous wear and tear that can cause ultimate failures. With over 2,300 miles of line, this percentage is not out of line for the amount of equipment supported on a system our size. A very small portion of this category in-whole was due to aging of the system. We continue to rebuild portions of our system each year and are routinely performing maintenance to ensure this cause does not increase.

7% Unknown

Our linemen are often able to pinpoint the cause of an outage right away. Still, even with years of experience, there are a handful of cases that remain unsolved mysteries.

6% Public & Member Accidents

This category encompasses a variety of incidents, but 86% of this slice was due to things on the ground hitting poles (think vehicles and farm machinery). The remaining percentage of public accidents were due to a combination of aircraft, underground conductor dig-ins, fires and irrigation system end-guns.

4% Animals

While we take steps to protect our equipment with shields and guards, mischievous wildlife — mainly birds and squirrels — can still occasionally cause trouble.

2% Scheduled Construction & Maintenance

Our crews must sometimes interrupt power service to safely perform construction and maintenance on our lines and equipment. We do our best to schedule and alert any members affected by this work in advance, and to keep interruptions to a minimum. We appreciate your patience when scheduled construction or maintenance is necessary in your area.

Rate increase reminder

Last month's issue featured details of a 6% rate increase to begin with February bills (January electric usage). The increase is for all rate classes, applying to both the facility charge and the electric charge, as well as outdoor light charges. Please visit our website at www.menard.com to view last month's article or give us a call to find out what the increase might look like for you.



ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Mid-winter is a great time to ensure you're making the most of your home heating system. Replace or clean filters to keep your furnace or heat pump running efficiently. Listen for strange noises and check for uneven heating—these signs indicate that the system may need servicing. Ensure vents and radiators aren't blocked by furniture or rugs as proper airflow helps your system work less and saves energy. A little maintenance along the way can prevent costly repairs and keep your home cozy through winter.

Sharing Success funding is available

Apply by March 1, 2026

Each year we partner with CoBank to provide funding to local projects sponsored by eligible 501(c)(3) charities and others serving a public purpose in local communities within our service territory. These include schools, government agencies, service/civic organizations, fairgrounds and many more.



TAKE NOTE OF OUR EARLIER DEADLINE!
COBANK HAS TWEAKED THE PROGRAM A BIT TO OPEN UP APPLICATIONS EARLIER.

See more details and apply at www.menard.com/sharingsuccess by March 1, 2026.



Board highlights

Nov. 25, 2025

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

- All Directors present except D. Jay Frye; also present General Manager, Attorney, Operations Manager and Director of Accounting & Finance.
- Introduced PPI President/CEO Eric Hobbie to give G&T presentation.
- Operations Mgr & Director Steve Worner left mtg.
- Director of Accounting & Finance delivered compiled review of proposed 2026 budget & options for achieving adequate margins. Approved option for 6% increase to rates & facility charges to begin 1/1/26.
- Reviewed waiver of 2025 PPI Revenue Deferral; voted to make no revisions.
- Approved waiver of 2026 PPI Revenue Deferral.
- Approved resolution to update authorized account signatories & decision makers for Alliance Community Bank accounts.
- Approve ACB Wire Authorization update.
- Approved resolution to amend 401k plan for Group 2 employees.
- Reviewed October monthly & YTD financial trends. Operating margins \$3,196,179 compared \$3,363,617 last year; equity at 43.48%; 12-mo TIER 2.75 & DSC 2.01. Director of Accounting & Finance left mtg.
- Reviewed operations report: 81 incidents; longest duration of single outage 363 min. for 1 member; largest # affected by single outage 1,150 for 1 hr. due to Ameren transmission loss.
- Reviewed 2025 capital credit general retirement; relevant facets of the Energy Omnibus Bill; NERC Winter Reliability Assessment for the MISO footprint.
- Next mtg 12/19/25.



Apply Now!

MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE SCHOLARSHIPS ARE AVAILABLE.

See page 6 for details.

PAPERLESS BILLING

Tackle your clutter this year! If you do not require a paper bill from us, you may choose Paperless Billing. Sign up through our online bill payment system in the MyMEC app or at www.menard.com.



Apply Now!

MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

\$2,000

4-YEAR COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY

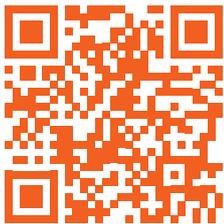
\$1,500

2-YEAR COMMUNITY COLLEGE

\$1,500

AT LARGE SCHOLARSHIP

**SEE MORE DETAILS AND APPLY AT
MENARD.COM/SCHOLARSHIPS
BY MARCH 1, 2026.**



Bonus!

**TRIP TO
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

Applicants may also apply for an all-expense-paid chaperoned trip on Youth to Washington Tour, where he/she will travel with other Illinois students for a weeklong tour of Washington, D.C., June 15-22, 2026.

Applicants must be a high school senior or equivalent, graduating during 2026. Applicant's parent/legal guardian must be a Menard Electric Cooperative member with their primary residence or business served by the cooperative.

