



## Building reliability

A new transmission line is being installed from our power supplier's East Lanesville Substation at Sherman and Mt. Pulaski Roads to the Co-op's new substation east of Mechanicsburg. This photo was taken late January along Sherman Road, near Kent Farm Road. The transmission line and substation are owned by Prairie Power, Inc., our wholesale power supplier. Along the 8.2-mile route, the co-op will have new underbuilt distribution facilities and service taps installed by the same contractor. The transmission line will continue to Taylorville where it will serve substations owned by Shelby Electric Co-op.

Very simply, power gets delivered to you from high-voltage transmission lines delivering electricity from central-station generation plants to distribution substations. Electricity is then distributed from those substations along lines owned by Menard Electric Co-op to serve each member.

This new transmission line will be one of the more visible improvements in our service territory. These changes are providing Menard Electric a stronger transmission source to serve a new substation with higher available load capacity and will provide better flexibility in our operations, all of which lead to greater reliability for our members.

## Annual Meeting 2021

Normally in this March issue of Connect, we are excited to talk about our 2021 Annual Meeting. We are looking forward to meeting with you, our members, again as soon as it is safe to do so and are looking into our options. As of the publication deadline, we don't have information to share.

We'll share information here and on our website and Facebook page as soon as it's available. In the meantime, stay in touch! Visit [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com), find us on Facebook, email [info@menard.com](mailto:info@menard.com) or call 800-872-1203. This is YOUR co-op and we are happy to answer any questions you have.



Employee Favorite  
**RECIPES**

Cheryl Milstead  
Dispatcher

## Crock Pot Corned Beef and Cabbage

- 10 red potatoes, halved or quartered (depending on size)
- 1 onion, chopped
- Several carrots, chopped
- 3 – 4 cups water
- Corned beef brisket, plus included spice packet
- 6 ounces beer
- 1/2 to 1 head of cabbage, chopped (depending on size)

Place onions, potatoes and carrots in bottom of crock pot. Pour in water and add brisket. Pour beer on top and sprinkle spice packet. Cook on low 8 hours. One hour before done, add cut up cabbage.

*Cheryl says, "This recipe is a simple way to make a corned beef and cabbage meal, just remember to add the cabbage at the end."*



## Lineworker's scholarship

The Lavern and Nola McEntire Lineworker's Scholarship offers one \$2,000 scholarship to the lineworker school conducted by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives in conjunction with Lincoln Land Community College in Springfield, Ill. Applicants must be sons or daughters of Illinois cooperative members, relatives of Illinois cooperative employees or directors, individuals enrolled in Lincoln Land's lineworker school, or individuals who have served or are serving in the armed forces or National Guard. Apply online at [www.menard.com/scholarships](http://www.menard.com/scholarships). Deadline is April 30, 2021.

## Planning a garden? Building a deck?

Does the promise of spring coming have you ready to break ground the moment it thaws? Plan ahead to notify JULIE to mark underground utility lines. Dial 8-1-1 or visit [www.illinois1call.com](http://www.illinois1call.com) at least two business days before you want to begin your project.



Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.





## Board highlights

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

**December 22, 2020**

- All Directors present in person or remotely; also Director of Member Services Trish Michels, Manager Anker & Attorney Smith.
- AIEC's Nancy McDonald presented a review of 2020 Member Satisfaction Survey.
- Approved 2020 inventory adjustment of -\$16,278.11.
- Approved Consent and Crossing Agreement with Lincoln Land Wind, LLC.
- Anker reviewed end of year financial summary forecast; reviewed monthly & YTD financial operating report, balance sheet & financial trends. Operating margins YTD as of 11/30 were \$3,107,264 compared to \$3,081,444 last year; equity at 42.67%; 12-mo TIER 2.82 & DSC 1.77.
- Reviewed Member Svcs report w/686 past due notices sent, generating 261 cut off tickets & \$2,532.65 in write-offs. Operations Report w/63 incidents affecting 11,214 members, including substation outages during windstorm 11/10/20.
- No changes made to employee fixed expense reimbursement amounts.
- Anker advised co-op would not qualify for the second round Paycheck Protection Program.
- Approved amendment to extend end of year termination of Families First Coronavirus Response Act Policy if President signs latest stimulus package into law.
- Next Mtg 1/26/21.

*Congratulations!*

MEC Directors Warren Goetsch, Don McMillan, Michael Patrick and Jay Frye were recently re-issued their Director Gold Certifications from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association for their continuing pursuit of and participation in Director education conferences and courses.



## Spirit of the community

Local businesses are the backbone of our community – a source of pride. Buying locally supports local artisans, tradesmen and merchants. In addition, funds from sales tax stay in our community for schools, fire and police departments, city parks, natural resources, and more. Keep the spirit of our community alive. Shop locally!

*Brought to you by your local Touchstone Energy Cooperative*





# NEVER ENTER FLOOD WATERS

When floods happen, news reports often show homeowners and reporters standing in or rowing through flood waters.

This is a **BAD IDEA**. Flood waters can cover downed power lines or other electrical hazards, and the combination of water and electricity can cause shock or electrocution.

### Here are some safety reminders:

- Never enter flood waters; this includes on foot or by any other means such as a boat or canoe.
- Electrical hazards such as downed power lines could be lurking underneath the standing water.
- Do not enter a flooded basement if water could be covering outlets, appliances, or electrical cords.
- Do not touch electrical equipment such as wires, switches or fuses if you are wet or standing in water or on a damp surface.

### Cleaning up can also be dangerous:

- Downed and deadly power lines can be hiding under branches and debris.
- Do not use electric yard tools if it is raining or the ground is wet.
- Replace water-damaged electronics and equipment.
- Always be aware of power line locations when using or carrying ladders, poles, or any other extendable or long tools.
- Be aware of power line locations each time you are elevated, for example: on a ladder, rooftop, or boom lift.

Learn more at:

