

Director Nominating Petitions Available

Due Monday, April 29, 2019

Petitions are available now at the office for Directors in Districts 1, 4 and 6 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 29, 2019.

One co-op member will be elected from each district to serve a three-year term at this year's annual meeting Thursday, June 13, 2019.

Seeking re-election are incumbent Directors Dennis Ryan of Petersburg, District 4 and Steven Worner of Manito, District 6. Current District 1 Director Roy Seanev will retire from the Board after 25 years of dedicated service.

See a map of Director Districts at www.menard.com/board-directors. Below are a few details about Directors and you can find more in our Bylaws book, available at www.menard.com/bylaws; call us if you need a copy. Stop by the office to pick up a petition.

Directors must:

- Establish policies and employ a general manager who is responsible for all operational details of the co-op.
- Be a member in good standing, have their primary residence within the geographical boundary of the district, 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 including finance, management and public issues. (It takes time to learn this industry and for that reason our Directors have made long-term commitments to serving the co-op.)

**Open
Seat**

District 1 Open Seat

Berlin,
Pleasant Plains,
Salisbury,
Tallula



District 4 Dennis Ryan, *Treasurer*

Chandlerville,
Greenvew,
Oakford,
Petersburg



District 6 Steven Worner

Forest City,
Manito,
San Jose,
Topeka

2019 Annual Meeting of Members

Thursday, June 13th



Keeping your service safe and reliable with vegetation management



Ross Cloninger
Forester

One way we seek to provide our members with safe and reliable power is to control vegetation within the right of way along our more than 2,600 miles of distribution lines.

Why we control vegetation

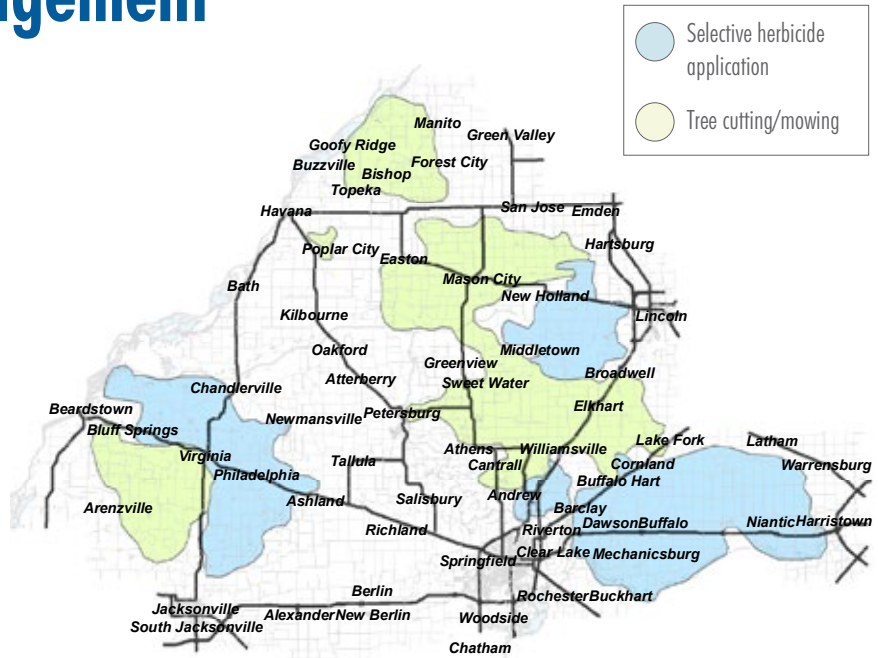
Safety: Safety is the primary reason for our program; trees grown too close to our lines are very dangerous for our linemen working on the lines, members working in or near trees, and children playing in trees near lines.

Moisture within a tree's limbs provides electricity with an ideal path to cause electrocution. Even branches that may seem far enough away can unexpectedly contact lines when winds, broken limbs or additional weight causes them to sag or fall.

Reliability: Trees contacting lines cause outages in any weather. They are a leading cause of outages during storms producing winds, snow or ice; but also on mild days where multiple short interruptions in service can be caused by swaying branches that are difficult for our linemen to find. Our vegetation management program is proving successful as our numbers of outages caused by vegetation are dropping in the areas we have trimmed the last couple years.

Our 2019 vegetation management program

When looking at our service territory you can see that we cover a large area and it takes several years to make a full cycle of tree trimming. We seek to clear each area of our territory every six years. This requires us to obtain 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 removed 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 for maintenance.

Specifications: 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 from the center of the pole. Smaller trees and brush under and close to lines are removed to allow access and eliminate future growing problems. 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.

Schedule: We partner with Spoon River Electric Cooperative's forestry department and employ contract crews

to implement our program. Throughout the rest of 2019, these crews will cut and mow vegetation on circuits branching out from our substations in Athens, Mason City and north of Poplar City. We will also be finishing up work along circuits fed from the Bluff Springs and Bishop substations. These areas are shown on the map in green.

In addition to trimming and mowing, contract crews will also selectively apply herbicide to brush as needed in areas that were mechanically cleared in 2018 in order to control problematic re-growth. In 2019, this will include the areas served by substations in Virginia, Bishop, Mason City, Bluff Springs, Sherman, Barclay, Lanesville and Middletown. These areas are shown on the map in blue.

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.

Member trimming requests


I spend a majority of my time with members inspecting the overall health and location of trees on their property. A member will call asking us to trim or take down a tree. In many cases the tree is located near or under a secondary wire. Secondary wire is a low voltage wire that runs from the transformer into your home. Typically, with secondary wire you will see two insulated black wires and one bare wire wrapped together. Due to the size of our system and the fact that these wires are low voltage and insulated, we do not trim out 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 member can do the work safely. Once the work is completed the Serviceman will put the secondary wire back up. This can even be done on the same day.

Proper planting

You'll help us eliminate the need for trimming your trees by planting properly. A common issue we face are members not realizing how far away from our lines they need to plant a tree. The outer edge of the branches (not the trunk) needs 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 feet. This will give you the minimum distance in feet to measure away from our lines.

Questions?

Contact Forester Ross Cloninger
800-872-1203
rcloninger@menard.com



Did you know?

Like our linemen, our forestry crews also have a very dangerous job. They work year-round in all kinds of harsh conditions. These crews have been properly trained and have years of experience on proper cutting techniques. They attend classes where they learn different climbing and roping methods. The crews are also exposed to new and improved safety equipment. When working close to high voltage electric lines, dielectric trucks and tools are required. Our trucks and trim saws are tested regularly to assure the safety of the crew. Every crew member is required to have the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) such as hardhats, safety glasses, ear protection, gloves and steel toes shoes to name a few. Each crew member is also trained on running equipment like bucket trucks, chippers and mowers.

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.

Call Before You Dig
JULIE
ILLINOIS ONE-CALL SYSTEM



1-800-872-1203
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 www.menard.com
 facebook.com/MenardElectric

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Board highlights

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

December 21, 2018

- Present were Directors D. Jay Frye, Warren Goetsch, Gary Martin, Donald McMillan, Michael Patrick, Dennis Ryan & Roy H. Seane; Director of Member Services Trish Michels, Manager of Accounting & Information Systems Chris Hinton, Manager Alisha Anker & Attorney Charles Smith. Directors Jodine Tate & Steven Worner absent.
- AIEC Vice President of Member Services Nancy McDonald presented review of 2018 member satisfaction survey results.
- Michels: Reviewed 2018 sick leave bonus program; Board approved continuing program for 2019.
- Anker & Hinton reviewed proposed 2019 Financial Budget. Board discussed proposed changes & approved.
- Hinton: Discussed 2018 inventory adjustment, which was a net gain of \$15,754.51; Board approved.
- Board approved 0.25 mills per kwh deferral for 2019 for Prairie Power, Inc.
- Board discussed and approved IDNR license agreement renewal.
- Anker: Reviewed balance sheet, budget, safety, reliability, operations, IT security, capital credits & member newsletter reports; discussed changes to farm progress show participation and retirement of Rhonda Satorius. Board voted to table review of the Cooperative's Mission Statement.
- Anker: Gave November financial report. Year to date margins \$2,373,776 compared to \$2,631,451 last year. End of Nov. equity 41.56%. Served 10,930 accounts. Net utility plant \$49,232,197 compared to \$47,409,921 last year. Co-op meets requirements of RUS, FFB, NRUCFC & CoBank.
- Goetsch: Gave AIEC report.
- Martin: Gave Prairie Power, Inc. report.
- Voting Delegate/Alternates appointed. NRTC: McMillan/Patrick. NRECA: Ryan/Patrick.
- Board entered into executive session; reconvened; motion carried to confirm and ratify all action taken.
- Next Board Meeting Jan 22, 2019.



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**What are
you doing?**

Storekeeper Erik Raikes is building a meter loop that will be attached to our pole for use at a specific member service. The member will purchase the loop and connect to it in order to get power from the pole to their home.

MyMEC App – The easiest way to report an outage



Download the MyMEC App by searching for Menard Outage in the Google Play or iOS App store on your mobile device.

You'll need to input the account number (which can be found on a recent bill) or your meter number (located under the digital digits and above the barcode).

You can also report outages at www.menard.com/outage-center or by calling 800-872-1203.

No Barriers Expedition for veterans

Veterans should contact us by April 10, 2019 if interested in being nominated for a No Barriers USA Expedition or Summit sponsored by CoBank.

CoBank, a cooperative bank serving industries across rural America including Menard Electric Cooperative, has partnered with No Barriers USA to sponsor four, five-day expeditions to take place in Colorado in July and August as well as a Summit in California in June.

We are pleased to be able to nominate veterans from among our membership for this lifechanging opportunity. Restrictions apply. You can find more details at our website at www.menard.com/posts or by contacting General Manager Alisha Anker at 800-872-1203 or aanker@menard.com. Interested in being nominated? Contact Alisha by April 10, 2019.



Spring Storms Can Cause Outages

Severe spring storms can cause broken poles and downed lines that take time to repair. Our linemen are always prepared to restore power as quickly and safely as possible.



Use our MyMEC App to report outages, view a map and receive notifications from us. See page 20d for details.

Always stay away from downed power lines!

