ALONGTHELINES

MJM ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

DEDICATED TO PROVIDING RELIABLE SERVICE FOR OUR MEMBERS.

FEBRUARY 2024
VOL.17, NO. 2

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

February is Black History Month

Feb. 2: Groundhog Day

Feb. 14: Valentine's Day

Feb. 18-23: National Engineers Week

Feb. 18-25: National FFA Week

SAVE THE DATE!

June 6th, 2024

MJM's 2024 Annual Meeting in Carlinville, IL

HOLIDAYS OBSERVED:
New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day following Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and New Year's Eve.

OFFICE: 217-707-6156
FAX: 217-854-3918

18300 SHIPMAN ROAD (PO BOX 80)
CARLINVILLE, IL 62626

WWW.MJMEC.COOP

HOW TO PREPARE & STAY SAFE DURING WINTER STORMS

BY MJM PRESIDENT/CEO, **JOE HEYEN**

When winter temperatures drop and storms hit, it can be challenging to stay safe and warm. Winter storm severity varies depending on where you live, but nearly all Americans are affected by extreme winter storms at some point. MJM cares about your safety, and we want you to be prepared.

Heavy snow and ice can lead to downed power lines, leaving co-op members without power. During extremely low temperatures, this can be dangerous. During a power outage, our crews will continue to work as quickly and safely as possible to restore power, but there are a few things you can do to prepare yourself.

• **Stay warm** – Plan to use a safe alternate heating source, such as a fireplace or wood-burning stove during a power outage. These are great options to keep you and your loved ones warm, but exercise caution when using, and never leave the heating source unattended. If you are using gasoline-, propane- or natural gas-burning devices to stay warm, never use them indoors. Remember that fuel- and wood-burning sources of heat should always be properly ventilated. Always read the manufacturer's directions before using.

• **Stay fed** – The CDC recommends having several days' supply of food that does not need to be cooked handy. Crackers, cereal, canned goods and bread are good options. Five gallons of water per person should also be available in the event of an extended power outage. Be sure to have a storm preparedness kit ready before a storm strikes to help get you and your family through a power outage. This kit includes: bottled water, non-perishable food, blankets, warm clothing, first aid kit/medicine, flashlight, radio, extra batteries, and toiletries.

• **Stay safe** – When an outage occurs, it usually means power lines are down. It is best not to travel during winter storms, but if you must, bring a survival kit along, and do not travel alone. If you encounter downed lines, always assume they are live. Stay as far away from the downed lines as possible, and report the situation to our dispatchers by calling **217-707-6156** if possible.

Your vehicle should also have an emergency supply kit. Items in this kit include a snowbrush, snow shovel, cat litter for traction, extra warm clothing, blankets, drinking water, non-perishable foods, spare tire, jumper cables, reflective vest/triangles, first-aid kit, flashlight & extra batteries, compass, and a car charger for cell phones.

Winter weather can be unpredictable and dangerous, and planning ahead can often be the difference between life and death. MJM is ready for what Mother Nature has in store, and we want you to be ready, too. For more winter safety tips, visit **www.ready.gov/winter-weather**.

Winter Road Conditions (IDOT):
www.gettingaroundillinois.com
"Know before you go."

ALONGTHELINES

by MJM Electric Cooperative
www.mjmec.coop

18300 Shipman Road (PO Box 80)
Carlinville, IL 62626

Office: **1-217-707-6156**
Pay by Phone: **1-855-313-6314**

Office Hours:
Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.

How to report an outage:
Call **217-707-6156** or use your **SmartHub app.**

- When you report an outage, give your **name** and **location number**.
- Before calling, check your fuses or circuit breakers.
- Check with your neighbors. Call to report hazardous conditions.

Please do not report outages on Facebook/Social Media.

MJM Along the Lines (USPS 854-620) is published monthly for $4.75 per year, per member by MJM Electric Cooperative, Inc., P.O. Box 80, Carlinville, Illinois 62626. Second-class postage paid at Carlinville, IL. POSTMASTER: Send Address changes to MJM Along the Lines, P.O. Box 80, Carlinville, IL 62626.

MJM ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

IN THIS ISSUE

MEMBER TRADING POST

FOR SALE: Firewood seasoned & Split, 6' Pickup Bed $100, can deliver for a bit more. Call Leroy 618-972-4658

FOR SALE: 1959 Ford select-o-speed 10 speed automatic tractor. 3pt hitch, needs some work.
Serious inquiries call: 217-313-6783.

FOR SALE: 2007 Dodge Ram pickup, V8, 4 Door. 1500 Quad Cab with camper shell. 6.4 bed. $5,800. Call: 618-466-0664

FOR SALE: Track Lighting Fixtures and Bulbs. Box of 16 brand new Lazer Track lighting fixtures by Halo, black in color, LZR 301 MB (each lists online for $50) plus 12 50W, 120V flood lights (each lists online for $9). $400. Bunker Hill area.
Call: 618-585-4824

To list your free ad, email **info@mjmec.coop**, call 217-707-6156, or mail the ad to **MJM Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 80, Carlinville, IL 62626**.

Each ad will run for one month. Some restriction may apply.

LINEWORKER SCHOLARSHIP AVAILABLE

The LaVern and Nola McEntire Memorial Lineworker's Scholarship helps pay for costs to attend lineworker school. The $2,000 scholarship is awarded annually to an individual who is related to an Illinois rural electric cooperative employee or director; is the son or daughter of an Illinois electric cooperative member; is enrolled in the Lincoln Land lineworker's school; or has served or is currently serving in the U.S. armed forces or National Guard.

Awarded for the first time in 2011, the scholarship was endowed by LaVern and Nola McEntire to assist students attending lineworker's school at LLCC. LaVern served as a lineworker for more than 42 years at McDonough Power Cooperative.

The deadline to apply for this scholarship is **April 30, 2024.** To apply, go to:
aiec.coop/lavern-and-nola-lineworkers-scholarship

USING A GENERATOR?

8 DANGEROUS MISTAKES PEOPLE MAKE

1 IN ENCLOSED SPACES
Always use it in a well-ventilated area.

2 NEAR WINDOWS OR DOORS
Place it at least 20 feet away from windows and doors.

3 IN A GARAGE
Even if the door is up, never use a generator in a garage.

4 IN THE ELEMENTS
Run it on a dry surface under a canopy-like structure (but not in a carport).

5 PLUGGED INTO A WALL OUTLET
This can be deadly to you, family members, neighbors or utility workers.

6 WITH THE WRONG EXTENSION CORD
Use a properly rated cord to plug appliances into a generator.

7 WITHOUT CARBON MONOXIDE (CO) TESTERS
CO detectors should be on every level of your home (test them monthly).

8 IN DISREPAIR
Make sure your generator is well-maintained and in good working order.

LEARN MORE AT:
Safe Electricity.org®

POSTAL DELAYS

MJM is aware that some members have been receiving their monthly billing statements weeks after they have been processed. MJM's bill processing cycle typically has the printed billing statements available to the United States Postal Service system for delivery by the 3rd of each month (or a little later due to the processing date being on a Sunday or holiday).

The due date for electric bill payments is the 15th of the month, however, late fees are not applied until 4PM CST on the 22nd of each month. A late penalty is waived once every twelve billing cycles as well.

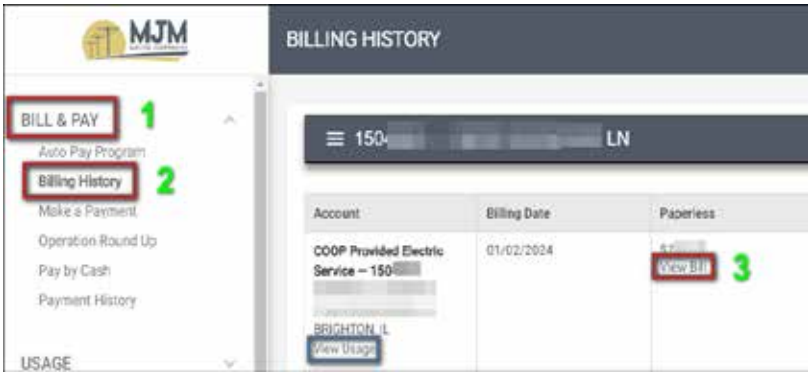
If mail delays are affecting you, please remember you can log into your account online to view the bill itself as well as make payments electronically. Additionally, you also have the option to switch to paperless bills, however, that is not required.

Visit **www.mjmec.coop** and click on the purple SmartHub image at the top of the webpage to get started. You can also download the SmartHub app for a better mobile device experience.

If you need assistance with creating an online account, call the billing department.

Billing Department - 217-707-6156, press option 2

Online view:



2024 RATES

A cost of service study will be completed in 2024 which will be taken into consideration for future rate adjustments. Electric rates for 2024 are projected to remain the same as 2023 rates.

Your "Rate Class" number is located on your monthly bill:

Service Map Loc	Service Description/Address	Rate	Meter Number	Days	Readings Previous	Readings Present	Multiplier	kWh Usage

Single-Phase Non Demand Non-Heat (Rate Class 1, 2, 3 & 4)

Service Delivery Charge	$ 54.00	per month
Power Supplier Energy Charge	$ 0.08663	per kWh
Distribution Energy Charge	$ 0.02497	per kWh

Three-Phase Non Demand Non-Heat (Rate Class 6, 7 & 8)

Service Delivery Charge	$ 112.00	per month
Power Supplier Energy Charge	$ 0.08663	per kWh
Distribution Energy Charge	$ 0.02301	per kWh

Single-Phase Electric Heat (Rate Class 5, 31, 32, 33, 37, 38, & 39)

Service Delivery Charge	$ 54.00	per month
Power Supplier Energy Charge	$ 0.08663	per kWh
Heating Energy Charge	$ 0.046	per kWh
Distribution Energy Charge	$ 0.02497	per kWh

Three-Phase Electric Heat (Rate Class 34, 35, 36, 40 & 41)

Service Delivery Charge	$ 112.00	per month
Power Supplier Energy Charge	$ 0.08663	per kWh
Heating Energy Charge	$ 0.046	per kWh
Distribution Energy Charge	$ 0.02301	per kWh

Single-Phase Large Power (Rate Class 9)

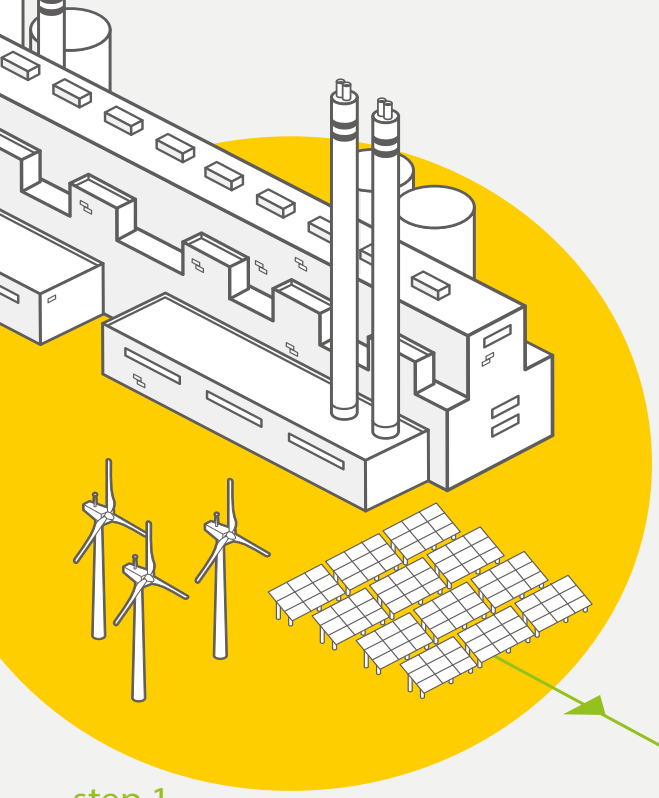
Service Delivery Charge	$ 80.00	per month
Power Supplier Energy Charge	$ 0.046	per kWh
Power Supplier Demand Charge	$ 11.09	per kW
Distribution Energy Charge	$ 0.03896	per kWh

Three-Phase Large Power (Rate Class 10)

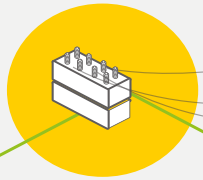
Service Delivery Charge	$ 123.00	per month
Power Supplier Energy Charge	$ 0.046	per kWh
Power Supplier Demand Charge	$ 11.67	per kW
Distribution Energy Charge	$ 0.041818	per kWh

CRITICAL CONNECTIONS: HOW ELECTRICITY GETS TO YOU

The electric grid is considered one of the most complex machines in the world, delivering the electricity we need for everyday life.

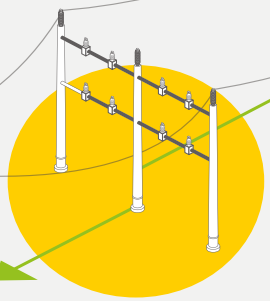


step 1
GENERATION
Power plants generate electricity using a variety of energy sources, like solar, natural gas, nuclear and wind energy.

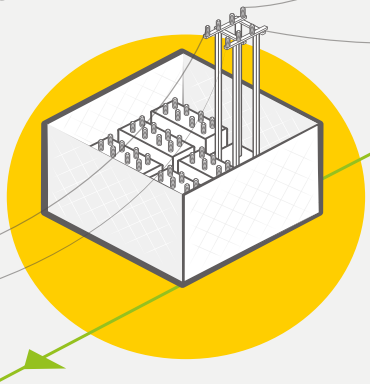


step 2
STEP-UP TRANSFORMER
A step-up transformer increases the voltage to push the electricity over long distances.

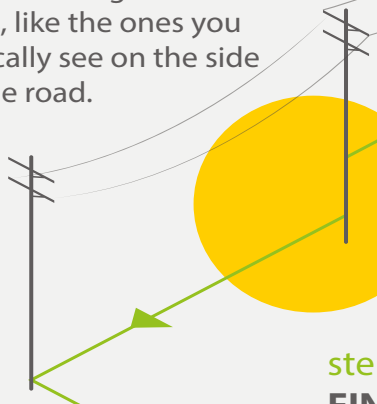
step 3
TRANSMISSION LINES
High-voltage electricity travels over long distances through these lines.



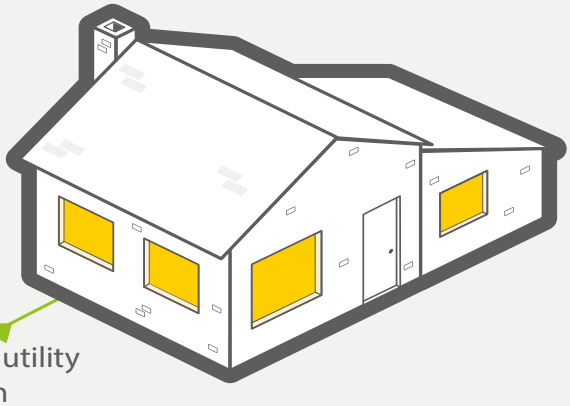
step 4
TRANSMISSION SUBSTATION
Voltage is lowered at a transmission substation so electricity can travel across the local distribution system.

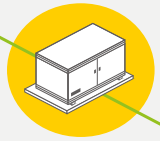


step 5
DISTRIBUTION SUBSTATION
These substations lower the voltage again so the electricity is ready to travel on distribution lines.



step 6
DISTRIBUTION LINES
Lower-voltage electricity travels through distribution lines, like the ones you typically see on the side of the road.





step 7
FINAL STOP
A transformer located on the ground or a utility pole reduces the voltage a final time, then electricity is sent inside your home, school or business.

BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO THE ELECTRIC GRID

by MJM's Director of Engineering, Bob Brandon

Electricity plays an essential role in everyday life. It powers our homes, offices, hospitals and schools. We depend on it to keep us warm in the winter (and cool in the summer), charge our phones and binge our favorite TV shows. If the power goes out, even briefly, our lives can be disrupted.

The system that delivers your electricity is often described as the most complex machine in the world, and it's known as the electric grid.

What makes it so complex? We all use different amounts of electricity throughout the day, so the supply and demand for electricity is constantly changing. For example, we typically use more electricity in the mornings when we're starting our day, and in the evenings when we're cooking dinner and using appliances. Severe weather and other factors also impact how much electricity we need.

The challenge for electric providers is to plan for, produce and purchase enough electricity so it's available exactly when we need it. Too much or too little electricity in one place can cause problems. So, to make sure the whole system stays balanced, the electric grid must adjust in real time to changes and unforeseen events.

At its core, the electric grid is a network of power lines, transformers, substations and other infrastructure that span the entire country. But it's not just a singular system. It's divided into three major interconnected grids: the Eastern Interconnection, the Western Interconnection and the Electric Reliability Council of Texas. These grids operate independently but are linked to allow electricity to be transferred between regions when backup support is required.

Within the three regions, seven balancing authorities known as independent system operators (ISOs) or regional transmission organizations (RTOs) monitor the grid, signaling to power plants when more electricity is needed to maintain a balanced electrical flow. ISOs and RTOs are like traffic controllers for electricity.

The journey of electricity begins at power plants. Power plants can be thought of as factories that make electricity using various energy sources, like natural gas, solar, wind and nuclear energy. Across the U.S., more than 11,000 power plants deliver electricity to the grid.

MJM receives power from our generation and transmission (G&T) co-op, Wabash Valley Power Alliance. We work closely with Wabash to provide electricity at the lowest cost possible. Being part of a G&T benefits members like you by placing ownership and control in the hands of your co-op, prioritizing affordability and reliability, supporting local economic development and fostering a sense of community.

To get the electricity from power plants to you, we need a transportation system.

High-voltage transmission lines act as the highways for electricity, transporting power over long distances. These lines are supported by massive towers and travel through vast landscapes, connecting power plants to electric substations.

Substations are like pit stops along the highway, where the voltage of electricity is adjusted. They play a crucial role in managing power flow and ensuring that electricity is safe for use in homes and businesses.

Once the electricity is reduced to the proper voltage, it travels through distribution power lines, like the ones you typically see on the side of the road. Distribution lines carry electricity from substations to homes, schools and businesses. Distribution transformers, which look like metal buckets on the tops of power poles or large green boxes on the ground, further reduce the voltage to levels suitable for household appliances and electronic devices.

After traveling through transformers, electricity reaches you––to power everyday life.

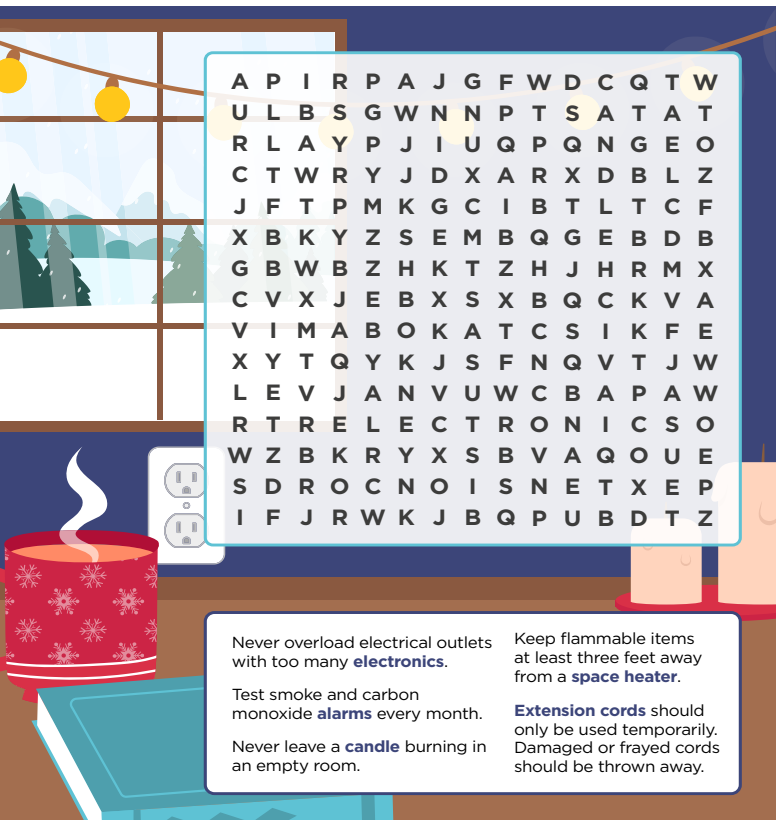
We're proud to be your local, trusted energy provider. From the time it's created to the time it's used, electricity travels great distances to be available at the flip of a switch. That's what makes the electric grid our nation's most complex machine––and one of our nation's greatest achievements.

WINTER SAFETY WORD SEARCH

Did you know most home fires happen during colder months? Play it safe this winter season.

Read the safety tips below, then find and circle the bolded words in the puzzle.

Energy Explorers



ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Area rugs are an easy, cost-effective solution to cold floors. Adding area rugs to hard-surface flooring can add warmth to any room and keep your feet cozy on cold winter days.

Choose rugs made from wool or other natural fibers and plush or high-pile textures for the most insulation. Place rugs in areas where you need additional warmth, like the foot of a bed or under a coffee table. Area rugs can enhance the aesthetic of your home and keep you cozier.