

# ALONG THE LINES



DEDICATED TO PROVIDING RELIABLE SERVICE FOR OUR MEMBERS.

**JULY 2023**  
VOL.16, NO. 7

## USAGE HABITS

Where electricity is being used in households. p.2

## GEO THERMAL

System operation tips and tricks. p.5

## SMART LIGHTING

LED lighting and Smart Controls. p.7

## JULY CALENDAR

July 4th: **OFFICE CLOSED**

## UPCOMING

Sep. 4th: **LABOR DAY - OFFICE CLOSED**

## SIGN UP FOR AUTO PAY:

Recurring Payments from Checking Accounts, Savings Accounts, Credit Cards, or Debit Cards - The payment will equal the account's net amount due on the day it is drafted, which is the 15th of each month. Unless otherwise stated on your bill. This payment option is available by signing up through SmartHub, online, or contacting MJM at 217-707-6156.

MJM accepts Visa, Discover, and MasterCard payments. If you are signing up a debit or credit card, you must sign up online.

### HOLIDAYS OBSERVED:

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



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

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

WWW.MJMEC.COOP





# How Americans Use Electricity

The latest data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration shows the combined use of clothes washers and dryers, dishwashers, small appliances and other electrical equipment (noted as "all other uses" below) accounts for the largest percentage of electricity consumption in American homes.

## TOP kW USERS

**Electric Heat Furnaces**  
10,000-50,000 Watts (10kW-50kW)

**Clothes Dryer**  
5000 Watts (5.0kW)

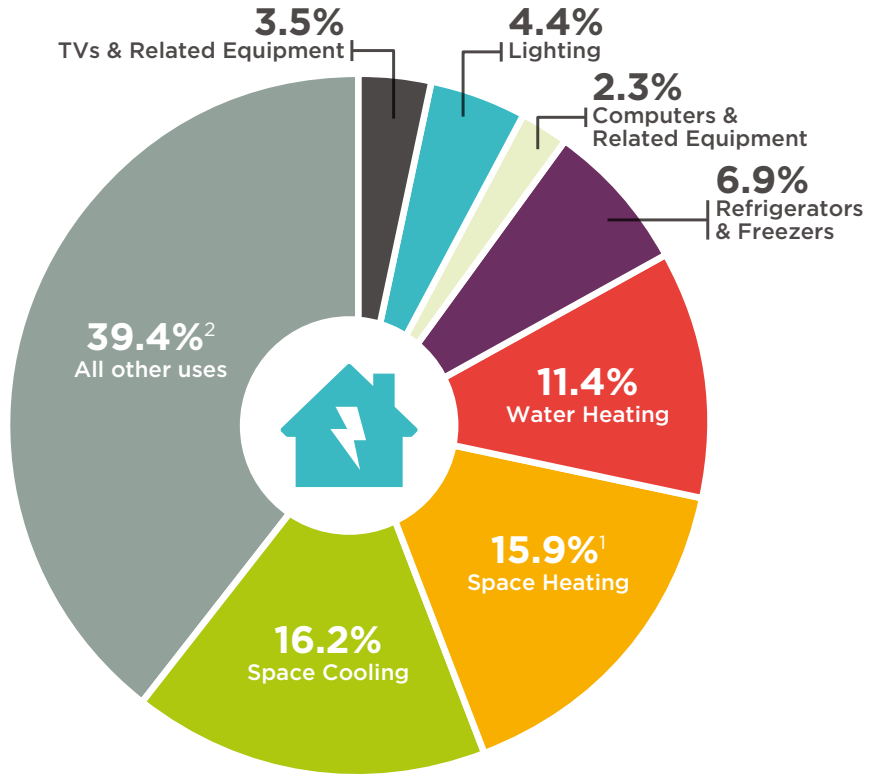
**Quick Recovery Water Heater**  
4500 Watts (4.5kW)

**Air Conditioner**  
36,000 BTU: 4500 Watts (4.5kW)  
12,000 BTU: 1500 Watts (1.5kW)

**Range (Oven):** 2660 Watts (2.66kW)  
**Range (Self Clean Cycle):** 2500W (2.5kW)

**Space Heaters, Microwaves, Jacuzzi**  
**Curling Irons, Vacuum & Convection Ovens**  
1500 Watts (1.5kW)

**Dishwashers (Dry Cycle),**  
**Coffee Makers, & Waffle Irons**  
1200 Watts (1.2kW)



Source: Energy Information Administration 2022

<sup>1</sup>Includes consumption for heat and operating furnace fans and boiler pumps.

<sup>2</sup>Includes miscellaneous electronics, clothes washers and dryers, cooking equipment, dishwashers, heating elements, and motors.

To check how much your specific appliances consume, and calculate how that reflects on a monthly power bill go to: [ENERGY.GOV/ENERGYSAVER](https://www.energy.gov/energysaver)



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by MJM Electric Cooperative  
www.mjmec.coop

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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.**

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

# IN THIS ISSUE

- 04 **Annual Meeting**  
Recap photos from our 84th Annual Meeting.
- 05 **Geothermal Systems**  
Tips and tricks.
- 06 **Smart Lighting**  
LEDs and Smart Controls for your home.
- 07 **2023 Scholarship Recipients**  
Congratulations and best of luck!

PLEASE RECYCLE



- **PAY ONLINE**
- **TRACK YOUR USAGE**
- **REPORT OUTAGES**
- **GET NOTIFICATIONS**

SCAN THE QR CODE ABOVE  
 WITH YOUR SMARTPHONE, OR GO TO:

[HTTPS://MJMEC.COOP/SMARTHUB-HELP](https://mjmec.coop/smarthub-help)

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Summer is a prime opportunity to enjoy the great outdoors. To reduce home energy use, avoid using your oven and use a grill instead. Not only will cooking outdoors eliminate the electricity used to power the stove, but it will also avoid raising the temperature inside your home, reducing the need for air conditioning or cooling.

You can also avoid using the oven with tasty no-bake recipes. Get creative in the kitchen (or the backyard) and find new ways to save energy!

Source: Dept. of Energy



# 2023 ANNUAL MEETING RECAP

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE!

**404 registered members & 775 meals served!**

Special thanks to the Macoupin County 4-H volunteers, Patty Ames, Pork Producers, Association of Electric Cooperatives, and Wabash Valley Power Alliance.



# GROUND LEVEL OF SAVINGS

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR GEOTHERMAL SYSTEM TO MINIMIZE YOUR ENERGY USE – AND COSTS

BY WABASH VALLEY POWER ALLIANCE

Most homeowners see the seasonal spike in energy bills each sweltering summer and frigid winter. Fortunately, most geothermal system owners see those spikes look more like molehills than mountains during intense weather. The earth under their feet insulates them from high energy costs – literally.

Monthly electric bills typically spike with the temperature extremes that require heating and cooling systems to work hard – and use lots of energy – to keep people comfortable. Yet homeowners with a geothermal system typically see fewer steep increases in energy use during extreme weather. That's because of how a geothermal system works: by using a loop system to exchange heat between your home and the earth's naturally moderate temperatures underground. This process requires much less electricity than other kinds of heating and cooling systems. In a closed loop geothermal system, plastic tubing buried in the ground uses a fluid to exchange heat between the ground and the building.

With the geothermal system doing most of the hard work, there are a few things that homeowners can do to optimize the system's performance.

**Set your thermostat, then forget it!** This one is key for homeowners with a geothermal system. The system can work incredibly efficiently to maintain your home's temperature. It also has a backup heating system, which is commonly electric heating strips, for additional support if for some reason the geothermal system is unable to maintain the home's temperature (such as extremely cold temperatures). Your thermostat will typically display if your geothermal system uses backup heat. Being in the habit of checking for that notice could help you catch system problems early and avoid higher than necessary energy bills.

If homeowners change the thermostat two or more degrees higher than its previous setting, the thermostat may activate the backup heating system (some thermostats vary on the temperature difference needed). Backup heating systems cost significantly more money than letting the geothermal system maintain the home temperature. **Only use backup heating when absolutely necessary.**



**Check your air filter monthly.** Like other heat pumps and furnaces, geothermal systems also have an air filter. You should check your air filter at least once each month and replace it if needed. A dirty filter can impede airflow, causing your geothermal system (or any heat pump or furnace) to work harder than necessary.

**Let your ears guide you.** As you become accustomed to your geothermal system, keep an ear out to listen for unexpected noises that have not previously occurred. Homeowners with an open loop geothermal system may hear sounds such as their water softener cycling every day, or their pressure tank clicking on and off repeatedly. These can indicate a malfunctioning system and may be worth having a qualified contractor check out your geothermal system. Even an annual inspection could be worthwhile to ensure your system is working properly.

A geothermal system can lead to significant long-term energy and cost savings while keeping you warm in the winter and cool all summer long. For more information about geothermal system options, contact your local electric cooperative's energy advisor or visit [PowerMoves.com](https://www.powermoves.com).



# GET SMART ABOUT HOME LIGHTING

BY: ABBY BERRY (NRECA)

Gone are the days when a simple flip of the switch was the only choice for illuminating our homes. While we still have this tried-and-true option, we've entered a new era of innovative and intelligent technologies, which includes smart lighting.

Smart lighting connects to Wi-Fi and offers an array of cutting-edge functionality and convenience. Let's look at the main benefits of smart lighting options.

**Smart lighting is energy efficient.** Most smart bulbs utilize LED technology, which is much more efficient than traditional incandescent lighting. Additionally, smart lighting gives you more control over how and when you light your home, ultimately resulting in less energy used for lighting.

**Smart lighting provides convenience and control.** Most smart bulbs can be controlled from an app on your smartphone or can be paired with your voice assistant, like Amazon Alexa. You can conveniently control lighting settings from anywhere in your home or when you're away. Whether you want to set a schedule for lighting or adjust brightness levels, these smart options offer effortless control from the comfort of, well, anywhere!

**Smart options empower you to personalize home lighting.** Bright, warm, purple, green—whatever mood you want to create, smart lighting can help. For a more traditional look, try dimmable white bulbs. If you want to create the perfect ambiance for movie night, look for bulbs that can be adjusted for a variety of vibrant colors. The possibilities are endless.

While smart lighting offers convenience and control, keep in mind your wall light switch will need to stay "on" for you to control the smart bulb from your phone or via voice command. To use a smart bulb, the wall switch it's connected to must be "on" so the bulb receives power, which enables it to connect to a Wi-Fi network.

If you need additional options to operate the lights, consider a smart light switch. Today's smart switches tend to play nicely with smart bulbs. If you want to control your smart bulbs with a physical switch (in addition to using your phone and voice commands), look for smart switches that include a built-in feature that allows both. Many smart light switches include motion detectors as well.



Photo Source: Riki Risnandar

If you're looking to take the plunge and integrate multiple smart bulbs to your home lighting system, your best bet may be a kit, like the Philips Hue Starter Kit. Most kits include several bulbs and any additional tools you'll need to get started.

If you're new to smart home tech and looking to start small, try a smart bulb in a high-traffic area of your home. It's also worth noting that smart plugs are a great starter option and allow convenient control of lamps or other lighting fixtures that are plugged in to a wall outlet. Smart plugs are inexpensive and simply plug in to your existing outlet. Electrical items that are connected to the smart plug can be controlled from a smart phone app, just like smart bulbs.

Whether you're looking for more convenience, colorful options or better ways to manage energy use, smart lighting can provide multiple benefits. Determine which smart lighting features are most important for your needs, then start shopping!



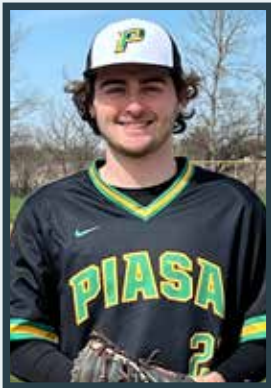
Photo Source: Freepik.com



Abby Berry writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56% of the nation's landscape.



# 2023 MJM ELECTRIC SCHOLASHIP RECIPIENTS



## HANK BOUILLON

From Plainview

Hank recieved one of MJM's \$1000 Scholarships and the AIEC's Thomas H. Moore IEC Memorial Scholarship. He plans to attend Illinois State University and study Construction Management.



## PAIGE LUCYKOW

From Hillsboro

Paige recieved one of MJM's \$1000 Scholarships, she plans to attend Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville and is pursuing a Bachelor's Degree of Science in Nursing.



## KAM LINK

From Gillespie

Kamryn recieved the \$500 MJM Honorary Scholarship, he has signed to play baseball at Johnson County Community College in Overland Park, KS, and is pusuing a degree in Kinesiology.



## GRANT NEUHAUS

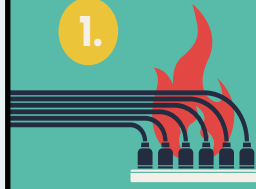
From Staunton

Grant recieved the \$250 MJM Honorary Scholarship, he has signed to play baseball at Milikin University in Decatur, IL and will be pursuing a 4-year degree.

# ELECTRICITY 101

To stay safe around electricity, start with these **SEVEN** basic tips:

1.



### DON'T OVERLOAD OUTLETS OR CIRCUITS

Plugging in too many items or drawing too much power on a circuit can cause overheating, fire, and damage to devices.

2.



### DON'T USE FAULTY ELECTRICAL CORDS OR PLUGS

Do not use cords that look frayed, worn or cracked. Do not use broken plugs. Never remove the grounding pin from a three-pronged plug.

3.



### HAVE YOUR ELECTRICIAN'S NUMBER IN YOUR PHONE

Most electrical repairs or installations are not DIY projects. Hire an expert to avoid serious injury or wiring problems.

4.



### BE CAREFUL AROUND H2O

Never use electricity while standing in damp or wet conditions. Keep all electrical devices away from water, including cell phones that are charging.

5.



### EVALUATE YOUR APPLIANCES

Do not use appliances in disrepair. Older or broken appliances can overheat, start a fire, and cause serious injuries.

6.



### TEST YOUR GFCIs

Outlets near a water source should be equipped with GFCIs, which help prevent shock and electrocution caused by ground faults. Test monthly to make sure they are working.

7.



### MAKE SURE YOUR HOME IS UP TO CODE

Your home should be properly wired and electrically sound. Contact a reputable electrician to evaluate your home.

**Safe**  
**Electricity.org**



# MEMBER TRADING POST

**FOR SALE:** 2006 Cadillac Escalade, one owner, 56,428 miles, call for price.  
Contact 618-498-4416.

**FOR SALE:** 5X8 utility trailer, solid steel floor, side rails, and tailgate ramp. 6 ply tires, there is a short in the wiring. \$325 cash only. 618-732-8194

**FOR SALE:** Numax Flooring Nailer with hammer & 6000 2in-16gauge nails. Works good; nailer is \$160 new, nails are \$25 per thousand new. Asking \$150 for all. Call: 217-851-7067

**FOR SALE:** OTC Porta-power hydrolic pump with twin cylinder ram. works good, no leaks, sells new for \$650. Asking \$300.  
Call: 217-851-7067

**FOR SALE:** 2005 250 Honda Helix. Contact 217-324-6766.



**Have an Electric Vehicle?**  
Let MJM know if you are a member that owns an EV, this will help future planning and development of infrastructure upgrades as more and more electric vehicles begin charging on MJM lines.

Contact: [info@mjmec.coop](mailto:info@mjmec.coop) or call 217-707-6156

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