

ALONG THE LINES



DEDICATED TO SAFELY PROVIDING RELIABLE SERVICE TO OUR MEMBERS.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

MARCH 2026
VOL.19, NO. 3

**INFO ABOUT
DATA CENTERS &
CRYPTOCURRENCY**
pg. 2 & 4

**MJM SERVICE
AWARDS & SAFETY
AWARD**
pg. 5

**2026 TREE TRIMMING
& SPRAYING**
pgs. 6-7

MARCH CALENDAR



March is Ladder Safety Month

Mar. 8: Daylight Saving: "Spring Forward"

Mar. 17: St. Patrick's Day

Mar. 20: First Day of Spring

Mar. 24: Ag Day

SAVE THE DATE!

THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 2026
**MJM'S 87TH ANNUAL MEETING
OF MEMBERS**

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.



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LOCAL CRYPTOCURRENCY PROJECTS & INFORMATION ABOUT DATA CENTERS



MJM PRESIDENT/CEO, JOE HEYEN



The cooperative commitment is a way of life for me. My father was a lineman here at MJM, and I grew up seeing what it takes to keep the lights on for our members. That experience still guides the way we make decisions today, even as we face new challenges *and* opportunities.

Across the country, new facilities are being built to support artificial intelligence (AI), data processing, and other digital services we rely on daily. Many of these projects are locating in rural areas near substations in co-op territory because we are known for dependable service and long-term commitment.

Last year, several developers approached MJM about building cryptocurrency sites in our service area. While these facilities are relatively small in size, they can represent significant energy use for a system like ours. We took those requests seriously because our responsibility is to protect reliability, support rate stability, and keep our members' best interests in mind.

That's why our Board and staff, working closely with our power supply partner Wabash Valley Power Alliance, carefully examined each proposal. We approved three projects, with the first installation beginning in late 2025 at the Taylor Springs substation, and additional sites planned at the Bunker Hill and Womac substations.

I understand new development can raise questions, and that is fair. The developer addressed noise concerns with quieter equipment and sound dampening panels at each site, and they covered all upfront costs. We also confirmed with Wabash that the power supply needed was available. **Most importantly, these projects do not increase member rates or put reliability at risk.**

On high regional demand days like the one that occurred in January due to Winter Storm Fern, cryptocurrency sites like these shut completely off long before warnings and voluntary conservation requests. They are tied directly to energy market pricing and if that price increases much higher than that of a low demand day, they will shut down. It is not profitable for them to run if the regional market price of energy rises.

There is meaningful upside for MJM and for you, our members, with developments like these. They can generate positive margins, and we expect there may be more opportunities ahead. Because we are a not-for-profit cooperative, those margins are reinvested back into the system to strengthen reliability and support long-term rate stability.

MJM was built by people like my dad who believed in hard work, responsibility, and serving others. I am proud to carry that forward by making smart decisions that protect our members and keep this co-op strong for the next generation.

If you have questions, please reach out to me.

Joe Heyen
President/CEO, MJM

DATA CENTER INFORMATION

Note: MJM currently does not supply power for any data centers.

Data centers may feel like a big-city phenomenon, but more and more of them are showing up in rural communities like ours--and there's good reason for that. Rural areas offer what data centers need most: affordable land, room to grow and access to transmission lines that can move large amounts of power.

Continued on page 4

ALONGTHELINES

by MJM Electric Cooperative
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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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 Tim Walsh..... District 1
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 Jennifer Peterson.....Office Manager
 Matt Eisenmenger.....Operations Manager
 Martin Hinton.....Engineering Manager
 Bob Brandon.....Right of Way Manager

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Eric Cooper.....Communications &
 Member Services Coordinator

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IN THIS ISSUE

2&4 **Cryptocurrency & Data Centers**
The challenges and opportunities they create.

5 **Service & Safety Awards**
MJM staff service awards & organization safety award.

6-7 **2026 Tree Trimming and Spraying**
MJM's Right-of-Way plan for 2026.



MJM WELCOMES NEW BOARD DIRECTORS



Leann Barr of Carlinville has been appointed to the MJM Board of Directors. Leann represents District 4, a position previously held by Bob Lehmann of Girard for 38 years before his passing in 2025.



Tim Walsh of Godfrey has been appointed to the MJM Board of Directors. Tim serves as District 1's representative, a position formerly held by Kay Schultz of Godfrey for 38 years prior to his retirement in 2025.

MEMBER TRADING POST

FOR SALE: 1980 C-60 Chevy truck. 35,000 miles, dual hoist, rollover tarp. The truck is like new condition. Call: 217-891-0708

WANTING TO BUY: Old Litchfield Bottles & Boxes, old tokens and items from Litchfield Creamery, Brown Shoe Factory, and misc. Call/leave message: 618-402-4420

FOR SALE: Old barn boards, metal roof, and beams, free to anyone that will tear down old barn and clean up the rubble. Call Leroy @ 618-972-4658

To list your free ad, email info@mjmec.coop, call 217-707-6156

Each ad will run for one month. Some restriction may apply.
 No Ads in May edition/Annual Meeting Booklet

DATA CENTER INFORMATION

CONTINUED.....

What makes data centers different from other large businesses is their appetite for electricity. These facilities run 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Servers must stay online constantly, which means power has to be reliable every minute of every day.

For electric cooperatives like MJM, powering data centers, much like cryptocurrency sites, would create both opportunities *and* challenges.

On the plus side, data centers have the potential to bring steady, long-term load growth that helps support investments in the local grid. With proper planning and policy support, those upgrades—including new substations, stronger lines and smarter technology—could benefit all MJM members and help keep electricity rates steady.

But providing power to data centers presents challenges, too. These large facilities can be constructed and operating in as little as one year, but ensuring the necessary infrastructure, equipment and electricity requires longer lead times and significant financial investment. Strategic planning and partnerships, as well as long-term power supply strategies are essential to the process.

While **MJM does not currently serve any data centers**, co-ops nationwide are fielding requests and inquiries from tech companies, and we anticipate similar requests in the not-too-distant future.

As a member-owned cooperative, our responsibility is twofold: to listen to the communities we serve and to provide reliable, affordable electric service to all MJM members. Balancing those responsibilities is not always simple, especially as new types of large-scale energy users, like data centers, become part of the local landscape.

No matter what the future holds, our priority will be supporting growth with fairness—that means ensuring large-scale energy users pay their fair share so residential bills don't spike and our local communities feel MJM is continually looking at ways to invest in them.

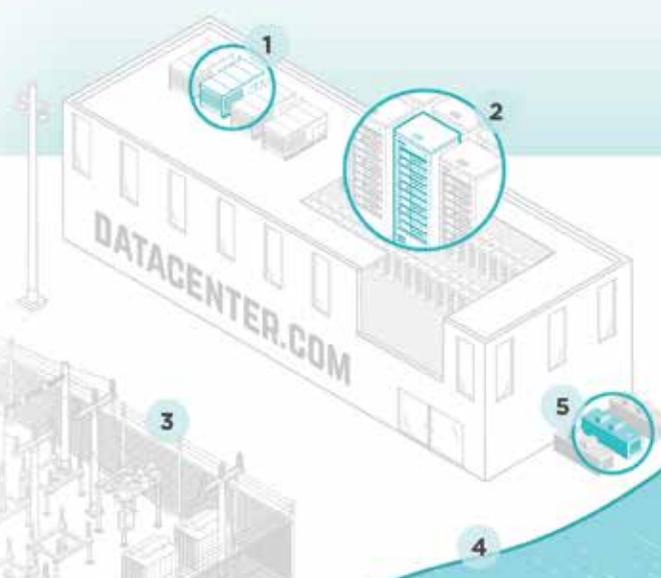
The energy landscape is changing, and with it comes both opportunities and challenges. My commitment, and the commitment of MJM's board and employees, is to continue listening, communicating and working with our members and community partners to ensure all decisions reflect the best interests of the people we serve.

If you have questions or concerns regarding data centers, your energy bills or any other co-op matters, we encourage you to stay engaged and reach out. Your voice matters at MJM!

Big Data, Bigger Demands

Many companies are choosing rural areas for their data centers because of cheaper land, available power and potential tax breaks. Data centers require huge amounts of electricity to operate, which presents new opportunities and challenges for electric co-ops.

- 1 HVAC:** Constant cooling is needed to ensure the servers function properly.
- 2 Servers:** Servers run applications and process data 24/7. One server rack can consume enough electricity to power a small home. A large data center can house thousands of server racks.
- 3 Infrastructure:** Data centers often require new electrical infrastructure to meet their power needs.
- 4 Water Source:** Many large data centers are deploying evaporative cooling, which is more efficient than compressor-based systems.
- 5 Backup Power:** On-site generators keep data centers running during power outages and can also be used to help lower demand when electricity use spikes.



2025 MJM SERVICE AWARDS



SAFETY FIRST:

M.J.M. ELECTRIC RECOGNIZED FOR OUTSTANDING WORKPLACE PRACTICES



Connor Mitchell

Apprentice Lineman
10 years



Joe Heyen

President/CEO
10 years



Adam Crowe

Area Utility Leader
20 years



Chuck Lucykow

Area Utility Leader
25 years



Joe Miles

Area Utility Leader
25 years



L to R: Connor Mitchell, Jack Schwartz, & Brian Bell

Safety leadership and training were the focus of the 2026 Safety and Energy Conference, held January 28–29 in Springfield. The two-day event brought together electric cooperative professionals, safety leaders and industry partners for educational sessions, networking and recognition of outstanding safety performance.

The conference, which was held by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives, covered a range of topics focused on leadership, safety and workplace culture, including personal influence and leadership, technical safety training, and the role of safety culture in the workplace.

Safety awards were also given, recognizing cooperatives for exemplary safety performance over the past year. M.J.M. Electric Cooperative earned the 2025 RESAP Certificate of Achievement.

This certificate indicates that the co-op completed the Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program, a program that was developed to maintain a culture of safety at cooperatives. By participating in the program, cooperatives commit to safety as an organizational value through training, educating and assessing its workforce.

As the electric industry continues to evolve, safety remains a top priority. M.J.M. Electric will always be committed to a strong safety culture for both employees and cooperative members.

MJM extends its gratitude and congratulations to everyone who has received a service award this past year, acknowledging their commitment and efforts over the years at the cooperative!

THE IMPORTANCE OF TREE TRIMMING

BY MJM ROW MANAGER, BOB BRANDON

At MJM, we strive to balance maintaining beautiful surroundings and ensuring a reliable power supply by keeping power lines clear in rights of way (ROW).

While we recognize and appreciate the beauty of trees, there are three main benefits to tree trimming in ROW areas. However, before touching on the main reasons, let me explain what a “right of way” is and how it may impact you. A right of way is the land we use to construct, maintain, replace or repair underground and overhead power lines. Rights of way enable the co-op to provide clearance from trees and other obstructions that could hinder the power line installation, maintenance or operation. ROW areas are typically on public lands or located near a business or home. Regardless, MJM must be able to maintain the power lines above and below the ROW. The overall goal of our vegetation management program is to provide reliable power to our members while maintaining the beauty of our community. Proactive vegetation management benefits co-op members in three tangible ways.

SAFETY

First and foremost, we care about our members and put their safety and that of our lineworkers above all else. Overgrown vegetation and trees pose a risk to power lines. For example, if trees are touching power lines in our members’ yards, they can pose grave danger to families. If children can access those trees, they can potentially climb into a danger zone. Electricity can arc, or jump, from a power line to a nearby conductor like a tree. A proactive approach also diminishes the chances of fallen branches or trees during severe weather events that make it more complicated and dangerous for lineworkers to restore power.

RELIABILITY

Of course, one of the biggest benefits of a smart vegetation management program is reliability. Strategic tree trimming reduces the frequency of downed lines causing power outages. Generally speaking, healthy trees don’t fall on power lines, and clear lines don’t cause problems. Proactive trimming and pruning keeps lines clear to promote reliability. Keeping power lines clear of overgrown vegetation improves service reliability. While many factors can impact power disruptions, about half of all outages



can be attributed to overgrown vegetation. This is why you sometimes see MJM crews or contractors out in the community trimming trees near power lines. Our trimming crews have been trained and certified based on the latest industry standards.

In fact, all U.S. electric utilities are required to trim trees that grow too close to power lines. Scheduled trimming throughout the year keeps lines clear from overgrown or dead limbs that are likely to fall, and we are better able to prepare for severe weather events.

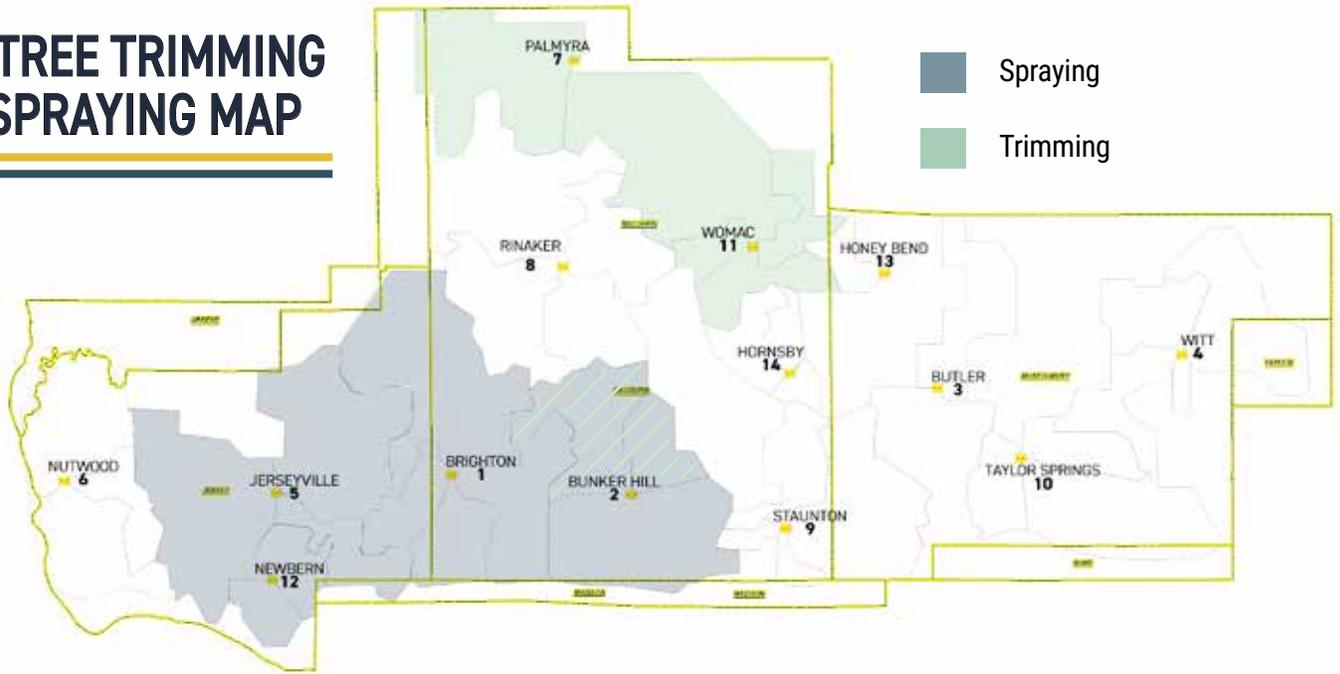
Plus, we all know it’s more cost-effective to undertake preventative maintenance than it is to make repairs after the fact. Drone inspections of power lines and vegetation allow us to reduce labor and equipment costs while bolstering reliability. We also use data and the technology to maximize the efficiency of our operation. This includes our vegetation management plan.

AFFORDABILITY

As you know, MJM is a not-for-profit cooperative, and that means we strive to keep our costs in check in order to keep our rates affordable. This extends to our approach to vegetation management. If trees grow too close to power lines, the potential for expensive repairs also increases. Effective tree trimming and other vegetation management efforts keep costs down for everyone.

Our community is a special place. We appreciate the beauty trees afford, but we also know our community depends on us to provide reliable energy. Through vegetation management, we are better able to keep the power lines clear, prepare for future weather events and secure the reliability of the grid.

2026 TREE TRIMMING AND SPRAYING MAP



2026 TRIMMING:

- **Womac North**
- **Bunker Hill North***
- **Palmyra**

* Spraying and Trimming



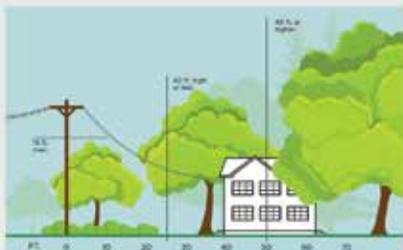
2026 SPRAYING:

- **Newbern**
- **Jerseyville**
- **Brighton**
- **Bunker Hill ***

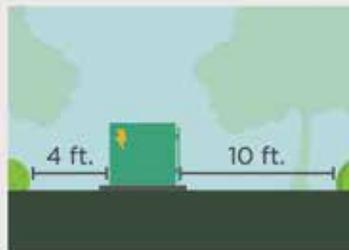
3 Ways to Help Limit Tree Trimming

Did you know electric utilities are required to trim trees and other types of vegetation that grow too close to overhead power lines? We know you love your trees, and we will do everything we can to avoid trimming them. Here's how you can help:

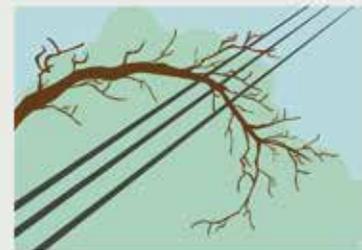
1. Plant trees in the right place. Trees that will be <40 ft. should be planted at least 25 ft. away from power lines (>40ft. should be at least 50 ft. away).



2. Don't block pad-mounted transformers. Plant shrubs at least 10 ft. away from transformer doors and 4 ft. from transformer sides.



3. Report dangerous branches. If you spot a tree or branch that is dangerously close to power lines, please let us know.



Trimming improves safety for all. Let's work together to enjoy the beauty of trees and reliable electricity.



RETIREMENT WELL DESERVED



In 1980, Lee Plummer joined MJM's Board of Directors and served as district one's representative for four years. He then transitioned into the role of MJM's legal counsel for the next 41 years until retiring at the end of December 2025. MJM's Board of Directors thank Attorney Lee Plummer for his 45 years of dedicated service to MJM!

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

As spring arrives, take advantage of milder temperatures to save energy at home. Open windows on pleasant days to bring in fresh air instead of running your HVAC system. It's also a great time to replace dirty air filters, which helps your system run more efficiently and improves indoor air quality. As daylight increases, turn off unnecessary lights and rely on natural sunlight when possible. Small seasonal adjustments like these can reduce energy use, lower monthly bills and help keep your home comfortable as winter transitions into spring.

