

# ALONG THE LINES



DEDICATED TO PROVIDING RELIABLE SERVICE FOR OUR MEMBERS.

**APRIL 2023**  
VOL.16, NO. 4

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APPRECIATION DAY**  
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## APRIL CALENDAR

- 1st: April Fools Day
- 3rd: Blue Ribbon Week Begins
- 5th: National Caramel Day
- 6th: Army Day
- 7th: **Office Closed - Good Friday**
- 9th: Easter Sunday
- 11th: National Pet Day
- 18th: Lineworker Appreciation Day
- 22nd: Earth Day
- 26th: Administrative Professionals Day
- 28th: Arbor Day

## UPCOMING

- May 29th: **Office Closed - Memorial Day**
- Jun. 8th: 2023 ANNUAL MEETING
- July 4th: **Office Closed**

### 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



# MJM LENDS A HAND

## CO-OP PRINCIPLE #7: CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY

On a cold, wet, and very windy day (March 3rd, 2023), three of our MJM employees got on their rain gear and headed over to Cross Church in Carlinville to help hand out food at the Drive-Up Food Giveaway. This giveaway was open to residents of Macoupin County and was provided by the Central Illinois Food Bank, a member of the Feeding America organization. Updates on when these events take place can be found on Cross Church's Facebook page or [centralilfoodbank.org](http://centralilfoodbank.org).

Central Illinois Foodbank Headquarters  
1937 East Cook  
Springfield, Illinois 62703  
Phone: 217 522.4022  
Fax: 217 522.6418  
Email: [info@centralilfoodbank.org](mailto:info@centralilfoodbank.org)



L to R: Conner, Andrew, and Mike ready to weather the storm.



## Dig Smart. Dig Safe.

Before you dig, call 811 or visit [call811.com](http://call811.com) to mark underground utility lines. 811 is a free service that helps keep our community safe.



April is National Safe Digging Month.

### THERE ARE FIVE STEPS TO SAFER DIGGING:

1. Pre-mark the proposed dig area with white paint or flags.
2. Call 811 or go online to submit your locate request before you dig. There is no charge for the service.
3. Wait the required amount of time (typically two business days).
4. Respect the marks and do not move any flags.
5. Dig with care. Avoid digging on top of or within 18–24 inches on all sides of utility marks, which may mean moving your digging project to another part of your yard.

For more information about electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org). For more information about 811, visit [call811.com](http://call811.com)

source: [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org)

# ALONGTHELINES

by MJM Electric Cooperative  
www.mjmec.coop

18300 Shipman Road (PO Box 80)  
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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

**CHAIRMAN:** W. Kay Schultz..... Godfrey  
**VICE CHAIRMAN:** Charles Huebener..... Brighton  
**SECRETARY:** Marcie Tonsor..... Jerseyville  
**TREASURER:** Robert Moore..... Medora  
 Robert Lehmann..... Girard  
 Tyler Heyen..... Raymond  
 Dwayne Milner..... Piasa  
 James R. Niemann..... Litchfield  
 Todd Stewart..... Nokomis

## STAFF

Joe Heyen.....President/CEO  
 Jeremy Pattillo.....Director of Finance and Accounting  
 Jennifer Peterson.....Executive Administrator  
 Matt Eisenmenger.....Director of Operations  
 Bob Brandon.....Director of Engineering

## EDITOR

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

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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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Teaching kids about safe outdoor play.

PLEASE RECYCLE



## ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS DAY

APRIL 26TH, 2023



The day recognizes and celebrates the work of secretaries, administrative assistants, receptionists, and other administrative support professionals. Central to any business, these professionals keep an office organized and efficient. We are thankful for the great team members we have here at MJM!

# CONGRATULATIONS

DIRECTOR JAMES NIEMANN



Board Director James Niemann (L) with Board Chairman W. Kay Schultz (R)

District Seven Board Director, James Niemann received his Director Gold Certificate renewed by the National Rural Electric Cooperatives Association (NRECA) at the February 2023 Board meeting.

To earn the Director Gold Certificate, Directors must first earn NRECA's Credentialed Cooperative Director Certificate and Board Leadership Certificate (BLC) plus three additional credits from BLC courses. The Director Gold Certificate program is geared toward Directors who are committed to continuing their education. By earning the Director Gold Certificate, Directors are taking initiative to be up to date on all Co-op matters and the best way to serve MJM's Members.



# MJM WELCOMES

NEW APPRENTICE LINEWORKERS



Tanner Mullen



Devon Ralston

MJM would like to welcome Tanner Mullen of Irving, and Devon Ralston of Bunker Hill to the team!

# WELCOME OUR NEW BOARD DIRECTOR

TODD STEWART - DISTRICT 8

MJM would like to extend a warm welcome to our newest Board Director, Todd Stewart.

Todd was born and raised in Nokomis and still lives there today. Todd lives 7 miles south of Nokomis with his wife Erika of 22 years, who Todd states, "is the glue that keeps this family together." Todd and Erika have two children; 19-year-old daughter Skylar is in her first year LLCC for Ag Business with hopes to transfer to Purdue, and 15-year-old son, Walker, a freshman at Nokomis High School that is very interested Agriculture and hopes to come back to the family farm.

"When I'm not serving on the MJM board I help run our family farm along my dad, mom, and cousin plus operate T.J. Trucking a small one truck company that hauls grain, rock, and lime for the past 25 years. I have been a coach for youth leagues, helped with FFA activities, and a member of St. Louis Catholic Church. My hobbies include golf, spending time with family and friends and traveling with my wife. I look forward to serving this board and helping our cooperative grow and provide the best service at affordable prices."



# CONGRATULATIONS

## ETHAN BLEVINS

FORESTRY APPRENTICE

On February 20th, Ethan Blevins from Gillespie became a full-time Forestry Apprentice for MJM after completing the five-month intern program. We'd like to officially welcome Ethan to the MJM Forestry Crew!



# EFFICIENCY UPGRADES

## HELP YOU SAVE EVERY SEASON

BY ABBY BERRY (NRECA)

Spring and summer are opportune times for home upgrades and DIY projects. If you're planning to make improvements to your home, consider upgrades that promote better efficiency. Here are a few projects that can help you save energy and money--and increase the comfort of your home.

Installing a smart thermostat is one of the simplest ways to manage home energy use and keep summer bills in check. Smart thermostats are easy to install and allow you to control your heating and cooling system from your phone. You can purchase an ENERGY STAR®-certified smart thermostat for as low as \$100, which can save you 8% on annual heating and cooling costs, about \$50 per year. This upgrade will quickly pay for itself, and you'll gain insight into better ways to heat and cool your home.

Speaking of smart, additional devices like smart LED bulbs also offer convenient control and help boost energy savings at home. With smart lighting, you can set a schedule for when and how your lights should be turned on or off. And the next time you head out to run errands and realize you left the lights on, all you have to do is turn them off through your phone. Smart lights come in a variety of shapes, colors and brightness levels--and you can purchase bulbs for indoor or outdoor use. Schedule outdoor smart lights to illuminate your home at night and when you're out of town for better security.

While it's not as trendy as incorporating smart technologies, sealing air leaks around your home is a simple, effective way to save energy and lower your bills. Applying new (or replacing old) weather stripping around doors and windows can instantly make your home more comfortable and reduce energy waste. Applying caulk to fill gaps can also improve the seal of your home. Caulk can be applied to a variety of areas, including windows, doors, bathtubs and sinks.

If your home feels too warm during summer (and too chilly during winter) even after you've sealed with weather stripping and caulk, your home may need additional insulation. Insulation is considered a more expensive efficiency upgrade; however, if your home is under-insulated, additional insulation can make a big impact on reducing energy use and costs. The cost of



Photo Source: Erik McLean, Unsplash

new insulation depends on a variety of factors like materials, size of the home and whether you use a contractor. Typically, the project costs can be recouped in a few years and your home will immediately feel more comfortable.

Of course, there are additional efficiency upgrades that can make a big impact on energy use, like replacing old appliances with ENERGY-STAR® models or replacing old, leaky windows with new, energy efficient windows. But these upgrades can be a bit pricey.

If you're wanting to make your home more energy efficient but you're not sure where to start, your best bet is to enlist the help of an expert to conduct an energy audit of your home. An energy audit can easily identify areas to boost efficiency, and then you can determine the projects you want to tackle first based on your budget and needs.



Photo Source: Scott Van Osdol

# LINEWORKER APPRECIATION DAY

APRIL 18TH, 2023

BY: [SAFEELECTRICITY.ORG](http://SAFEELECTRICITY.ORG)

Electric lineworkers provide an essential service: They install and maintain overhead and underground power lines that keep electricity flowing. These specialized workers are on call 24/7 in case severe storms or other circumstances cause the power to go out.

Lineworkers work with high-voltage electricity, often at great heights, in all kinds of weather conditions. Maintaining the power grid is physically demanding. To become proficient, most lineworkers go through a technical training program and first learn on the job as apprentices under the careful eye of seasoned lineworkers who have earned journeyman status.

Electric power line installers and repairers held approximately 126,600 jobs in 2021, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Nearly half of these employees worked for electric power generation, transmission and distribution utilities.

## SAFETY COMES FIRST

Lineworkers spend numerous hours in safety training each year and must understand and apply crucial safety regulations.

Protective clothing is required to shield lineworkers since they work around high voltages. Collectively, gear components can weigh up to 45 pounds.

According to the U.S. BLS, electric power line installers and repairers typically:

- **Install, maintain or repair the power lines that move electricity.**
- **Identify defective devices, voltage regulators, transformers and switches.**
- **Inspect and test power lines and auxiliary equipment.**
- **String (install) power lines between poles, towers and buildings.**



- **Climb poles and transmission towers and use truck-mounted buckets to access equipment.**
- **Operate power equipment when installing and repairing poles, towers and lines.**
- **Know and implement safety standards and procedures.**

When a problem is reported, lineworkers must identify the cause and fix it. This usually involves diagnostic testing using specialized equipment and repair work. To work on poles, they usually use bucket trucks to raise themselves to the top of the structure, although all lineworkers must be adept at climbing poles and towers when necessary. Workers use specialized safety equipment to keep them from falling when climbing utility poles and towers.

Storms and other natural disasters can cause extensive damage to power lines. When power is lost, line repairers must work safely and efficiently to restore service. We salute our lineworkers who work around the clock to keep the power on. Their safety, as well as yours, is our top priority.

*"Behind every lineworker, there is a family waiting for them to come home safe."*



# PLAY IT SAFE AROUND POWER LINES

BY: [SAFEELECTRICITY.ORG](http://SAFEELECTRICITY.ORG)

Digging holes, climbing trees, flying kites – outdoor play often creates beautiful childhood memories. Before hitting the great outdoors, discuss electrical safety with your children.

## **FLYING FUN**

While flying kites, model airplanes, remote-control flying toys and drones, stay in large, open areas (such as parks or fields), far away from power lines. If an item gets caught in a power line, teach children to never try to retrieve it. Instead, an adult should call their electric utility for help.

## **GENERAL OUTDOOR SAFETY TIPS**

Other important safety guidelines for kids and adults alike include:

- **Never throw objects at power lines.**
- **Stay far away from downed, damaged or low-hanging power lines. An adult should call 9-1-1 to report a downed or damaged line.**
- **Be cautious after a severe storm that caused a power outage. Downed power lines could be hidden under water, snow or storm debris. Wait to go outside until power has been restored.**
- **Do not climb, sit or play on padmount transformers (green boxes).**
- **Do not climb trees that have overhead power lines near or running through them.**

## **POOLSIDE**

When spending time by the pool, look overhead when using pool skimmers or other long objects to be sure you are not getting close to an overhead power line. If you are swimming and feel a prickly or tingling sensation, do not stay in the pool. There could be a stray electric current from a downed power line or a damaged electrical device.

Also, never play in a flooded street or ditch; a downed power line could be hidden by the water and fallen debris.



## TALK TO YOUR CHILDREN

about safe outdoor play

## **PREVENTION IS KEY**

Electric shock and injuries are often preventable. Empower your family with electrical safety knowledge to avoid preventable electric injuries. For more information about electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

KEEP KIDS SAFE AROUND

## Trees and Power Lines

When kids take a break from gaming or other devices, they may head outdoors to play. If they will be climbing trees, scope out the area first to ensure that the treetops do not have power lines running through them.

Not realizing power lines are energized, children may reach up to grab a line or accidentally come too close to it when they are playing or sitting high up in a tree.



Even if the power lines are not touching the tree, contact could happen once weight is added to the branch.

In addition, teach kids to fly kites, drones and remote control planes or toys in open areas free from power lines.

If a toy or other object lands in a substation, please call your electric utility to retrieve the item. Never approach the fence or try to enter the area.

Take time to teach children and teens how to respect and identify potential electrical hazards.



Learn more at [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org)



## MEMBER TRADING POST

**FOR SALE:** 10in table saw, bandsaw w/ cabinet, miter saw w/ workbench. \$300.  
Call: 217-456-8001

**FOR SALE:** Men's XL Harley Davidson Jacket and Winter Gloves, barely worn (1 season), liner included: \$300.  
Insulated white Garage Door, new in box, 8'x10', track & hardware included, ordered through Wayne Dalton Doors: \$800  
Call: 618-791-7464

**FOR SALE:** For Sale: 8' Grass-works 3pt tractor mount herbicide weed wiper. \$3,500.00  
Call: 618-600-3116

**WANTED:** Seeking a caregiver for 14 year old handicapped boy. Must be able to assist in walking and bathroom aid. Call for more details 217-320-8971

**FOR SALE:** 1965 Case Tracker, Diesel motor, 3pt hitch, good condition, good tires, 4 speed transmission, power steering, ready to work. \$3800  
Call: 618-372-8411

**FOR SALE:** Kerosene Heater 120,000 BTU. Beanie Babies for sale too. Call:217-324-6766

**WANTING TO BUY:** Small, 3 point rear tiller.  
Call: 217-473-1245

**FOR SALE:** Dress Cowboy boots, size 8.5 D, worn some \$50. Acme still in box, size 8.5 D \$100. Western Saddle with new bridle \$580. (Cash Only)  
"Bush Hog" brand Rotary mower, 7ft, pull type, slip clutch, stump jumper, hard wheel, ....  
.....hydraulic cylinder and hoses. (Cash only) Can send pictures of any item(s) listed.  
Call or text: 618-806-5746

**FOR SALE:** Ferguson 35 Deluxe Tractor, 12 Volt System, High and Low transmission, 3pt hitch, original paint, runs great, great tires, new battery, all-around good little tractor. \$3500  
Call: 618-402-4420