

# ALONG THE LINES



DEDICATED TO PROVIDING RELIABLE SERVICE FOR OUR MEMBERS.

**DECEMBER 2024**

VOL.17, NO. 12

**CAPITAL CREDITS**

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## DECEMBER CALENDAR



December is Safe Toys & Gifts Month

Dec 2nd: Cyber Monday

Dec 7th: Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day

Dec 21th: First Day of Winter

Dec 24 & 25th: **MJM Office Closed**

Dec 31 & Jan 1: **MJM Office Closed**

# HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

### 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

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CARLINVILLE, IL 62626

WWW.MJMEC.COOP



# CAPITAL CREDITS: GIVING BACK IS THE COOPERATIVE WAY



BY MJM PRESIDENT/CEO, JOE HEYEN



The holiday season brings a spirit of generosity and compassion. It is a time to reflect on our many blessings and uplift those in need. While this is certainly a special time of year, cooperatives like MJM are deeply rooted in giving back to their local communities year-round.

Our mission is reliable power. Our purpose is people-- the members we are proud to serve. That is why we support local charity events and partner with local economic development organizations, to make a positive, meaningful impact on our community. You help us power that purpose, too. MJM's Operation Roundup program is made possible through members' participation in "rounding up" electric bills to the next dollar amount. Your generous contributions support local charitable organizations and community services.

Another way MJM gives back is by investing in tomorrow's leaders. Through presentations at elementary schools, sponsoring our local FFA & 4-H programs, investing in the Macoupin/Jersey/Montgomery Youth CEO programs, offer annual scholarship opportunities, and participate in the Electric Cooperative "Youth Tour" program. We aim to empower students for a brighter future. When we invest in our local youth, we strengthen the fabric of our community.

As a not-for-profit electric cooperative, we believe in giving credit where credit is due--to the members who shape our co-op. One of the ways we do this is through capital credits. Because MJM operates at cost, we give cash back to our members rather than outside investors or shareholders.

## HERE'S HOW CAPITAL CREDITS WORK:

MJM members use the electricity we provide and pay their monthly bills, and we track their business with the co-op over time. MJM pays all operating expenses throughout the year, and if any operating revenue is leftover, we allocate it as capital credits. When financial conditions permit, the co-op's board of directors votes to pay capital credits back to the members. MJM sends you

a check/applies a credit to your energy bill. Since 2013, MJM has returned \$5,854,086.88 to our local members.

Capital credits are just one of the many benefits of co-op membership. Giving back to our local members instead of outside parties is one of the many aspects that set cooperatives apart from other types of businesses.

Our members guide every decision we make and are the reason our co-op exists. To us, you are more than a customer. This holiday season, we hope you're proud to be part of a community-focused co-op that puts people before profits. From your friends at MJM, we hope you have a bright, blessed holiday season.

To learn more about capital credits or ways we give back to local communities, visit [www.mjmec.coop](http://www.mjmec.coop). See page 5 of this newsletter for a 2024 Capital Credits update.



# ALONGTHELINES

by MJM Electric Cooperative  
www.mjmec.coop

18300 Shipman Road, PO Box 80  
Carlinville, IL 62626

Office: 1-217-707-6156

## 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..... District 1  
**VICE CHAIRMAN:** Charles Huebener..... District 3  
**SECRETARY:** Marcie Tonsor..... District 9  
**TREASURER:** Todd Stewart..... District 8  
 Robert Lehmann..... District 4  
 Tyler Heyen..... District 6  
 Dwayne Milner..... District 2  
 James Niemann..... District 7  
 (Vacant)..... (District 5)

## STAFF

Joe Heyen.....President/CEO  
 Brian Gunning.....Finance and Accounting Manager  
 Jennifer Peterson.....Office Manager  
 Matt Eisenmenger.....Operations Manager  
 Bob Brandon.....Right of Way Manager  
 Martin Hinton.....Engineering Manager

## EDITOR

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

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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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## MJM OFFICE HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

OUR OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED:

**DECEMBER 24 & 25,  
DECEMBER 31 & JANUARY 1**

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS!**



We wish you and your family a very blessed holiday season!

*~ MJM Board of Directors,  
Staff, & Employees*

# FIGHT THE WINTER CHILL AND SAVE ENERGY



BY MJM COMMUNICATIONS & MEMBER SERVICE COORDINATOR, ERIC COOPER



We all have our favorite season. Some people love crisp, cool weather and bundling up under a favorite blanket, while others prefer the warm temperatures summer brings and all fun outdoor activities that go with it.

But there's one thing we can all agree on: high winter bills are never fun. MJM is here to help you find ways to manage your home energy use and keep winter bills in check. Here are five tips to help increase your home's energy efficiency this winter:

**1. Mind the thermostat.** This is one of the easiest ways to manage your home energy use. We recommend setting your thermostat to 68 degrees (or lower) when you're home. When you're sleeping or away for an extended period of time, try setting it between 58 and 62 degrees; there's no need to heat your home when you're away or sleeping and less active.

**2. Button up your home.** The Department of Energy estimates that air leaks account for **24% to 40%** of the energy used for heating and cooling a home. Caulking and weather stripping around windows and doors is another simple, cost-effective way to increase comfort and save energy. If you can feel drafts while standing near a window or door, it likely needs to be sealed.

**3. Use window coverings wisely.** Open blinds, drapes or other window coverings during the day to allow natural sunlight in to warm your home. Close them at night to keep the cold, drafty air out. If you feel cold air around windows, consider hanging curtains or drapes in a thicker material; heavier window coverings can make a significant difference in blocking cold outdoor air.

**4. Consider your approach to appliance use.** When combined, appliances and electronics account for a significant chunk of our home energy use, so assess how efficiently

you're using them. For example, if you're running the dishwasher or clothes washer, only wash full loads. Look for electronic devices that consume energy even when they're not in use, like phone chargers or game consoles. Every little bit helps, so unplug them to save energy.

**5. Think outside the box.** If you're still feeling chilly at home, think of other ways to warm up--beyond dialing up the thermostat. Add layers of clothing, wear thick socks and bundle up under blankets. You can even add layers to your home! If you have hard-surface flooring, consider purchasing an area rug to block cold air that leaks in through the floor.

Winter months often bring some of the highest energy bills of the year. By being proactive about saving energy, you can increase the comfort of your home and reduce monthly bills.

Visit our website for additional energy-saving tips:  
<https://mjmec.coop/saving-energy-101>





# WELCOMES

# 2024 CAPITAL CREDITS UPDATE



**BRIAN PAGE**  
Journeyman Forester  
Morrisonville, IL

Brian brings more than 16 years experience in line clearance trimming to the MJM Forestry Crew.



**TYLER STRACK**  
Apprentice Forester  
Plainview, IL

Tyler began as an Intern Forester in April 2024. He excelled during his 1,000 hour internship, and is now a full time employee at MJM!

Both Brian and Tyler began their roles in the MJM Forestry Department on October 14th, 2024. Join us in welcoming Brian and Tyler to the cooperative team.

## MJM to return \$647,708.82 in Capital Credit Refunds: 1985, 1986, & partial from 1987

In a Cooperative like MJM Electric, you are a member-Owner of the business. One major difference between a Cooperative and an investor-owned utility is that you see ownership in the business through capital credits. When capital credits are returned to members, you see the return on your investment. This is one of the benefits of being served by a non-profit utility!

Many MJM members do not realize that we are a not-for-profit utility. Every month you pay your bill, you are helping to finance, not just the purchase and production of power, but improvements to the system that keep the lights on. You are investing in YOUR Cooperative. Your immediate payback is in the form of increased reliability and affordable rates.

During the October 24, 2024, Board meeting, a motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously, to retire \$647,708.82. This amount represents 100% of 1985's & 1986's capital credits, and 80% of 1987's capital credits.

The 1985, 1986, and (partial) 1987 capital credits will show as a bill credit on current MJM members' December 2nd, 2024, billing statement. Active members who have been named as an heir of an estate and members who are no longer on MJM lines are receiving this capital credit refund via check. Please note, if a final refund payment is under \$10, a check will not be reissued but will be donated back to the Cooperative as permanent equity.

Don't forget that even if you have moved away from the Cooperative lines, you are still eligible to receive your capital credits. Always make sure that we have a current address on file. If you have any questions, please call the billing department at 217-707-6156.

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

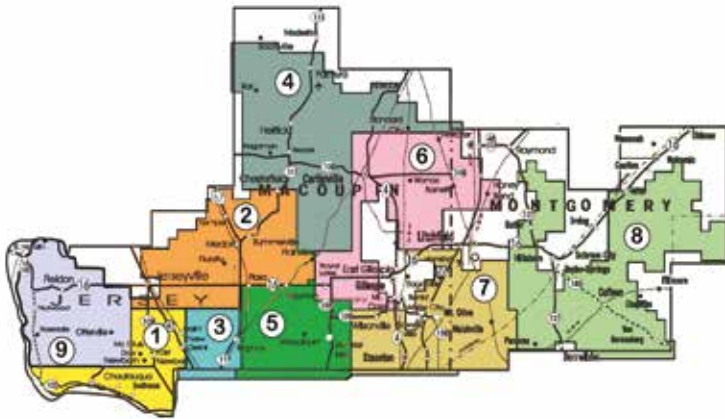
If you're planning to purchase electronic gifts this holiday season, look for the ENERGY STAR® label, which indicates higher energy efficiency performance.

Electronics that receive the ENERGY STAR® rating are up to 25% more efficient than standard products. This holiday season, give the gift of energy savings with ENERGY STAR®-rated electronics and equipment.

source: [energystar.gov](http://energystar.gov)

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2025 ELECTION DETAILS

# 2025 SCHOLARSHIPS REMINDER



Your cooperative's Directors are MJM members just like you. They are elected by you and your fellow co-op members to set policy and govern the co-op. Nine directors sit on the board, residing in and representing a specific district in the cooperative. An MJM member is eligible to run for Director if they reside in the appropriate district and meet additional requirements as listed in MJM's bylaws, Section 4.02 – Qualifications; this document is available on our website ([www.mjmec.coop](http://www.mjmec.coop)).

Your Board of Directors is chosen through elections each year at the annual meeting. Each of the nine directors is elected for a three-year term and may be re-elected. Majority vote at the annual meeting decides who is elected. Terms are staggered in which three Directors are elected each year. On June 12, 2025, members will vote for Directors to serve in Districts 1, 6, and 9.

Prior to each annual meeting of members, an Election and Credentials (E&C) committee is appointed by the Board. A district candidate must be accompanied by a petition signed by 35 or more MJM members. Please note, official petition forms may be obtained from the co-op directly and must be submitted to the co-op between March 14th and April 28th, 2025. After the deadline date, the E&C committee meets with each petitioning nominee and reviews their qualifications before certifying them as a qualified candidate. Please see our Bylaws document, Article IV (pages 12-19) for more details. [mjmec.coop/how-were-governed](http://mjmec.coop/how-were-governed)

Each Director represents the members of his or her district. Working closely with the CEO/President, the Board ensures the cooperative provides quality service to its members.

The Illinois Electric Cooperative (IEC) Memorial Scholarship Program awards \$2,500 scholarships annually to deserving students in the “electric cooperative family” entering college to assist them with their educational costs. MJM also awards two \$1,000 scholarships, chosen by a review committee at the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives from these applications:

**10** scholarships are awarded to high school students who are the child of an Illinois electric cooperative member receiving service from the cooperative.

**(Deadline to apply Dec. 31, 2024).**

**5** scholarships are reserved for high school students enrolling full-time at a two-year Illinois community college who are the child of Illinois electric cooperative members, employees, or directors.

**(Deadline to apply Dec. 31, 2024).**

**1** scholarship, the Earl W. Struck Memorial Scholarship, is awarded to a high school student who is the child of an Illinois electric cooperative employee or director.

**(Deadline to apply Dec. 31, 2024).**

**1** scholarship, the LaVern and Nola McEntire Lineworker's Scholarship, is awarded to a student to attend the lineworker's school conducted by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives in conjunction with Lincoln Land Community College, Springfield, IL.

**(Deadline to apply Apr. 30, 2025).**

For more information about the IEC Memorial Scholarships, please contact: MJM Communications & Member Service Coordinator, Eric Cooper at 217-707-6156.

Application Links:  
<https://mjmec.coop/scholarships>



# USE A SPACE HEATER WITH CARE

by [SafeElectricity.org](https://www.SafeElectricity.org)

Electric space heaters can help warm a room quickly. However, they can be as dangerous as convenient if used improperly. Heating equipment accounts for 13% of home fires.

Safe Electricity urges everyone in the home to understand the importance of using space heaters safely:

- **Make sure the space heater is clean** and in good condition. Cords should not be frayed, brittle, or cracked.
- **Purchase only space heaters that have been safety tested and UL approved.** Make sure the unit has an emergency tip-over shut-off feature and heating element guards. Read and follow the manufacturer's instructions for operation and care.
- **Make sure your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are in good working condition** before using a space heater.
- **Place the heater out of high-traffic areas** and on a level, hard, non-flammable floor surface—NOT on carpets, furniture, or countertops.
- **Never use them to thaw pipes, cook food, or dry clothing or towels.** Space heaters have one purpose—to provide supplemental heating.
- **Remember to keep space heaters at least three feet from combustible liquids,** like fuel, spray cans, and paint, and flammable items such as draperies, blankets, and sofas.
- **Never allow pets or children near an electric heater.** Accidental contact could cause serious shock or burns.
- **Plug space heaters directly into the outlet,** and never use an extension cord or multiple plugs.
- **Do not overload circuits.** Make sure not to plug the unit into the same circuit as other electric appliances.
- **If your space heater is plugged into a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) and it trips,** don't assume there is something wrong with the GFCI. Immediately stop using the heater until a professional can check it— if not, a serious shock could occur.
- **Replace older space heaters with newer, safer models.**
- **Always turn off space heaters when not in use.** Never leave one of these devices on unattended or after going to bed.



**Do not attempt to warm your entire home using only space heaters.** Space heaters are useful in small areas, such as a study or bedroom room. However, if you need to keep large areas warm, your home heating system will do the job more efficiently. Each space heater running for a full hour uses approximately 1.5kWh in addition to regular usage, which can result in higher energy bills.

If shopping around for a space heater, look for one that has guards from heating elements and automatically shuts off if it is tipped over or overheating. Also be sure to check for safety certification marks to verify that the product has been tested for safety. If a certification mark is unfamiliar, check for the legitimacy online. Some common, legitimate marks are UL, CSA, and ETL.

**Many people also use electric blankets to keep warm during cold winter nights.**

- Before plugging in electric blankets, check for any damage and inspect cord for frays, cracks, or cuts.
- Do not tuck electric blankets under the mattress and place nothing on top of the blanket while it's in use, including comforters and bedspreads.
- Don't allow pets to sleep on the electric blanket.

To learn more on how to avoid electrical hazards while staying warm this winter, visit [SafeElectricity.org](https://www.SafeElectricity.org).

# 2024 OPERATION ROUND UP RECAP

## THANK YOU MJM MEMBERS!



The Holidays often bring a season of generosity with them and in this day and age, that care and generosity is needed more than ever. One of the principles that cooperative across the United States share is "Concern for Community." Within this principle, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities. For Operation Round Up (ORU), and the MJM Members that participate in the program, it was the most charitable year ever since its introduction in 2020!

This year, not-for-profit organizations in Macoupin, Jersey, and Montgomery Counties received a total of \$55,358. The ORU Grant Review Board, made up of MJM members from different Board Districts, reviewed a total of 21 applications in the 4 review cycles of 2024. A list of the approved 18 applicants that were awarded funding is below:

- Here's to Reading - \$3,708**
- CASA (Jersey & Greene County) - \$2,500**
- Jr. Panthers Football - \$2,500**
- Coal County Sports Complex Foundation - \$2,500**
- Zion Lutheran School, Litchfield - \$5,000**
- The Restore Network - \$3,000**
- Got Faith: Feed & Inspire the Hungry - \$2,400**
- First Baptist Church of Jerseyville - \$5,000**
- MacGomery Camp - \$5,000**
- Carlinville Winning Communities - \$2,000**
- Southside Church of Litchfield - \$2,500**
- CASA (Jersey & Greene County) - \$2,000**
- Tri-County Charitable Ministries - \$2,500**
- Catholic Charities Carlinville - \$5,000**
- SCIL Regional Workforce Training Ctr. - \$3,000**
- Macoupin County Art Collective - \$1,750**
- Carlinville Christmas on the Square - \$5,000**

If you would like to be a committee member for the ORU Grant Review Board for your Board District, please contact the MJM Office at **217-707-6156** or email **roundup@mjmec.coop**, and we will send you the application. The Committee meets 4 times a year to determine which organizations within the MJM service territory receive funding from the ORU program. You must be currently giving to the ORU program on your monthly billing to be considered for a position on the committee.

MJM would like to give a heartfelt thank you to all the members that make this program possible. Your pennies given per month have great power to give hope and make a big impact on your communities. We cannot wait to see the positive outcomes that Operation Round Up 2025 brings!



***Next Deadline:***  
***January 6, 2025***

Section 501(c)(3), 501(c), and 509(a)(1) non-for-profits organizations within the MJM service territory are encouraged to apply for an Operation Round Up (ORU) grant.

Please send all applications, additional forms, and paperwork to Operation Round Up, P.O. Box 80, Carlinville, IL, 62626. Once the application and information is completed and submitted to MJM, the information will then be considered by the Grant Review Board for approval of funds.

<https://mjmec.coop/operation-round>



# HURRICANE HELENE

## MJM CREW ASSISTS RESTORATION EFFORTS

On September 26, 2024, Florida's "Big Bend" area off the Gulf of Mexico experienced the landfall of a Category 4 Hurricane: Helene, at its peak intensity. Maximum sustained winds of 140mph were recorded as it approached Perry, Florida! Helene weakened as it moved rapidly inland and degenerated to a "post-tropical storm" as it entered Tennessee on September 27th. Before fully dissipating on September 29th, this devastating tropical cyclone caused widespread destruction and fatalities across Southeastern United States. Helene also spawned many tornadoes, and the rainfall caused extreme flooding, particularly in eastern Tennessee and North Carolina. Millions of people in these regions were without power; poles were snapped, wires and transformers ripped from the poles, and roadways to get to some of these areas were destroyed.



MJM at Jackson Energy, KY

More than a dozen states—including Texas, Oklahoma, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Missouri, Arkansas, Iowa, Ohio, Alabama, Maryland and New Jersey—deployed mutual aid crews to help with power restoration. MJM sent a four-man crew to the Kentucky and Tennessee Jackson Energy Electric Cooperative area. After power was restored in this region, our team moved on to the Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative area, headquartered in Lenoir, North Carolina - 70 miles northeast of Asheville, NC; an area that had severe damage and loss of life from the storms and flooding.



Blue Ridge Energy, NC



Blue Ridge Energy, NC

At the peak of the damage caused by Helene, Blue Ridge Energy had over 63,000 members without power. An estimated 6,800 miles of the co-op's 8,500 miles of line were damaged and the roads to get to certain areas in their service territory were completely gone. Over 500 lineworkers traveled to the



Night crews at Blue Ridge Energy, NC



Lenoir area to assist with the restoration efforts of Blue Ridge Energy. These lineworker crews split into day and night crews to ensure non-stop restoration efforts, and power was fully restored to Blue Ridge Energy's grid on October 14th. As outage numbers leveled back down to a manageable number for Blue Ridge Energy, they were able to release the mutual aid crews, and MJM's four-man crew arrived back home safe and sound to their families on October 11th.

# SOLAR FAQ

In the business world, there is a saying that goes, "if you don't tell your story, someone else will." In today's realm of an extra noisy communication environment, where a simple piece of misinformation can spread like wildfire through the already scorched earth of social media platforms, it is often harder to get the non-subjective facts out in front of negative perceptions and opinions once they are released into the wild. When it comes to renewable energy, the narrative has gotten away from the electric distribution cooperatives.

Here at MJM, we have a little over 240 members now that have installed solar. When distributed energy installations (solar, wind, etc.) were originally approved by the MJM Board, MJM did mirror the Investor-Owned regulation, by taking on solar capacity equaling 1% of our total load, and giving a Net Metering (or 1:1) billing credit to the members that installed at that time. This capacity level was reached by mid-2016. These accounts (remaining 42 accounts) had a "grandfathered in" period of Net Metering that is ending in the first quarter of 2025.

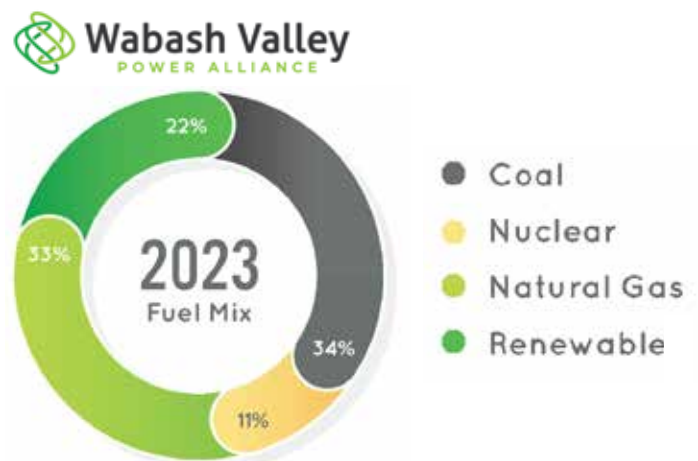
Net Billing is the name of the current billing option for MJM members that install distributed energy and is based on the national market value projections for purchasing & selling energy production. This value of energy (sold and bought in Megawatt hours) fluctuates, sometimes hourly within the national energy market due to what is available/ready and what is needed in the different regions nationwide. Cost averages are calculated annually to set a more stable rate/cost. This averaged value is called "avoided cost," and it can be summarized as "energy-only." It is the cost of the produced energy units without extra costs. Currently, as this article is being written, the price for our region - Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) - is .02066/kWh (\$20.66/MWh) and the projected average for the year was set at .03239/kWh (\$32.39/MWh). This is the price a Generation/Transmission company or co-op like our power provider, Wabash Valley Power Alliance, would purchase extra power needed (shortage on what they produced themselves) or sell extra power they produced do not need (over produced themselves), back to the national energy market. If your eyes haven't glazed over yet and you are still reading along, thank you and congratulations, but that was only about half of this very dense and complex subject.



## Will the "Power Supplier Energy" or "Distribution Energy" costs on my bill go down as well when the avoided cost energy price goes down (or up)?

No, it will not. These costs and rates are from a different entity than the "energy-only/avoided cost" energy purchased in the national market. Generation & Transmission Co-ops like Wabash Valley Power Alliance produce and provide power to their members; electric distribution Co-ops like MJM. These "G&Ts" produce their own energy, purchase and develop new energy assets, have facilities, equipment, employees, and all the costs that come along with those items. Wabash provides contracted, 24/7 power for 23 electric distribution Co-ops in Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri. These energy costs do include Transmission and other fees that are charged to the Co-ops in both "fixed/base" costs (stable, do not change) and "variable" costs Megawatt/Kilowatt hours.

Wabash has its own energy production assets, Fuel Mix, and continues to make great strides in reaching NET Zero/decarbonization by 2050; they currently have over 600MW of renewable energy assets (large-scale solar, wind farms, landfill methane capture) in their fuel mix:



## Why doesn't MJM offer the same 1:1 as Ameren IL?

For this answer, it is important to understand the differences between a not-for-profit, rural electric Distribution Cooperative like MJM and an Investor-Owned electric Transmission/Generation/Distribution company like Ameren IL. Several things can be identified within the names and descriptions of the two alone. Having only Distribution means MJM does not have energy production assets or energy storage assets, we only have the ability to distribute energy to our 7,800 members from our substations across 2,119 miles of powerlines. Ameren IL can provide its 1.2 million customers with the same distribution from their substations, across their 46,000 miles of powerlines, but also the storage of energy produced from renewable resources that either Ameren IL or Ameren IL customers own. The numeral difference between 7,800 and 1.2 million is impressive enough, but Ameren IL's 1.2 million has some major extra "weight" to this scale. Ameren IL services densely populated areas/territories (towns, cities) that include all the heavy energy purchases and loads from every business, in every town & city, across their territory/region in three-fourths of Illinois. MJM's 7,800 members are 85% residential, 15% commercial loads and we serve roughly 4 members per mile in mainly 3 Illinois counties. More revenue obviously frees an organization's annual budget up to offer many different programs and incentives. The locally owned businesses & shops, for example, cannot offer the same prices and services as a Wal-Mart and/or Amazon. Each entity has its own strengths and weaknesses; good or bad, it is simply what they can accomplish with the tools and resources that they have.

Moving past the obvious size and load differences, being a member of a Cooperative means the members (you) own and have democratic control over the co-op. Investor-Owned companies are owned by the investors and the investors have the deciding votes. Within Ameren IL's billing, there are fees and rates that have been put in place to subsidize the costs of solar arrays coming online; each customer pays a variable cost based on kWh usage to help support the renewable energy and energy efficiency rebate programs. Such policies and fees could be voted on at MJM, however, to pass, would require a majority vote from the Board of Directors that are MJM members from the same districts you live in, not investors that could be from anywhere in the United States. Additionally, at the beginning of 2025, Ameren IL is moving to a "supply-only" buyback that gives credits towards supply and transmission billing items, due to the expiration of an Illinois incentive Law passed in 2021. Any new installations will receive "supply-only" credits, while the current solar customers will still be grandfathered in for 30 years to Net-Metering.

## Isn't the price of energy going up?

It certainly could in years to come during the energy source and decarbonization shift. The price of the equipment to provide energy has and will likely continue to go up. Transformers, poles, trucks, wire, and other items needed for the operation and maintaining of a distribution grid have gone up significantly since 2020. Transmission fees have also increased with the addition of new builds and upgrading of old Transmission lines and corridors. The fixed and operations costs more than variable or energy usage costs have increased in recent years.



## Recent MJM Solar Policy Changes:

In May 2024, the MJM Board of Directors voted on setting a "basement floor" on the avoided cost credit/MGEN rate to combat the energy market's massive fluctuations. Other Illinois Cooperatives offer this as well. The current excess energy that is not used by a member's home is bought back at 0.05/kWh (current year's market average is 0.03239/kWh). If in any given year the market energy rate goes up, MJM will set the buyback rate at the higher rate, but if it lessens, our buyback rate will not go under 0.05/kWh. Banked credits will now be reset on the last day of February as opposed to December. This allows the built-up credits to be used in the months of January and February, when most arrays are not producing as much.

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At MJM, we strive to provide our members with reliable service by keeping the lights on, keeping you informed on energy topics like renewables, efficiency, and what your electric co-op is doing to keep energy rates stable. Hopefully this article has shed some light on this renewable energy topic at your cooperative and the differences between an electric cooperative and an investor-owned utility corporation. It is a large subject matter that involves many different areas of the energy industry and cannot be summed up in a few sentences or a social media post.

If you have any questions about renewable energy installations, we have an interconnection packet and guidance available on our website: ([mjmec.coop/member-owned-generation-wind-solar-etc](https://www.mjmec.coop/member-owned-generation-wind-solar-etc)).

You can also contact our office at 217-707-6156 or email [solar@mjmec.coop](mailto:solar@mjmec.coop).



## MEMBER TRADING POST

**FOR SALE or TRADE:** Yamaha XT600 motorcycle. Excellent condition, \$1,300. Call 217-456-9105

**FOR SALE:** Split Seasoned Fire Wood, pickup truck bed loads - \$120 or call for delivery price: Call Leroy @ 618-972-4658

**FOR SALE:** Ford 2000 tractor with 5ft bush hog - \$5,000.  
2004 Challenger Camper, 31ft, with 5th wheel hitch - \$8,500.  
Litchfield area. Call 217-313-3839



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