

ALONG THE LINES



DEDICATED TO SAFELY PROVIDING RELIABLE SERVICE TO OUR MEMBERS.

JULY 2025

VOL.18, NO. 7

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UTILITY SCAM**

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JULY CALENDAR



July is National Grilling Month

July 4: Office Closed

July 5: International Day of Cooperatives

July 15: National Pet Fire Safety Day

July 20: National Ice Cream Day

UPCOMING

Sept. 4: Office Closed-Labor Day

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



DON'T FALL VICTIM TO UTILITY SCAMS



BY MJM PRESIDENT/CEO, JOE HEYEN



Every day, millions of Americans are targeted by scammers through phone calls, emails, text messages, online or in person. Scammers' tactics can change daily, which is why it's important for consumers to stay on top of the latest scam reports from local and national news outlets, as well as your local utility companies.

Over the past few years, several MJM Members were targeted through a phone scam where the scammers demanded immediate payment and threatened to shut off power if the money was not received. Remember, MJM will never call you and demand immediate payment without notice.

We want you to be aware of two trending scam tactics. One is **the overpayment trick**, where a scammer contacts you and claims that you have overpaid your utility bill. The scammer will say they need your personal banking information to deposit the credit back to your checking account. Don't fall for this scam! If you make an overpayment on your energy bill, MJM will automatically apply the credit to your account, which will carry over to your next billing cycle.

Another trending scam is **smishing** (short for SMS phishing). Many consumers know to watch out for suspicious emails, but we tend to trust text messages sent to our smartphones. **Always question suspicious texts**, especially from someone claiming to represent a utility. MJM will only send you important updates via text if you have signed up for SmartHub alerts. These are just a couple examples of trending scams, so it's important to watch for any red flags.



Here are a few reminders on how to take control of the situation when you've been targeted by a scammer:

- **Take your time.** Utility scammers try to create a sense of urgency so that you'll act fast and hand over personal information, especially over the phone. Take a moment to think about the situation before acting.
- **Be suspicious.** Scammers typically request immediate payments through prepaid debit cards or third-party apps. Unusual requests like this should raise red flags. Remember, if the request seems strange and out of the ordinary, you're likely being targeted by a scammer.
- **Confirm before you act.** If you are contacted by someone claiming to represent MJM or another utility but you're unsure, just **hang up the phone and call the utility directly. You can reach us at 217-707-6156 to verify the situation.** Save MJM's phone number in your contacts to quickly call our office if you receive any suspicious calls.

Our increasingly connected world provides scammers with more opportunities to connect with unsuspecting consumers. Be vigilant, and please report any utility scams to MJM so we can let others in our community know. Together, we can help prevent our friends and neighbors from being victimized.



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

STAFF

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

EDITOR

Eric Cooper.....	Communications & Member Services Coordinator
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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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Understanding electric equipment responsibilities.

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.

TIPS TO AVOID ENERGY SCAMS



If you suspect you're dealing with a utility scam, it's crucial to slow down and take your time before taking any action. Scammers will often pressure you to make quick decisions or immediate payments. Instead, take the time to verify the legitimacy of the communication by contacting your utility directly. Use a phone number from a reliable source, such as your bill or the utility's website. Taking this simple step can help protect you from falling victim to utility scams.

Source: Utilities United Against Scams



MACIE WRIGHT

THOMAS H. MOORE MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP



MJM is proud to announce that Macie Wright of Gillespie High School is one of sixteen winners of this year's Thomas H. Moore Illinois Electric Cooperatives (IEC) Memorial Scholarship. She is the child of David and Shannon Wright of Gillespie, IL. Macie competed for the scholarship with 293 other students from across the state. The \$2,500 awards are given each year to sixteen children of electric co-op members, employees or directors. A seventeenth scholarship is reserved for a student interested in lineworker's college and will be announced at a later date. Macie will be recognized during the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives' annual meeting on July 31, 2025, in Springfield.

Candidates were judged on grade-point average, college entrance exam scores, work and volunteer experience, school and civic activities, and a short essay demonstrating their knowledge of electric cooperatives.



We appreciate the scholarship recipients who were able to attend our Annual Meeting. MJM wishes all our scholarship recipients success in their future endeavors!



(L-R) Olivia Reid, Macie Wright, MJM President/CEO - Joe Heyen, & Addison Strohbeck



MJM ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE DIRECTORS ACHIEVE CREDENTIAL IN TODAY'S ELECTRIC UTILITY COMPETENCIES



(L-R) Charles Huebener - District 3, Todd Stewart - District 8, Marcie Tonsor - District 9, and Tyler Heyen - District 6

Multiple directors from MJM Electric Cooperative recently received a Credentialed Cooperative Director or Board Leadership certificate from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

An ever-changing business environment has imposed new demands on electric cooperative directors, requiring increased knowledge of changes in the electric utility business, new governance skills and a solid knowledge of the cooperative principles and business model. MJM has a commitment to work through the NRECA and the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC) to sharpen this body of knowledge for the benefit of their electric cooperative consumer-owners.

Tyler Heyen of Raymond, IL and Todd Stewart of Nokomis, IL completed the NRECA Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) program which requires demonstrated understanding of the basic competencies contained in five core courses:

- **Director Duties and Liabilities**
- **Understanding the Electric Business**
- **Board Operations and Process**
- **Strategic Planning**
- **Financial Decision Making**

Additionally, Charles Huebener of Brighton, IL and Marcie Tonsor of Jerseyville, IL completed the NRECA Board Leadership Certificate (BLC). This step of the program recognizes individuals who continue their professional development after becoming a Credentialed Cooperative

Director (CCD). Directors who have attained the BLC have completed 10 credits in advanced, issues-oriented courses.

MJM's Board of Directors are focused on making beneficial decisions that help support the mission to safely provide reliable service to MJM members throughout the service territory.

MJM'S IT ADMINISTRATOR, CHRIS FRANZEN, COMPLETES THE NRECA CO-OP CYBER GOALS PROGRAM - LEVEL 1



(L-R) MJM President/CEO - Joe Heyen, IT Administrator - Chris Franzen, and District 3 Board Director - Charles Huebener

MJM's IT Administrator, Chris Franzen, completed the NRECA (National Rural Electric Cooperative Association) Co-op Cyber Goals program which aims to improve the cybersecurity posture of electric cooperatives through a series of voluntary goals. The program currently consists of two levels: Level One (10 goals) and Level Two (10 goals). These goals are designed to help co-ops achieve high-priority security measures and build a stronger foundation for future cybersecurity efforts.

Overall Goals of the Program:

- **Advance Cybersecurity Posture:** Aims to improve the overall cybersecurity maturity of electric cooperatives.
- **Prioritize Cybersecurity Tasks:** The goals help co-ops focus on critical cybersecurity tasks and initiatives.
- **Enhance Decision-Making Skills:** The program provides resources and guidance to support informed cybersecurity decision-making.
- **Show Measurable Progress:** Allows co-ops to track their progress towards achieving their cybersecurity goals.

JULY IS NATIONAL GRILLING MONTH

Grilling outdoors is not only a good way to keep your house cooler and lower your energy bill, it's a great way to enjoy warm summer days with family and friends – but more than half of grill fires occur during these peak months.

Each year, grill fires cause thousands of injuries and millions of dollars in property loss, according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). Most grill fires can be prevented with proper maintenance and safe use.

Stay safe by following these simple tips:

- Keep your grill clean by removing grease or fat buildup from grates and trays.
- Place the grill on a stable surface, away from homes, deck railings and overhanging branches.
- Keep children and pets at least three feet away.
- Never leave an active grill unattended.
- Use propane and charcoal grills outdoors only to prevent fire hazards and carbon monoxide poisoning.

Gas grills pose a greater fire risk due to leaks. To ensure safe grilling, check for leaks each season:

- Mix equal parts dish soap and water.
- After attaching the gas cylinder, open the valve one turn counterclockwise.
- Apply the soapy mixture to the hose and connections. If bubbles form, a gas leak is present.

If you detect a leak, turn off the gas and grill immediately. If the leak stops, have the grill serviced by a professional before use. If the leak continues, move away and call the fire department for assistance. Do not move the grill.

Bonus safety tip: Open the lid before lighting a gas grill to prevent gas buildup. If the flame goes out during use, turn off the gas and wait at least five minutes before relighting.

Charcoal grilling is a favorite way to cook outdoors but pose fire and carbon monoxide risks if not handled properly. Follow these essential safety tips:

- Only use charcoal starter fluid designed for grills; never use gasoline or other flammable liquids.
- Never add lighter fluid to a lit fire – this causes flare-ups.
- Store starter fluid away from heat sources and out of children's reach.



- Let charcoal coals and ashes cool completely before disposing of them in a metal container.

Electric grills are safe outdoors if proper safety precautions are followed:

- Ensure your electric grill is outdoor rated to withstand exposure to moisture and varying temperatures.
- Never use an electronic grill in rainy or wet conditions. Store the grill in a dry place when not in use.
- Keep electrical connections away from water, damp surfaces or pools to avoid electric shock.
- Always plug your grill into a Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) outlet to protect against shocks. If using an extension cord, make sure it's outdoor-rated and GFCI-protected.
- Check the power cord for frays, cracks or damage before use.
- Turn off and unplug the grill after use.

If your electric grill stops working, consult the manufacturer instead of attempting electrical repairs yourself.

Cleaning your grill

Dirty grills are a leading cause of grill fires, according to the NFPA. Despite the belief that a seasoned grill enhances flavor, regular cleaning is essential for safety and performance:

- Let the grill cool before cleaning or storing it.
- Clean all grill parts including grates, burners, side tables and grease traps to prevent grease fires.
- Follow the manufacturers instructions for proper cleaning.

Take these precautions and enjoy a safe and flavorful grilling season.



ANNUAL MEETING PHOTOS

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING MJM'S 86TH ANNUAL MEETING

Photos by Lisa Cherry - Assistant Editor of Illinois Country Living Magazine



2025 BOARD OFFICERS



Todd Stewart
CHAIRMAN



Charles Huebener
VICE-CHAIRMAN



Marcie Tonsor
SECRETARY



Tyler Heyen
TREASURER



WHO OWNS WHAT?

UNDERSTANDING ELECTRIC EQUIPMENT RESPONSIBILITIES



As July rolls in with longer days and rising temperatures, it also brings the increased potential for severe weather. Summer storms can arrive quickly and hit hard, sometimes causing significant damage to essential electric equipment throughout our community.

MJM is always prepared to respond swiftly to outages and restore power safely, but it is also important for homeowners to understand which parts of the electric system are their responsibility and which are maintained by us at the co-op. Understanding these key differences can help speed up repairs and ensure everyone stays safe when the weather turns rough.

MJM is responsible for maintaining and repairing the equipment and lines that run to your home, including utility poles, distribution power lines, electric meters and padmounted transformers.

MJM members are responsible for the equipment located between the electric meter and your home or business, including any underground service lines that lead into the structure and the service panel. Members are also responsible for the weatherhead and service mast located outside the home.

If any equipment that you (the homeowner) are responsible for is damaged, please call a licensed electrician to conduct the repairs. A professional has the experience and know-how to assess and manage these types of repairs.

When severe weather damages electrical equipment, it's important to note that any necessary repairs to the homeowner's equipment must be conducted before MJM crews can restore power to your home or business. By understanding the equipment you are responsible for, the repair and restoration process will be smoother and faster.

Our community takes great pride in the beautiful trees and landscaping that contribute to the natural beauty where we live, however, regular trimming is essential to ensure reliable electric service and minimize damage from severe weather. MJM regularly trims trees throughout our service territory to improve service

reliability. If you spot a tree limb that is obstructing a distribution power line outside your home, please call the MJM office so we can trim those limbs and maintain those lines.

Any overgrown limbs or vegetation around the service line, is the homeowner's responsibility, and in these cases, please call a professional tree trimming service to assist.

By working together to understand the essential equipment that powers daily life, we can all be better prepared to start the repair and restoration process if severe weather impacts our community.

If you have any questions about your electrical equipment, we're here to help. Please contact the MJM Office Operations & Engineering Department at 217-707-6156.



ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

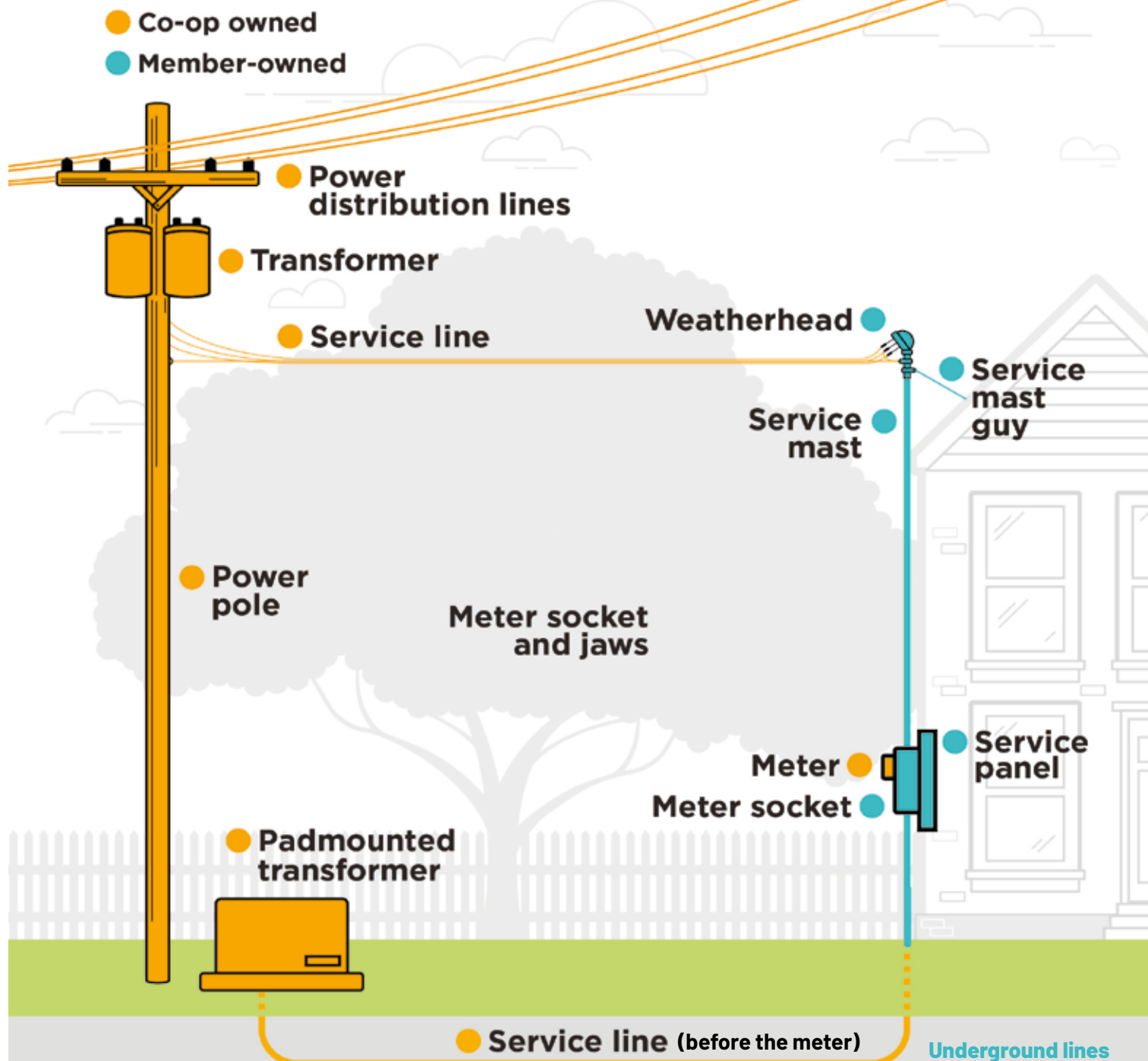
During summer months, run large appliances that emit heat such as clothes dryers and dishwashers during the evening when the outdoor temperature is lower. Running heat-emitting appliances in the evening will reduce indoor heat gain during the day when outdoor temperatures are highest and ultimately keep your air conditioner from working harder than necessary.

Source: [energy.gov](https://www.energy.gov)

Who Owns What?

Electric Co-op Owned Equipment vs Member-Owned Equipment

This graphic depicts equipment owned by the co-op (in gold) and the member (in blue). If a storm damages any equipment owned by the co-op, we are responsible for repairs. If a storm damages any member-owned equipment, the member is responsible for repairs. Members should hire a licensed electrician when making any repairs to member-owned equipment.



Note: This graphic depicts overhead and underground service. Please be aware of which type of service you receive at your home.

Underground lines after the meter, are member-owned.



2025 POWER MOVES® HOME PROGRAM

WHAT IS THE POWER MOVES HOME PROGRAM?

This program helps guide you through the process of building a comfortable home with low energy bills. By working with your builder to address key components in technology, air sealing and the building envelope, your home will be high performance — and we'll guarantee it!

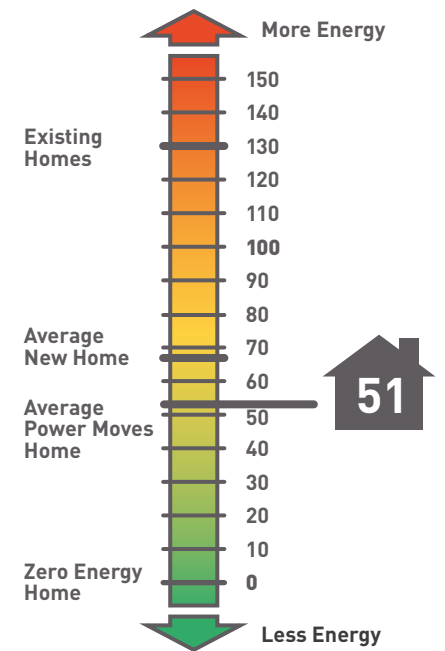
WHAT'S THE PROCESS?

1. Meet with builder to discuss key construction components
2. Register home with program
3. HERS Rater reviews blueprints and discusses how certain areas can impact energy performance and occupant comfort with your builder
4. Construction starts
5. Rater visits home after insulation is installed to verify it has been installed properly
6. Construction finishes
7. Rater verifies air sealing with blower door and duct blaster testing
8. Co-op provides you with the HERS Rating packet and Certificate of Compliance.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THE PROGRAM?

- ▶ **Comfort:** Extra attention to construction details ensures that the temperature in the front of your house is the same as in the back. And that you can actually use the bonus room over the garage and not melt in the summer and freeze in the winter.
- ▶ **Healthy Indoor Air:** Each Power Moves Home has a mechanical ventilation system customized to your home's size and number of occupants.
- ▶ **More Money in Your Pocket:** Exclusive in-program rebates help you upgrade insulation and equipment.

Comparing HERS® Scores Index



The HERS Index is the industry standard for measuring a home's energy efficiency. Take a look at how a Power Moves Home stacks up against a typical resale home and an average new home.

FREE BLOWER DOOR TESTING (HERS SCORE 60)

Your local code may require a blower door test be completed prior to moving in.

A participating Power Moves Home includes that blower door test (and HERS rating), a \$750 value, for free.

ENVELOPE INCENTIVE

Envelope

HERS Score \leq 50	\$1,000*
HERS Score $<$ 40	\$2,000*

*Envelope incentives are split with the builder and member. Envelope incentives are reduced by 50% if fossil fuel backup heat is used.

MECHANICAL INCENTIVES

Ground Source Heat Pump — Water to Air	
Open Loop \geq 21.1 EER / \geq 4.1 COP	\$1,000
Closed Loop \geq 17.1 EER / \geq 3.6 COP	\$2,000
Ground Source Heat Pump — Water to Water	
Open Loop \geq 20.1 EER / \geq 3.5 COP	\$1,000
Closed Loop \geq 16.1 EER / \geq 3.1 COP	\$2,000
Heat Pump Water Heater	
Minimum Efficiency \geq 3.3 UEF	\$800

Dual Fuel Heat Pump	
SEER2 \geq 15.2, HSPF \geq 7.5	\$500
Cold Climate Heat Pump	
SEER2 \geq 15.2, HSPF2 \geq 8.1, COP at 5 degrees \geq 1.75	\$1800 (whole home)
	\$800 (partial home)



2025 BUSINESS NEW CONSTRUCTION REBATE PROGRAM SUMMARY



NON-AGRICULTURE FACILITIES

Lighting

Lighting rebates are calculated on Lighting Power Density (the total Watts of lighting/square foot of building). Please provide us your COMCheck report.

INTERIOR	▶ ≥ 10% more efficient than code	\$200/1,000 ft ²
	▶ ≥ 20% more efficient than code	\$300/1,000 ft ²
	▶ ≥ 30% more efficient than code	\$350/1,000 ft ²
	▶ ≥ 40% more efficient than code	\$400/1,000 ft ²
	▶ ≥ 50% more efficient than code	\$450/1,000 ft ²
	▶ Exterior Lighting	\$35 - \$120/fixture

HVAC

▶ Air Source Heat Pumps	\$80-\$300 ton
▶ Geothermal Heat Pumps	\$500, \$600 or \$750/ton
▶ Air Cooled Unitary Packaged AC and Split Systems	\$60 or \$75/ton
▶ VFDs on HVAC Systems	\$100/HP (not code required)
▶ Chillers	\$25 or \$60/ton

Miscellaneous

▶ VFDs on process systems	\$80/HP
▶ Air Compressors VFD screw	\$80/HP
▶ Commercial Food Service	Varies

AGRICULTURE FACILITIES

▶ VFDs on irrigation	\$40/HP
▶ High Volume Low-Speed Fans	\$600/fan
▶ High Speed Fans	\$50/fan

Please call us to discuss other energy saving items in agriculture facilities.

ITEMS NOT ON THIS LIST?

No problem! We can review and provide a custom incentive offer.

In order to receive a rebate, equipment must meet our minimum efficiency standards. Please talk with our energy engineer about your project. This is for information purposes only and not a quote or guarantee of an incentive.

WHAT IS THIS PROGRAM?

This program is for commercial accounts that are building:

- ▶ New construction
- ▶ Adding on to existing facility
- ▶ Change of use or total gut rehab of existing facility

WHO'S ELIGIBLE FOR A REBATE?

- ▶ Non-residential members of participating electric cooperatives.

WHAT'S THE REBATE LIMIT?

Rebates are PER BUILDING, PER YEAR.

- ▶ \$25,000 Prescriptive
- ▶ \$50,000 Custom

HOW DO I GET THE MOST FROM THIS PROGRAM?

Talk to us before your plans are on paper. Often, we can help you and your contractors find a better solution at a lower cost and provide more rebate money and better long-term savings.

HOW DO I GET STARTED?

Talk to your co-op. Ask them for a Project Information Form and to set up a meeting with our BNC energy engineer.

WHAT BASELINE DO YOU USE?

All rebates in this program are based on local energy codes

- ▶ IN = ASHRAE 90.1-2007
- ▶ IL = 2022 IECC
- ▶ MO = ASHRAE 90.1-2007

Agricultural Building Averages

- ▶ Average Size: 37,051 ft²
- ▶ Average Incentives per ft²: \$0.36

Manufacturing Building Averages

- ▶ Average Size: 66,295 ft²
- ▶ Average Incentives per ft²: \$0.56

Other Building Averages

- ▶ Average Size: 70,378 ft²
- ▶ Average Incentives per ft²: \$0.47



MEMBER TRADING POST

FOR SALE: Lift for disabled. Easily move your loved one for bed to chair. Foldable. \$200 (new cost is \$2,000) Carlinville. Call: 314-825-1200

FOR SALE: John Deere 7000 6 row planter. Corn and radial bean meters. All well maintained and field ready. \$7,000. Also, White 6342 planter. 12-30" or 13-15" rows. No-till with electric half width shutoff. \$13,000. Call: 217-371-4087

WANTED: 16x7ft garage door. Call 618-334-4298



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. No Ads in May edition/Annual Meeting Booklet