



# along the lines

Vol. 13, No. 3

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[www.mjmec.coop](http://www.mjmec.coop)

## One Door Closes, Another Door Opens...



You know what they say, "When one door closes, another one opens." And that's exactly what's happening at MJM! **Barring no issues, MJM will be moving into the new building on April 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>.** Since that is a Monday and Tuesday, the office will be temporarily closed to the public. We will resume normal business hours on Wednesday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, at the new headquarters!

Not only will the doors be closed those two days, but we will not be able to accept payments in the office, by phone or electronically.

The only contact information that will change is our physical address. Our new address will be 18300 Shipman Road, Carlinville. Members can continue to send mail to P.O. Box 80, Carlinville, IL, 62626. Our phone number will remain the same: 217-707-6156.

We could not be more excited for this move and we invite Members to continue to come in and see us. As mentioned in previous building updates, the new headquarters will have a drive through for quick access to drop off payments. The building will also have a secure drop box that will be located near the drive through window. This drop box will submit payments into the building so it will remain secure.

We appreciate the abundant support from MJM's Membership and Board of Directors recognizing the need for a new facility which will help us serve our Members more safely and efficiently. We envision that the multi-purpose room (on the North side of the building) will be used by MJM Members and aid our local communities. It's bittersweet to close the doors on what was but we are so excited to open the doors on what will be. 🌈

We were able to salvage the sign off the front of the old headquarters building and repurpose it. "Something Old" stands for continuity...and "Something New" shows optimism for the future.

**MJM Electric Cooperative, Inc.**


A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

264 N. East St., Carlinville, IL 62626

Office 1-800-648-4729

Pay by Phone 1-855-313-6314

Office Hours

Mon-Fri 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. 

**Board of Directors**

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Robert Lehmann .....Girard

*Vice Chairman*

Paul Bartlett..... Brighton

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*Engineering and Operations*

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**Editor**

Brooke Gross.....Communications

*and Member Services Coordinator*

**Holidays observed**

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

**How to report an outage**

Call 1-800-648-4729. Collect calls  
will be accepted to report outages.  
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.

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With the flip of a switch, your home is illuminated with light. The ease of lighting a room is routine. In fact, we often do not even give it a second thought. However, the various lighting options that are available are worth a second look as they can help you save both energy and money.

The least efficient type of lightbulb is incandescent, which releases about 90 percent of its energy as heat rather than light. Halogen bulbs are a specific type of incandescent bulb designed to be more efficient, and although they meet the federal minimum for lighting efficiency, there are more efficiency options available.

Compact florescent lamps (CFLs) typically pay for themselves in energy savings in less than nine months and use about one third of the energy of a halogen incandescent bulb. They release about 80 percent of their energy as heat, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. When an incandescent bulb is replaced with a CFL, it can boost savings over the course of the bulb's lifetime. When disposing of these bulbs, remember that they should be recycled due to the small amount of mercury they contain.

Light emitting diode (LED) bulbs release very little energy as heat, and they use only between 25 to 30 percent of the energy of traditional incandescent bulbs. In addition, they usually last between 8 and 24 times longer than incandescent bulbs.

When you are purchasing lightbulbs, check the label. It includes information on bulb brightness (measured in lumens), estimated annual cost, bulb lifespan, energy used, and light appearance. Watts measure the energy used, while lumens correspond to the brightness of the bulb. With incandescent bulbs, many people got used to associating brightness with wattage. If you are looking for the brightness of a 40-watt incandescent bulb, now look for a 450-lumen bulb. For the brightness of a 60-watt incandescent bulb, get an 800-lumen bulb. Energy Star recommends that when shopping for efficiency, find a bulb with sufficient lumens and the lowest corresponding wattage and temperature.

Regardless of the bulbs that you install, take the extra steps to use your lights efficiently. Turn off lights when rooms are unoccupied. Consider investing in dimmers. Timers or sensors can help save energy. Also, motion-detectors and daylight shut-off devices can help reduce costs on outside lighting. 

*By Safe Electricity*

# When MJM Calls, Who Will Answer?

Stay in the know by keeping your contact information up to date!

At MJM, we are constantly striving to improve our operational efficiency so we can provide the most reliable electric service possible for our Members (that's you!).

We rely on data for nearly every aspect of our operations, which is why we need your help. By making sure we have your most accurate and complete contact information, we can continue to provide the high level of service that you expect and deserve. Accurate information enables us to improve Member service and enhance communications for reporting and repairing outages. It also allows Co-op Members to receive information about other important programs, events and activities.

Up-to-date contact information can potentially speed up the power restoration process during an outage. For example, the phone number you provide is linked to your service address to our outage management system. This means when you call to report an outage, our system recognizes your phone number and matches it with your account location. Accurate information helps our outage management system predict the location and possible cause of an outage, making it easier for our crews to correct the problem.

While we always do our best to maintain service, we occasionally plan outages to update, repair or replace equipment. In these instances, we can provide advance notification to affected Members through automated phone messages, text messages or email, *if* we have your updated contact information and communication preferences. **You must opt in via our SmartHub app to receive text and email notifications.**

Keeping the Co-op updated with your information also helps us when there's a question about energy use or billing. Emails and text messages are also used to notify registered Members of any changes in Co-op event details. In addition, discrepancies on your account can be taken care of promptly if MJM has accurate account information.

Many of you have been Members of the Co-op for years, and it's likely that your account information hasn't been updated for some time. We recognize that many Members now use a cell phone as their primary phone service, and we might not have that number in our system.

Sometimes we forget things like paying your bill during a hectic month. Each month, delinquent payment phone calls are made after the 15th to Members with correct contact information on file. This is a courtesy call that informs our Members that the Co-op has not received their payment for the current month.

We want to emphasize that in providing your contact information to the Co-op, we will never share this information with any third parties. It is only used by MJM to send important information to you. Please take a moment to view your contact information by looking at the bottom of your billing statement on the bill stub (the part that you mail in with your payment) or login to your account(s) online at MJM's website ([www.mjmec.coop](http://www.mjmec.coop)) or via SmartHub on a mobile device. By doing so, you will be helping us improve service and efficiency so we can better serve you and all Members of the Co-op. 🌟



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# Three Ways to Electrify Your Lawn Care



Spring is just around the corner, and you can practically smell the freshly-cut grass. If you're in the market to upgrade your lawn care equipment, you may want to consider electric (or battery-powered) options.

Gas-powered lawn mowers and trimmers may be your go-to, but times they are a changin'. Electric lawn care equipment options are becoming more popular than ever, offering consumers faster charging times, longer battery life and quieter, greener products compared to their gas-powered counterparts. Here are three ways you can electrify your lawn care this spring.

## **Electric Lawn Mowers**

Electric lawn mowers have come a long way over the last few years. Early models required corded connections, which were tricky to manage—but the cord has been cut. Newer cordless electric mowers are certainly more expensive than gas-powered mowers, but much of the upfront cost can be recovered since electricity is a less expensive fuel than gas, and electric engines generally require less maintenance than gas engines. Cordless electric mowers typically range from \$200 to \$500.

Electric mowers are suitable for most lawn care needs, with batteries that typically require about one to two hours to fully charge, and most batteries can run for a full hour. That said, if you have a large yard (half an acre or larger), a gas-powered option may be best to suit your needs.

## **Electric Trimmers**


Cordless electric string trimmers are a great option for most lawns. Traditionally, like lawn mowers, string trimmers have typically been powered by gas. But new versions of electric trimmers are improving and are now considered worthy competitors of gas-powered models.

Cordless electric trimmers are much quieter and easier to use, but most batteries last about 30 to 45 minutes. So, if you have a lot of space to trim, you may want to consider a back-up battery or plan to work in short bursts. If you're interested in purchasing an electric trimmer, the main factors to consider are the battery's life, charge time and power. Costs can vary depending on your needs, but you can find a quality version for about \$100.

## **Electric Leaf Blowers**

After cutting and trimming your lawn, you'll need to clear off those walkways and patios for the finishing touch. If you don't want to deal with the maintenance of a gas-powered blower or the restraints of a corded blower, a cordless electric version is a great option.

Cordless electric leaf blowers are lightweight and easy to maneuver, but they don't offer quite as much power as gas-powered and corded blowers. If your leaf blowing and clearing needs are minimal, a cordless electric leaf blower can get the job done. Costs for a cordless electric blower vary depending on power and battery quality, but you can purchase a dependable model for about \$150 and up.

If you're looking to electrify your lawn care equipment, be sure to do your homework. Search online for the latest reviews, and check trusted websites like [ConsumerReports.org](https://www.ConsumerReports.org). With a little research, you'll be well on your way to Lawn of the Month – with less maintenance, hassle and noise (and your neighbors will thank you!). 

*By Abby Berry, NRECA*

# HAVE WHAT IT TAKES?



Education, acknowledgement and leadership. What do these three words have in common? They're all three attached to a Member Advocate Committee (MAC)! These past two years, MJM has had the privilege to host up to 19 Member Advocates in various locations throughout MJM's territory. MJM is proud to continue hosting this committee and is looking for more MJM Members to join the committee.

The Member Advocate Committee was created to enhance the understanding of MJM's core business, principles and values. The purpose of this committee supports the second cooperative principle of democratic Member control and the fifth cooperative principle of education, training and information. MJM is looking for a collection of individuals who bring unique knowledge and skills which complement the skills of MJM's Board of Directors. The advocate group will not have authority to govern the organization but will serve to make recommendations and/or provide key information and materials to MJM's management team.

Because this is a newly formed committee, MJM has extended an invite to those who have already served to remain serving in order to stagger the terms, and to keep the momentum flowing. Since not everyone will continue forward, we are reaching out to the Membership once again to see if they are interested in being on the Member Advocate Committee. It's a great opportunity to learn about YOUR cooperative and also offer up ideas that might help benefit YOUR cooperative.

We would like for the Member to serve a two-year term and we will meet approximately six times during this term. Meetings will start at 6 p.m. and last approximately 90 minutes and includes a meal. Applicants will be selected from varying demographics – age groups, occupations, community involvement and utility rate. Our goal is to get Members to represent each of MJM's nine districts. Meetings will be held at the new MJM headquarters at 18300 Shipman Road Carlinville (tentatively as of April 22, 2020) and/or may occur at locations around MJM's service area.

If you are interested in serving on this committee or need more information, please contact the MJM office at 217-707-6156 between 7:30 am - 4:30 pm, Monday – Friday, and ask for Brooke Gross. Please respond promptly so that we can begin the application process. It's as simple as that! We look forward to hearing from YOU! 🎨

## JOIN THE MEMBER ADVOCATE COMMITTEE.



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# Time to Paws and Learn About Pet Safety!




For pet owners, playful dogs and curious cats become part of the family. Responsibility is an important part of pet ownership, and your pet's safety depends on you. You can help keep your furry friend safe by learning about and taking action on potential electrical hazards in your home.

Electrical cords can easily become an object of play for pets, but when sharp teeth clamp down on the cord and break through the rubber coat and expose the wire, this can shock your pet and become a fire hazard in your home. Here are some tips to prevent cords from becoming a chew toy:

- Wind up excess cords and hide them from view or place cords out of pet's reach. This could be done by hiding them behind furniture or hanging them off the floor.
- Coat cords with a bitter substance to make them undesirable to pets. Appropriate and safe products can be purchased online or at pet stores.
- Reprimand pets for playing with electrical cords. Pets need to learn these are not toys.
- Remember to continuously check cords for fraying or bite marks, and replace them accordingly.

Provide your pet with new and different chew toys to keep them entertained so electrical cords do not become a dangerous replacement. Make sure plugs are completely plugged into outlets. Partially exposed prongs are a hazard for curious pets. Remember to unplug all appliances and electronics not in use to cut electric current.

Discourage pets from sleeping near or behind electronics or appliances. Many pets are attracted to the warmth, but this is a potential fire hazard. Pets need to be kept away from all electrical connections. All outlets near sinks or bathtubs should be equipped with a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI). Playful pets can knock radios, curling irons, and other electrical devices into water, creating a dangerous situation. GFCIs stop the flow of electricity instantly if there is a problem and can save lives.

For those with fish, be sure cords attached to an aquarium have a drip loop—cords that slack below the outlet—to make sure water does not run into the outlet. If a pet should receive a shock, never touch the animal until you know it is away from the power source or the electric current is shut off in order to prevent injury to yourself. Once it is clear to approach the pet, give it medical treatment immediately. 

*By Safe Electricity*



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# United States<sup>®</sup> Census 2020

## IMPORTANT – The 2020 US Census

March 12 - 20: Households will begin receiving official Census Bureau mail with detailed information on how to respond to the 2020 Census online, by phone, or by mail.

The Census Bureau will be dropping off census surveys to rural areas that do not have mail delivery services in March. The Census will not be sending mail to post office boxes. Individuals that do not receive mail, may respond online at <https://2020census.gov/> from mid-March through April 30, 2020. When responding online, when you are asked for your Census ID, click on the box on the bottom indicating that you do not have a Census ID. You will then be prompted to enter the physical address of your home, which is often referred to as your 911 resident address.

Local, State and Federal funding of government programs and schools are dependent on the Census Count. Help us get the funding we need for our community by responding to the Census Survey! 🗳️

## Your response matters.

Health clinics. Fire departments. Schools. Even roads and highways. The census can shape many different aspects of your community.



Census results help determine how billions of dollars in federal funding flow into states and communities each year.



The results determine how many seats in Congress each state gets.



It's mandated by the U.S. Constitution in Article 1, Section 2: The U.S. has counted its population every 10 years since 1790.

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## Member Trading Post

**FOR SALE:** Two Giant sized dog crates, 1 Vari Kennel and 1 black wire. \$75.00 each. A camper shell for a short bed truck. Teal in color, \$100.00. 217.730.6297

**FOR SALE:** Honda Electric-Start Snow Blower, 20 inch clearing width, 187 cc GC190 engine, Model # HS720AS; bought new Dec 2017; Asking \$500. Call 618-946-0869.

**FOR SALE:** Stiebel Eltron Temptra 12B electric boiler. It was used for three years to supply hot water to an in-floor heating system for a 1200 square foot insulated workshop. The power rating is 12.0 kW at 240 volts. Original cost was \$1,000. Asking \$300. A Craftsman tall padded shop stool, like new: \$15.00. Call 217-556-7511 for more information.

**FOR SALE:** 8ft vanity top, two bases, man made marble. Asking \$70. 30 x 68 steel outside door. Asking \$25. 45 gallon butchering kettle with stand. Asking \$60. All are in good shape. 217-594-2860.

**FOR SALE:** 2000 SKEETER T185, 2000 YAMAHA 150 motor, 2000 trailer. Asking \$11,000. Always placed in the garage and well maintained, 25 pitch stainless prop, CB Marine cavitation plate, 74 lb motor guide trolling motor, Lowrance fish finder at helm, hummingbird at bow, 1 year old trailer tires, boat cover, near Roxana Illinois. 618-610-7954.

**FOR SALE:** 2006 Kubota RTV900, 4x4, side by side utility diesel canopy windshield hydraulic dump bed with real tree camo. 720 hours one owner. Power steering, 4wd locking rear differential, 3 range hydrostatic transmission and bed liner brush guard rear receiver hitch. Very good condition. Asking for \$8,900. Please call 618-372-3009.

**FOR SALE:** Single axle trailer, 5'x8' w/full width ramp, foldable jack w/wheel. Like New. Asking \$800. Call 217-854-2063.



Happy  
St. Patrick's Day!

To list your free ad, email [brookeg@mjmec.coop](mailto:brookeg@mjmec.coop), call 1-800-648-4729, or mail the ad to MJM Electric Cooperative, 264 N. East St., P.O. Box 80, Carlinville, IL 62626. Each ad will run for one month. Some restriction may apply. Thank you.

