



A Building Update - From Within!

Finally! An article about life inside of the new headquarters. On November 29, 2018, MJM had a special groundbreaking ceremony for the new headquarters. On July 22, 2020, MJM opened their doors to the public at the new location. Clearly, the countdown has been long, but the wait has been worth it.



During our first month, we celebrated some of our 'firsts' with Members. Since we have a drive thru located to the south side of the building, Ethelreda Harrison of Carlinville was the first Member to drive up and conduct business. After months of being closed to the public due to COVID, we welcomed our newest Member, Andrew Botterbush of Carlinville, inside. He was the first Member to do a transaction and visit the new lobby. Both Members got an MJM logoed stainless steel tumbler. It felt good to finally be able to assist Members face to face again! If you haven't stopped by, make sure to do so. We would be happy to serve you.



Now that MJM's warehouse has a drive thru bay, Emerald Transformer pulled through the warehouse to load up some transformers that are going to be tested then reconditioned or scrapped. Emerald Transformer employee Steve was asked how he liked having a drive thru warehouse. Steve answered, "This is nice to have. This is really nice, actually! I travel to different locations between Texas and North Dakota and, out of all the stops, this is the third location that has a drive thru warehouse. This will be nice to use during the winter, too. Since I am traveling from one extreme of weather to the next, it's helped build up my immune system!"



The day Emerald Transformer stopped by a rainstorm was occurring. MJM employees and Steve stayed safe on the inside of the warehouse while loading the transformers.

Another first was the unloading of poles to our new pole yard. Brown Wood Preserving Co. employee Mike said, "Thank you, thank you, thank you! It was very difficult to maneuver to get to your old pole yard, especially in the winter. The road was narrow and has a tricky curve and I was also afraid I was going to destroy the front yard of your landlord. I know you will come to appreciate this new pole yard, too, due to the accessibility." He unloaded 41, 40ft poles that day.

To know the new headquarters is creating an efficient and safe place for our employees, Members and vendors, it has made this building worth the wait. We thank all our Members for supporting this decision to expand. By seeing how much positive change has happened in one month, it gets us that much more excited for what is left to come in the future! 🎉





ALONG THE LINES

Published by:

MJM Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

18300 Shipman Road, Carlinville, IL 62626

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Pay by Phone 1-855-313-6314



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

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- 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 217-707-6156. 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. Please do not report outages on Facebook.

MJM Along the Lines (USPS 854-620) is published monthly for \$3.00 per year by MJM Electric Cooperative, Inc., P.O. Box 80, Carlinville, Illinois 62626. Second-class postage paid at Carlinville, IL. POSTMASTER: Send Address changes to MJM Along the Lines, P.O. Box 80, Carlinville, IL 62626.


Why is it good to see Co-op workers on your property?

MJM employees and contractors work throughout our service territory, in the rights-of-way and easements, and across your private property and driveways. We're working to ensure reliable power for you and your neighbors, and that means we must cross your property from time to time.

You may see us:

- Making routine repairs
- Replacing meters
- Trimming trees and brush
- Restoring power outages
- Locating buried utilities for construction and digging projects
- Working to upgrade poles, wires, transformers and equipment
- Inspecting lines, power poles, transformer boxes and equipment



All field work, except emergency power restoration, is conducted during normal working hours, which usually is 7:00 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Every effort is made to avoid damage and unnecessary intrusion. If you have concerns about our work, contact us at 217-707-6156. We appreciate your cooperation! 

Happy Labor Day!

The office will be closed on Monday, September 7th.





Who **POWERS** you?

Inspired by someone making a difference in your community? Tell their story and they could win a cash prize.

Visit whopowersyou.com between 9/8/20 and 10/9/20 and submit a photo of your nominee. Then tell us why that person inspires you and how they make a difference in your co-op community.



\$5,000 GRAND PRIZE

\$2,000 SECOND PLACE

\$1,500 THIRD PLACE

\$500 HONORABLE MENTION

MJM Electric, along with Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives, is pleased to announce the #WhoPowersYou Contest celebrating local heroes. It's a chance for MJM Members and employees to nominate someone making a difference in the community and an opportunity to celebrate the power of human connections. In addition to being nationally recognized, nominees can win up to \$5,000 for the cause they champion.

To nominate a local hero in our service area, Members and employees can go to whopowersyou.com and submit their nominee's name, photo and a brief description of how they make a difference locally. Nominations open on September 8, 2020, and must be submitted by midnight on October 9, 2020.

An independent panel of judges will select winning entry based upon the positive community impact and creativity of the entry. The winners will be announced in October.

Prize money totaling \$9,000 will be awarded as follows:


- Grand Prize: \$5,000
- Second Place: \$2,000
- Third Place: \$1,500
- Honorable Mention: \$500

Touchstone Energy Cooperatives launched the #WhoPowersYou Contest to celebrate people making a powerful impact in their community. Only Members of Touchstone Energy Cooperatives, including those in MJM's Electric territory, are eligible to participate.

About MJM Electric

Since 1939, MJM has proven to being committed to serving our Members in Macoupin, Jersey, Montgomery, Bond, Fayette, Green and Madison counties. MJM is a not-for-profit Cooperative that serves 9,386 meters MJM has seven Cooperative principles in which one of them sticks out the most during these times. Our seventh principle, Concern for Community, is part of the reason why MJM took part in this contest.

About Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives

Touchstone Energy Cooperatives (www.touchstoneenergy.com) is a national network of more than 700 electric cooperatives dedicated to serving their members and communities with integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community. Touchstone Energy co-ops collectively deliver power and energy solutions to more than 30 million members every day. 

Electricity Brings Everyday Value!

Even though I work in the energy industry, like most people, I still don't think much about the electricity I use. I expect the lights to turn on when I flip the switch and the coffeemaker to work each morning. Because electricity is so abundant, we don't think much about it. Since many of us have been spending more time at home over the past few months, we have likely been using more energy. And yet, we still expect an endless supply of power with uninterrupted service 24/7. The only time we really think about electricity is when the power goes out or perhaps when the monthly bill arrives.

Given how electricity powers our modern lifestyle every day, it's a great value, especially when compared to other common services and expenses. For example, think back to the cost of a gallon of gasoline 20 years ago. Consider the cost of groceries or a cup of your favorite specialty coffee from a few years back. In comparison, the cost of electricity has remained largely flat, unlike most other consumer goods.

Like many of you, I have a cell phone to stay connected, and I subscribe to cable channels so I can enjoy more viewing options. Many of us consider these necessities for modern day life. We can see what we're getting for our money, and we pay the price for those services. In contrast, when we use electricity, we don't necessarily "see" all that we're getting for our money.

But considering what electricity does for us, it's a tremendous value for our quality of life as well as our budgets. For comparison, consider that the average rent increase was nearly 4% (from 2014-2019) according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index (CPI). The cost of medical care was increased 3% during this time, and education was not too far behind at 2.6%. So, where did electricity rank? According to the CPI, electricity increased by less than half a percentage point, 0.4%.

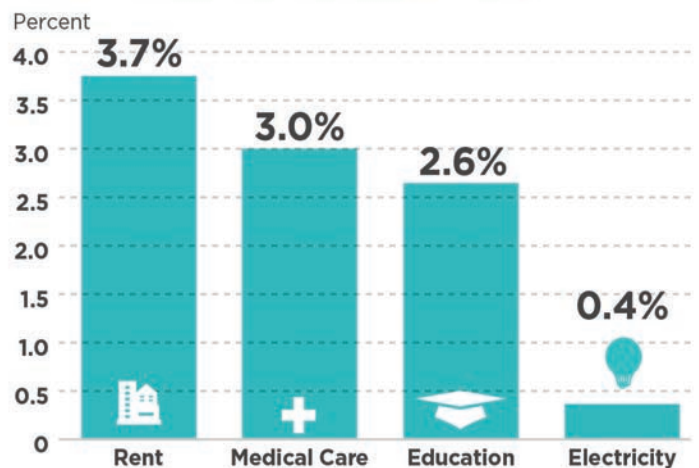
The bottom line: electricity brings everyday value. Considering that electricity is something that we all use around the clock, we are striving to increase our service reliability, reduce those brief interruptions yet reduce costs as much as we can. Through our partnership with Wabash Valley Power Alliance, we are continually working to improve our operations to provide the reliable service you expect and deserve as valued Members of the Co-op.

We recognize that the past few months have been challenging for many of our Members and we are here to help. If you have questions about your account or are looking for ways to save energy at home, please give us a call. MJM is *your* Electric Co-op and our sole purpose is to serve you and the needs of our community. That's everyday value. 🌟

ELECTRICITY REMAINS A GOOD VALUE

The cost of powering your home rises slowly when compared to other common expenses. Looking at price increases over the last five years, it's easy to see electricity remains a good value!

Average Annual Price Increase 2014-2019



Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
Consumer Price Index

A \$olid Investment in Your Electric Co-op

As a Member of MJM, you make an investment in the Co-op every time you pay your bill. This collective investment in the Co-op benefits you and the community immediately and over time. So, what exactly is this monthly investment, and how do you benefit from it?

The *service delivery charge* is a monthly investment that helps your Co-op cover the expenses of maintaining the overall electric system. Combatting cyber security threats and maintaining poles, wires, substations, and Co-op equipment takes strategic planning and significant resources. The *service delivery charge* essentially ensures that all equipment operates properly, and staff is trained and ready, so the lights turn on when you need them.

Regardless of how much electricity a particular family uses, the cost of delivering power to that house is the same. As a not-for-profit Electric Cooperative, we believe the operational costs should be spread fairly and equitably across all of our Members, regardless of the level of electricity use. That is why every Member in each rate class pays the service delivery charge each month to cover basic operational costs. Members are charged the same amount for the cost of operation since they benefit from the same service. In essence, this gives each MJM Member a share in MJM's operation.

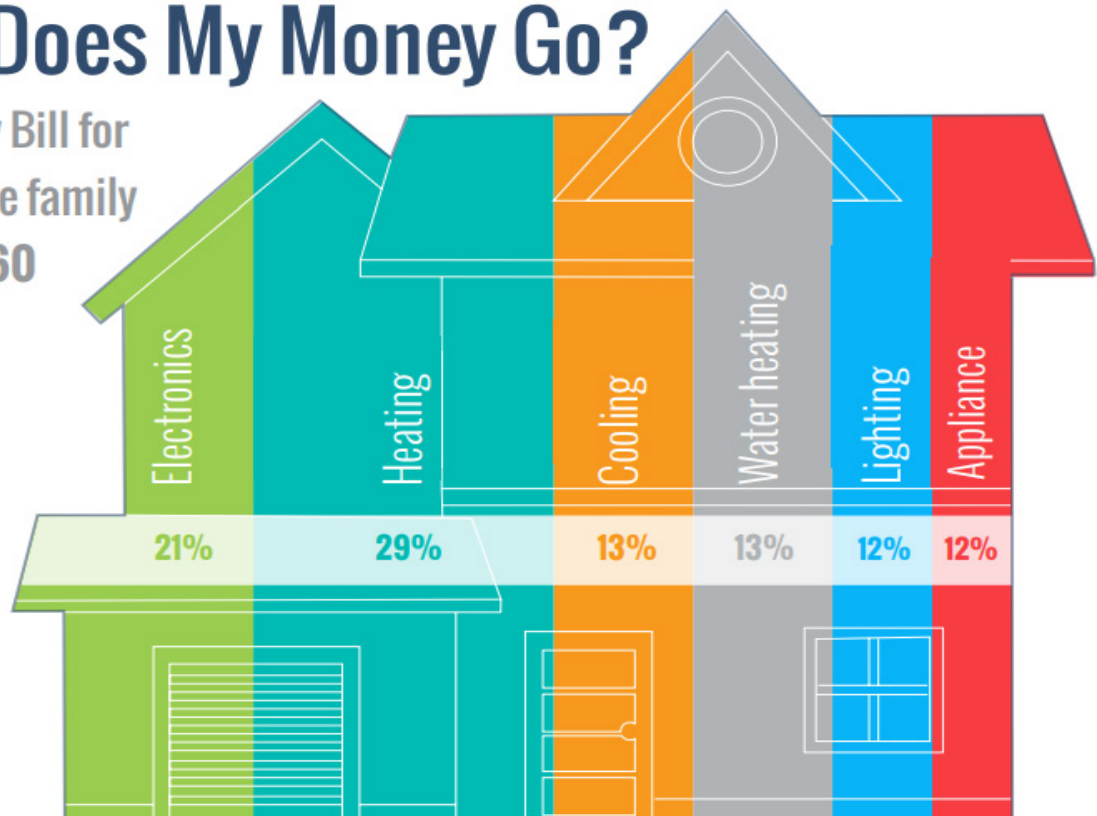
Your monthly investment ensures you have access to safe, reliable, and affordable power when you need it. We appreciate and value the investment that you make in the Co-op each month, and we strive to use that investment wisely for the benefit of all Members of our community. 🌈

Where Does My Money Go?

Annual Energy Bill for a typical single family home is \$2,060

Electronics include: telephone and external power adapters, consumer electronics (computer, TVs and DVD player), home office equipment, and small appliances

Appliance include: refrigerator, dishwasher, clothes, washer and dryer



Source: Typical House Factoid Memo. Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. April 2013.

Avoid Hazards with Grain Bins and Power Lines

Electrical power is an indispensable part of modern agricultural operations. In fact, electricity is such a commonplace part of a farm operation that it can all too easily become a part of the scenery and its hazards overlooked. One often overlooked safety consideration is the power line clearance required for grain bins. Safe Electricity provides tips on avoiding electrical hazards around the farm, including the construction of grain bins.


Electrical hazards include large equipment and farm structures near overhead power lines. The best way to avoid problems is to keep equipment and new constructions a safe distance from power lines.

Equipment and vehicles, such as augers and grain trucks, around grain bins are particularly at risk of coming into contact with overhead power lines. It is important that bins be built a safe distance from power lines to help ensure the safety of all farm workers.

The National Electrical Safety Code sets the minimum distance that power lines must be above and around grain bins. Your state and utility may have additional requirements. If planning on constructing a new grain bin, contact your local utility before any construction begins. They can help you determine minimum safety requirements.

Keep these additional safety tips in mind anytime you are operating large farm equipment around power lines:

- Keep equipment at least 10 feet from lines—at all times, in all directions.
- Inspect the height of the farm equipment to determine clearance.
- Always remember to lower extensions when moving loads.
- Use a spotter when operating large machinery near lines.
- Never attempt to move a power line out of the way or raise it for clearance.
- If a power line is sagging or low, contact your local utility.

If equipment does come into contact with a power line, remember, stay on the equipment until the utility has arrived to de-energize the lines. Warn others to stay away, and call the local utility provider immediately. The only reason to exit is if the equipment is on fire. If this is the case, jump off the equipment with your feet together and without touching the ground and vehicle at the same time. Then, still keeping your feet together, “bunny hop” away to safety. 



LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD!

There's an old political saying, "If you're not at the table, you're on the menu." This adage is the perfect answer to the question, "Why vote?" It's a blunt description of what happens when you don't engage in the political process.

If you don't vote, you're not only missing the opportunity to support a candidate that shares your views and concerns, you're allowing others to chart a course that impacts your future. That's why we're encouraging all MJM Members to recognize National Voter Registration Day on September 22, 2020. Whether you're registering yourself or others to vote, or helping members of our community get organized, there are many ways to get involved.

Your vision, your vote

While local elections may not be as exciting as the high-profile presidential election, they are just as critical. Local elections have a direct impact on your community and on your quality of life.

Like the national level, local elections represent who we are as a community, and more importantly, where we want to go. Whether it's an election for a mayor, sheriff, state representative, school board, or an electric co-op board member, your vision for the community is tied to your vote.

Voting keeps elected officials accountable. Elections are a direct and tangible source of feedback. For example, MJM's Board of Directors provide strategic guidance on the direction of the Co-op and how it serves the community. Local board members embody the voice and identity of the community.


Staying in sync with the community

Ultimately, the role of the Co-op Board is governance. While day-to-day decisions are made by our employees, bigger decisions are made by the Board, whose mission is look out for the vitality of the Co-op and the Members we serve. MJM's Board of Directors provide their perspective on community priorities, thereby enabling us to make more informed decisions on long-term investments.

However, Boards are not perfect, and we need you, the Members of the Co-op, to help keep the system in check. We depend on you and your neighbors to vote so that we can stay on course and ensure that we are in sync with the community that we serve.

A strong voter turnout shows investment in the community and ensures that a diverse number of views are represented. The whole community benefits when more people participate in the process, because greater numbers reflect a consensus on the direction of the future and the will of the people.

By voting in national, state and local elections, you are serving as a role model for your family, friends and colleagues. The act of voting demonstrates your support for the community and helps officials chart a course for the future. Democracy is not a spectator sport. Research candidates, learn about issues that are on the ballot and get out and vote!

To learn more about National Voter Registration Day or to get involved, visit www.nationalregistrationday.org. 



September 22, 2020

Member Trading Post

FOR SALE: 40 ft TV tower in 10-foot sections. Asking \$150. 618-334-4298

FOR SALE: small girl's bike with training wheels-\$10, desk-\$15, medium pet carrier-\$10, Bumbo seat-\$6, Graco stroller with car seat and 3 bases-\$125 217-556-5361

FOR SALE: Club house 2 bed with loft on Illinois River. Located in Fieldon, IL. Hunting area for duck and deer. Asking \$39,900. Please call 314-752-3949

FOR SALE: Coleman Powermate 2500 generator. 2500 running watts. Good for jobsite. Asking \$100. MTD garden tiller. Three tine, chain driven. Asking \$50. Please call 618-372-8194.

FOR SALE: Power Boss Home Generator – 5500 Watts; 7350 starting Watts, powered by Briggs and Stratton. Model – 030240, AC volts – 120/240; AC Amps – 45.8/22.9; AC Watts – 5500. Maybe used three times. Asking \$500. Call Bill Harding at 217-854-6071.

FOR SALE: 4' pull behind grass thatcher with 5hp engine. New carb, new teeth, new gas tank. Asking \$125. Also selling a 8' land plane/driveway grader. Cat 2 but can be set for Cat 1 for 50-90hp tractor. Asking \$1,000. Please call 618-535-5158.

FOR SALE: Case/IH 2166 combine, 3435 E/hrs, 2647 R/hrs, hopper extension, auto chain oiler, rock trap, always shredded. \$29,500 Call 618-964-4061

FOR SALE: Skid steer brush and tree shredding, trees up to 5". Central Illinois area. Call Jim for more information/pricing at (618) 420-4744

FOR SALE: Metal puppy crate. 24 W - 36 L – 26 H. Asking \$30. Wheelchair ramp for \$25. FREE two large oak trees. You cut, haul, and clean up. Call 618-635-2391

FOR RENT: Camper, car and boat storage in Carlinville area. 618-334-4298

To list your free ad, email brookeg@mjmec.coop, call 217-707-6156, or mail the ad to MJM Electric Cooperative, 18300 Shipman Road, P.O. Box 80, Carlinville, IL 62626. Each ad will run for one month. Some restriction may apply. Thank you.