

Menard Electric Cooperative's

Connect to MEC



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Menard Electric Cooperative's

75th Anniversary

On a warm summer night, in a small room at the Farm Bureau Building in Petersburg, a group of rural residents met to discuss the formation of an electric cooperative, one of the first in Illinois. That was June 13, 1936.

That night Menard Electric Cooperative was formed. At that time, city residents had had the luxuries of electricity for many years. But life on the farm continued as it had for the generations before.

A large division appeared between rural life and city life. Refrigerators, lights, washing machines and many more items had lightened the load for city families while those in the country continued on as if electricity had never been created. Hauling water, using wood stoves, scrubbing clothes, lighting kerosene lanterns and using outdoor plumbing were still parts of everyday life. The hardships endured were great.

A farmer giving witness in a Tennessee church in the early 1940s said, "Brothers and sisters, I want to tell you this. The greatest thing on earth is to have the love of God in your heart, and the next greatest thing is to have electricity in your house."

The men who met in 1936 to form Menard Electric were looking to ease the burdens put on rural families. August 1937, just over one

year and a great deal of hard work after that first meeting, the first members received electricity in their homes.

From the beginning, Menard Electric sought to keep its members informed about its operations and involved in electing directors to govern the non-profit organization. An annual meeting of members was held that first year and one has been held every year since. Hopefully you've joined us for one.

Next year will mark our 75th annual meeting of members. We're making plans to celebrate this milestone and need your help.

We'll be putting together a historical cookbook to be given as a gift to all members who attend the 75th annual meeting in June 2012. The cookbook will feature recipes from our members sprinkled with a bit of history about your cooperative. But we



need your help. Use the form here to submit your recipe.

And keep your eye here on your Illinois Country Living magazine each month to read more about your co-op's first years and the changes we've seen through the past 75 years.

Time to tackle that to-do list

“Dad! There’s a tree growing out of our house!”

Is it time to clean the gutters? The summer heat has been a good reason to delay those kind of projects but that’s hopefully all behind us now. It might be time to get started on your honey-do list before the winter winds start blowing. Keep these tips in mind to stay safe as you tackle all your small jobs.



- ❑ If you’re using a ladder to complete caulking or other outdoor jobs, be sure to carry it horizontally whenever possible and always look up and around you for power lines.
- ❑ If you have lines attached to your home, keep yourself and your equipment 10 feet away.
- ❑ Never trim trees near lines – leave that to us.
- ❑ Never use a water or blower extension to clean gutters near electric lines.
- ❑ If you’re using power tools outdoors, choose a heavy-duty outdoor extension cord. Never remove or bend back the third prong on a cord—it is designed to reduce the risk of electrocution or shock. And if your outdoor outlets aren’t protected by a GFCI, it is a good idea to use a portable GFCI cord or outlet to protect yourself against shock, especially in damp conditions.
- ❑ Use common sense and don’t try to complete tasks if it is raining or the ground is wet.
- ❑ If a project involves digging, call JULIE at 811 before you begin. Never assume where underground utility lines are. The service is free and is completed in just a few days. It can save your life if you hit a line, and save you a bunch of money, too, if you were to damage one.

Monthly Safety Tip

Safe Harvest

Keep equipment 10 feet from lines and use care when raising augers or truck beds. If you make contact with a line, always stay in the cab, call for help and warn others to stay away. Visit www.safeelectricity.org for more tips.



Board Meeting Report

For full minutes please visit our website at www.menard.com or contact our office.

Present were Manager Lynn Frasco, Attorney Charles Smith and Directors Jerry Brooks, Michael Carls, Jay Frye, Warren Goetsch, Gary Martin, Donald McMillan, Michael Patrick, Roy Seaney and Steven Worner. Director Donald McMillan was absent.

Received a preliminary draft of Cost of Service Study from AIEC. Frasco advised that Staff had not yet had a chance to fully review the draft.

Frasco discussed letter from Kenneth Sharp regarding his opinion

that electric utilities should remove power poles along roadways.

IRS mileage rate changed to 55.5 cents.

Capital Credit General Retirement for 2011 totaled \$349,185.51; 1,145 active accounts received payment.

Reviewed Home Program. 135 Member Audits completed and 4 scheduled. Rebates in process totaled \$78,651.91; balance of \$18,831.00 uncommitted.

Discussed 2011 Annual Meeting; 770 meals served and 356 members

registered.

Year to date margins were \$177,728 compared to \$637,237 a year earlier. Equity as of the end of May was 33.63 percent and the number of members served was 10,524 compared to 10,509 a year ago.

Net Utility Plant at the end of May was \$35,859,772 compared to \$35,409,942 last year. The cooperative continues to meet the requirements of the RUS, FFB and NRUCFC.

Make One Change

We encourage you to make one small, no-cost change each month to save energy. To find out how all the little changes add up visit www.togetherwesave.coop.

Smarter Television

Have a high-definition television? Many come with a quick-start option. Turn it off to save energy and add only seconds to your start-up time. If you can, plug your television DVR, DVD and game console into a power strip. When you're not watching TV or recording a show later, flip the strip's off button to save stand-by power.

Capital Credit Allocation

A message appeared on the electric bill you received the first week of August. It included the amount of capital credits allocated to your account for electricity you purchased in 2010. These allocations are not available as cash nor can they be applied as payment to your bill. Capital credits are paid to members as the board of directors dictates according to the financial condition of the cooperative. The capital credits allocated to you will remain with your membership until they can be retired. This is why it is important that we retain a current updated address for you even if you move off our lines.

