

THE GRID

P.O. Box 709
(104 Dewitt Ave., East)
Mattoon, Illinois 61938

Phone: 217/235-0341
or Toll-Free:
1-888-661-CMEC (2632)
Office hours:
Monday-Friday
7:30a.m. - 4:30p.m.

Chairman
Debbie Albin..... Mattoon

Vice Chairman
John Bowers..... Lovington

Secretary
Bill Voyles..... Sullivan

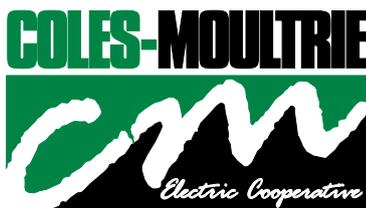
Treasurer
Jeffery Hudson..... Charleston

Directors
Andrew Fearn.... Charleston
Kent Metzger Gays
Thomas Sherman... Humboldt

President/CEO
Amy Borntrager

To Report an Outage
call #888-661-2632

Send your current email
to info@cmec.coop
for a chance to win a
\$25 bill credit



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Oh, Give Me a Home Where the Buffalo Roam

Farmer and rancher safety

We don't have to remind those who work the land and raise livestock that they have a potentially dangerous occupation. However, due to the nature of the job, and because of long days and tiring work, here are some reminders about electrical dangers on the farm or ranch.

Overhead power lines

If you contact a power line, guy wire, utility pole, electrical box or any other electrical equipment, do not get out of your cab or truck. Stay put and call 9-1-1 to dispatch the local utility to de-energize the power. If you must get out due to smoke or fire, make a solid jump out without touching any part of the tractor or vehicle, and hop or shuffle away as far as you can, keeping both feet together as you go.

Determine proper clearance

Contact us to measure power line heights; do NOT do this yourself. Once you know the heights, you can determine appropriate equipment, implement and extension clearances. Always maintain at least 10 feet between the power line and the tallest height of the equipment. Keep in mind that due to wear, age and even weather conditions, power lines can change height. Please contact us with any concerns. It's good to know power line clearance, but always have a spotter.

Call us before moving or adding a grain bin

The National Electrical Safety Code addresses grain bins and their

proximity to power lines with specific requirements. The requirements are in place to decrease the chances of farming equipment and machinery coming in contact with power lines. If you plan to build a new grain bin or remodel an area that already has one, contact CMEC at 217-235-0341. We can help with specific code requirements. The taller a grain bin, the farther it must be placed from a power line.

Always dig safely

Whether installing new fence posts or using large tillage tools, call 8-1-1 before you dig to have underground utilities marked. Even if you think you know where buried gas, power and other lines are, don't rely on your memory. Get all utilities marked so you know for sure. Utility locators do not mark private lines.

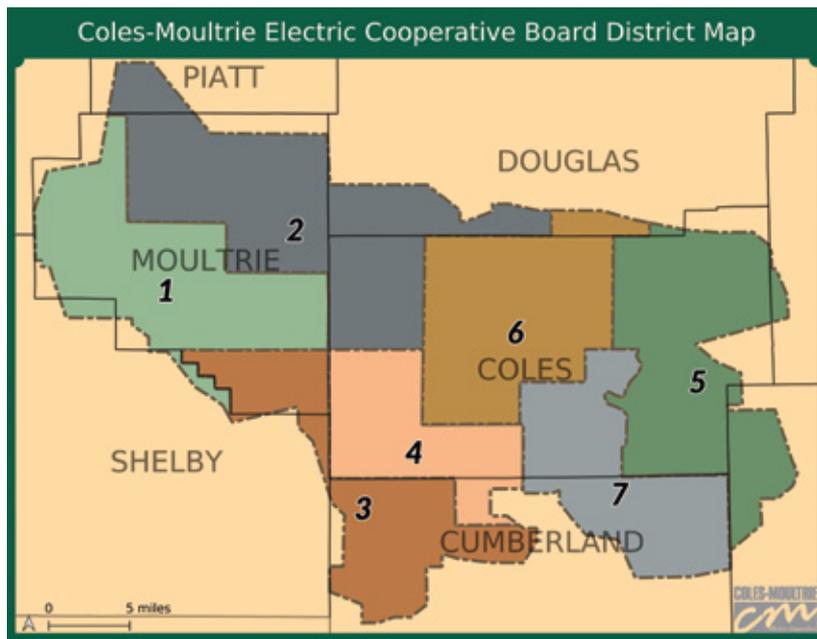
Use standby generators with care. If you have a standby generator to provide essential power during an outage, be sure to correctly use the transfer switch. Once you properly engage the switch, it stops your farm's generated power from entering utility lines. This is called backfeeding, which can electrocute lineworkers who are working to restore power.



Know what's below.
Call before you dig.

Vote Now!

Voting is open now through June 15. Members were mailed ballots around May 18 with the option to return them by mail or vote online. Details are available on our website, www.cmec.coop and included in your mailed ballot packet. Survey Ballot Systems, SBS, will tabulate and report election results electronically to CMEC. District #4 (see map below) was the only contested district up for election in 2020. Nominees are Mike Lefever and Colt Roderick. There are no proposed bylaw amendments this year. Electric cooperatives are member-owned and democratically-controlled, which means your vote counts.



THIS EVENT IS
POSTPONED

COVID-19

81st Annual Meeting

**Due to COVID-19,
our meeting has been
postponed to Sept. 25
to keep our members
and employees safe.**

Follow us on Facebook,
visit our webpage:
www.cmec.coop or
call our office toll free
at 888-661-2632 to
stay updated on
recent changes.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Home cooling makes up a large portion of your energy bills. Try to keep the difference between the temperature of your thermostat setting and the outside temperature to a minimum. The smaller the difference, the more energy you will save.



**Welcome our New
Journeyman Lineman
Peter Homan**

Meet CMEC Senior Staff



Amy Borntrager
President/CEO



Anita Hoene
Director of HR



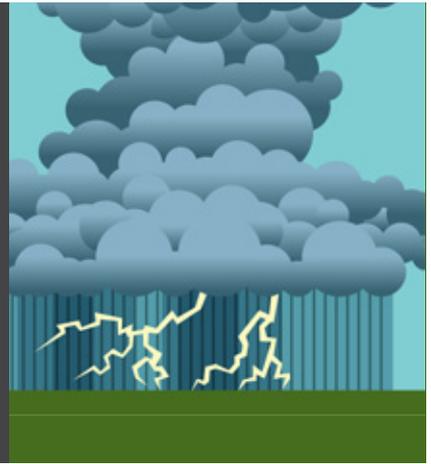
Jim Wallace
Director of Operations
and Engineering



David Welsh
Director of IT

Shocking Facts About Lightning

- There are 25 million cloud-to-ground lightning flashes annually in the U.S.
- Every year, 300 Americans are struck by lightning.
- Of those struck, 30 are killed and others suffer lifelong disabilities.



LOVE THE OUTDOORS? BE **SAFE** OUT THERE

 **$\frac{2}{3}$** of lightning fatalities are associated with outdoor **recreational activities**.

 Pay attention to weather forecasts **before you go canoeing or boating**. Get off the open water as soon as you **hear thunder**.

 **Do not use generators in enclosed areas.** The same goes for grills, camping stoves or other small appliances that produce carbon monoxide.

 **Look up** for power lines while fishing or sailing.
FACT: Fishing is the most common outdoor activity associated with lightning-related deaths.

 **Going for a hike?** If you hear thunder or see lightning, **do not seek shelter under a tree.**

 **Tent camping?** Plan ahead, seek shelter in a hard-top vehicle or four-sided building during a storm or at the first sight of lightning.

For more information, visit:



Let's Talk

The energy industry is undergoing rapid change, and technology is paving the way for innovation in the way energy is used, produced, stored and shared. Consumers are interested in more green energy alternatives while smart homes and apps make managing energy use and paying electric bills more convenient than ever.

While the changing energy market has created more options for consumers, it has also resulted in more utility scams and misleading information surrounding solar installations. That's because of two factors.

Utility scams are common because of the vast number of utilities that exist, and consumers are understandably anxious with the threat of disruption to their electric, heating or water service. Second, new products and services in the energy industry provide an opening for scammers and pop-up companies to provide misleading information or shoddy products and services.

Avoid phone scams

A common phone scam typically begins with a phone number that appears to be from a valid utility company. The scammer will claim you have a past due account and threaten to disconnect service or take legal action. The scammer will typically demand that you use a prepaid debit card or money order, often within a short, urgent time frame to pay the "past due" amount.



You can combat this scam by being aware of the status of your account. Never give your banking or personal information over the phone to someone you did not call. If you have a question or concern about your energy bill, call us directly at 217-235-0341. Do not use the phone number given by the scammer. **White Laundering**

Avoid solar scams

Another scam we see from time to time is connected to rooftop solar. Homeowners with rooftop solar may receive a sales call offering an accessory, upgrade or extended warranty to their solar array. The calls could be from crooks claiming to represent a solar company, promising to replace faulty or broken parts or improve efficiency. Again, if you are not expecting the call, don't be fooled. These calls offering misleading information are likely a scam. Call CMEC or the company that installed the solar array if you think there may be a problem. Other than occasional cleaning, rooftop

solar (if installed correctly) is virtually maintenance-free.

Use trusted sources

If you're considering solar for your home, make sure you are working with a reputable company. Because this is still an emerging industry with evolving technology, there has been a proliferation of pop-up companies in the market to make a quick buck. Representatives of rooftop solar companies may have more sales experience than knowledge of the energy industry, and their primary goal could be making a sale and moving on to the next prospect.

Our cooperative can offer a candid assessment to determine whether rooftop solar is right for you. After all, CMEC has a different "bottom line" that is not directly tied to the sale of a product or service. We take a more holistic, objective view of how to achieve energy and cost savings for our members, and that may or may not include rooftop solar.

In this ever-changing environment, it's important to remember you have a trusted energy advisor - your local electric cooperative. We are a community-focused organization that works to efficiently deliver affordable, reliable and safe energy to our members.

Remember, we're just one call or click away, so please reach out with any questions about your electric service or bills - we're here to help.

Find Your Name and Win \$25

Find your name hidden inside this issue of **The Grid** and receive a **\$25 bill credit**. Credit must be claimed by the end of each month in which this newsletter is published.



Monthly Board Meeting Minutes can be viewed on our website: cmeccoop.com