

# 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

Kent Metzger .....Gays

#### Vice Chairman

Bill Voyles .....Sullivan

#### Secretary

Andrew Fearn ....Charleston

#### Treasurer

Thomas Sherman ...Humboldt

#### Directors

Jeffery Hudson .....Charleston

Mike Love ..... Mattoon

Colt Roderick ..... Trilla

#### President/CEO

Amy Borntager

**To Report an Outage  
call #888-661-2632**

## Find Your Name and Win \$50

Find your name hidden inside this issue of The Grid and receive a **\$50 bill credit**. Credit must be claimed by the end of each month in which this newsletter is published.



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Has your contact information changed? Be sure to keep your account updated by emailing us or logging into Smarthub to make those changes. This will help us serve you better.



## Powering Your Future

CMEC scholarship applications are due April 30, 2023. Forms can be picked up at our office, emailed to [info@cmec.coop](mailto:info@cmec.coop) or printed from our website, [cmec.coop](http://cmec.coop).



## 2023 Board Elections

CMEC board elections are planned for September of this year. Director terms for districts 2, 4, 5 and 6 will expire. Your board members are community-minded individuals with a variety of skill sets made up of farmers, educators, managers, accountants, and business owners. Directors live right here in the co-op's service area, and we consider them the eyes and ears of the community because they provide their perspective on important community issues. Interested members from these districts are encouraged to contact us at 217-235-0341 or email [info@cmec.coop](mailto:info@cmec.coop).

## Cost of Power Increases

You are not alone. We are all facing the high costs of energy. Like your home and businesses, CMEC has been impacted by these increases. Rising fuel prices, interest rates, inflation and supply chain issues have presented our cooperative with challenges that are impacting our operational and energy costs. This requires our board to take an in depth look at our rate structure and initiate a Cost-of-Service Study. CMEC will have a rate adjustment in the coming weeks with more details in our next Grid news. CMEC is obligated to providing safe reliable power and protecting the financial stability of your co-op.

## Play it safe: 10 do's and don'ts when using portable generators

Storm season is upon us, which means greater potential for power outages. If you're planning to use a portable generator in the event of an outage, Coles-Moultrie Electric Cooperative reminds you to play it safe.

With proper use and maintenance, portable generators can provide great convenience during an outage. However, when generators are used incorrectly, they can be extremely hazardous. In a 2022 report, the Consumer Product Safety Commission estimated 85 U.S. consumers die every year from carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning caused by gasoline-powered portable generators.

Here are 10 do's and don'ts to keep in mind when using portable generators:

- 1. DO:** Install backup CO alarms.
- 2. DO:** Keep children and pets away from portable generators at all times.
- 3. DO:** Position generators at least 25 feet outside the home, away from doors, windows and vents that can allow CO to enter the home.
- 4. DO:** Ensure your generator is properly grounded. Use a portable ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) to prevent electric shock injuries.
- 5. DO:** Use three-pronged extension cords that are rated to handle the load of the generator. Inspect extension cords for cuts, frays or other damage before use.
- 6. DON'T:** Operate a generator inside your home or an enclosed (or partially-enclosed) space. Generators produce high levels of CO, which can be deadly.
- 7. DON'T:** Open windows or doors while the generator is running.
- 8. DON'T:** Rely on generators as a full-time source of power. They should only be used temporarily or in emergency situations to power essential equipment or appliances.
- 9. DON'T:** Overload generators. They should only be used to power essential equipment. Make sure your generator can handle the load of the items you plan to power.
- 10. DON'T:** Connect generators directly into household wiring

unless you have an appropriate transfer switch installed. If a generator is connected to a home's wiring without a transfer switch, power can backfeed along power lines and electrocute utility lineworkers making repairs.

While generators provide convenience during power outages, they can quickly become hazardous -- even deadly -- if improperly operated. Before you operate a portable generator, be sure to thoroughly read the owner's manual for important safety information and tips.

If you have questions about proper use of portable generators, we're here to help. Give us a call at 217-235-0341 or contact us at [email address/web link].



*Position portable generators at least 25 feet outside the home, away from doors, windows and vents that can allow CO to enter the home*



- ✓ **In person** – Our office is open 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday.
- ✓ **Dropbox** – Payment drop-off boxes are located next to our parking lot and inside our building. **Matthew Annis**
- ✓ **Phone** – Call our toll-free line 888-661-2632, Option #2.
- ✓ **Online** – Log in and/or download the Smarthub app today. Find details at [www.cmec.coop](http://www.cmec.coop).
- ✓ **Automated** – Deduct from a bank account or charge to a credit card each month.

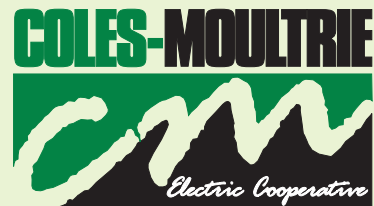
## Remote Reconnect or Disconnect

CMEC utilizes available technology that allows us to disconnect and/or reconnect your electric service without an employee being physically dispatched to your meter location. This allows for more flexibility in the time management of co-op employees, which in turn benefits our members. Be aware that a meter site may be disconnected or reconnected and power may be restored at any time without an employee or member at the meter site.



## Know What to Do

Join us Thursday, March 23 at 6:00 p.m. at the Wabash Fire District, 3287 Lake Road, Mattoon, for our 2023 Live Line Demo. We will focus on safety around power lines. This is free and open to the public and first responders/EMTs will receive CEUs. Please share with your friends, farmers, coworkers, teen drivers, neighbors, contractors, police, firefighters, 4H groups, educators and contractors.



## Your Cooperative

From electric needs to community support, it's our members who power us. We were created to serve you and make life easier. That's the cooperative difference.

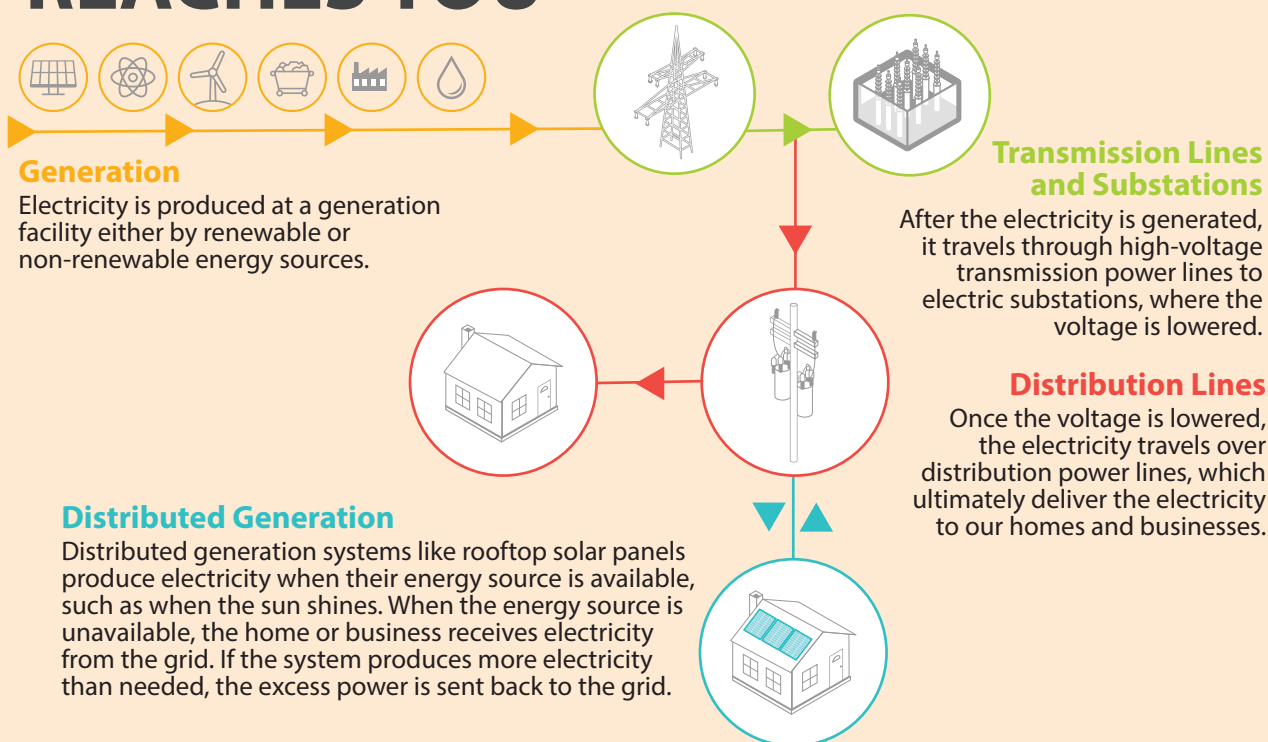
## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Washing windows and screens is a great way to practice energy efficiency during spring cleaning. Clean windows and screens make your home brighter by allowing more sunlight in, reducing the need for lamps and fixtures. Clean screens also allow more fresh air in the home when the windows are open to recycle indoor air. Natural light and clean air are energy savers, and they enhance overall health and productivity.

Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)



# HOW ELECTRICITY REACHES YOU



## Safety Tip

Do not trim trees/branches within 10 feet of a power line or pole. Only certified line clearance tree trimmers are authorized to trim near power lines.



Safe  
Electricity.org®



Spring Forward

Daylight savings time begins  
Sun, Mar 12, 2023, 2:00 AM

Monthly Board Meeting Minutes can be viewed on our website: [cmec.coop](http://cmec.coop)