

## Rate Increase



**Steve Epperson**  
President/CEO



Our office will be closed Dec. 24 and 25 for Christmas as well as Dec. 31 and Jan. 1 for New Year's. We wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season!!

In recent years the federal government began enacting regulation, which limited the ability to build new electric generation facilities. In the meantime, demand for electricity in the United States has steadily increased. As you might expect, when supply (generation facilities) is limited and demand is increased the price for electricity goes up. McDonough Power Cooperative does not generate its own electricity. Your cooperative purchases electricity on your behalf and distributes it to you over the cooperative's electric lines, poles, and substations. 5310LGH3-260B

While McDonough Power Cooperative strives to minimize costs and maintain good stewardship of the members' distribution system, these costs represent approximately 40 percent of the member's electricity bill - 60 percent is wholesale power costs (the electricity the cooperative purchases on your behalf). Your cooperative would like to thank you for participating in the "Our Energy, Our Future" campaign which emphasizes our concerns with legislators regarding future regulation and legislation. While there is still a great deal of work ahead, this campaign has had a positive impact. However, it cannot undo what has been done. In other words, wholesale power costs have increased substantially. On Jan. 1, 2009 McDonough Power Cooperative saw an increase in wholesale power costs of approximately 60 percent. Jan. 1, 2010 the cooperative anticipates another increase in wholesale power cost of approximately 4 percent.

Realizing the unfavorable dynamics with electricity generation and the potential impact to McDonough Power Cooperative members, several years ago your Board of Directors began develop-

ing contingency plans in order to mitigate future rate increases. These plans included:

- the deferral of revenue, when possible, so it could be applied in times of need;
- the consolidation of duties and the reduction of employees;
- the utilization of new technologies in order to create internal efficiencies and cost containment;
- the refinancing of debt during opportune times to decrease interest expense;
- the reduction of line loss (escaped electricity).

As a result of these and other proactive measures, your cooperative is limiting the members' rate increase to an average of 2.6 percent (\$2 increase in the facility charge and a slight increase to the energy charge). It is also eliminating the declining rate structure. This structure provided modest decreases in energy charges as more kWh's were purchased. Jan. 1, 2010, when new rates take effect, there will be a single energy rate for each rate class regardless of consumption.

Thank you so much for your support and understanding regarding this unpopular and unfortunate subject. McDonough Power Cooperative is blessed with great members who work hard and care deeply about their community. Please know your cooperative is committed to protecting your interests and advocating on your behalf. As always, please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or concerns.



# McDonough Power Cooperative

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[www.mcdonoughpower.com](http://www.mcdonoughpower.com)

Office hours:  
7 a.m. - 4 p.m. - Weekdays

## DIRECTORS

Michael Cox, Chairman

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## Co-op Connections Featured Business Café Aroma

**"F**or I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in." This verse from Matthew 25:35 inspired the creation of Café Aroma in Macomb. Café Aroma is a not-for-profit coffee house, owned and operated by Vineyard Church. Doug Stiles and congregants of Vineyard Church opened Café Aroma in 2007 because they wanted to unify the community and make folks feel welcome no matter what religion, race, or beliefs they have.

A portion of the proceeds from the coffee house is donated to Ninos de Mexico, an orphanage that takes in abused, abandoned, and/or battered children. Ninos de Mexico is located in Mexico City, Mexico. Currently, Café Aroma is sponsoring two children who have been taken in by Ninos de Mexico. The other portion of the proceeds allows Café Aroma to give free meals and drinks to those in need. Café Aroma truly believes in the spirit of generosity!



Café Aroma is a great place to get foodstuffs, coffee, and enjoy live music! They exclusively brew all fair trade coffees. Although fair trade coffee is more expensive, the benefits greatly outweigh the costs for everyone. The purpose of fair trade coffee is to promote healthier working conditions and greater economic incentive for producers. They also carry eco-friendly products to ensure a cleaner environment. Café Aroma recently introduced French Press Coffee. This is basically a more delicious brewing method. They are proud to say they are the only place in Macomb which offers French

Press Coffee. Not only does Café Aroma offer coffee, but they also feature a wide array of deli selections. Their menu includes a variety of paninis, wraps, and salads. They also offer a splendid collection of live music. They boast live music every Wednesday and Friday, as well as a live concert twice a month!

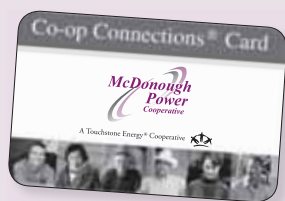
Those that bring it all together at Café Aroma include Lindsay Luecht who is the General Manager. She is married to Keith Luecht and together they lead worship every Sunday at Vineyard Church. They currently live in Macomb. Lindsay is a native of the area as she was born and raised in Bushnell. Becklynn Holland is a Shift Manager and the Arts Director. She is married to Nathan Holland and is several weeks pregnant! They currently live in Macomb; however she grew up in the military and has lived all over the world. Other employees include Rachel Self, Erin Miller, Liz Thielemann, Ashleigh Cholek, Paul Reese, Nolan Smith, and Dave Lester.

Café Aroma joined our Co-op Connections program in June of 2009. They are offering 10 percent off the total bill on Mondays and Tuesdays. This excludes "Cappi Hour" which runs everyday from 4-6 p.m. and offers customers' half price espresso bar and blended drinks. You can find these Co-op Connection specials at 301 W. University Drive in Macomb. Remember, you must bring your Co-op Connections card or key fob to receive these deals. They are open Monday-Friday 7 a.m.-11 p.m. and every Saturday they offer a breakfast buffet from 8 a.m.-1 p.m.





## Being a Co-op member has its advantages



**M**cDonough Power launched a program in October which offers further proof that being a member of an electric cooperative has its advantages. The Co-op Connections program benefits cooperative members by offering 10 percent to 60 percent savings on most prescriptions at over 60,000 independent pharmacies and national chains including CVS, Walgreens, Wal-Mart, Target, and more.

Since the cards were distributed in October, McDonough Power members have filled 39 prescriptions with the card and saved a total of \$511.23.

This is just one more way you win from being a cooperative member. Simply present your Co-op Connections card at a participating pharmacy with your prescription and receive a discount at the time of purchase. Whenever a Co-op Connections card holder – whether from McDonough Power or from any of the other participating Touchstone Energy cooperatives across the country – shows their card, they will receive a 10 percent to 60 percent discount on most prescriptions.

## Take Note – Extended Outage Information

**I**n the event of an extended power outage McDonough Power will periodically provide updates to our website as well as our call center up-front message. Here's how to access the information during an extended outage:

- If you have internet access simply log on to [www.mcdonoughpower.com](http://www.mcdonoughpower.com) and click on Current Outage Information.
- Call our emergency outage line at (309) 837-1400 and wait on the line for the up-front call center message.

If you have an outage to report that is not related to the outage information being provided please make sure to report your outage by calling our emergency outage line at (309) 837-1400.

## How To Weather a Winter Outage

**S**evere winter storms containing high winds and ice can cause widespread and prolonged outages. Always call your cooperative when you have an outage, and follow these steps to get through it safely.

1. Have the following on-hand this winter:
  - Battery-powered radio
  - Flashlights
  - Extra batteries
  - Extra blankets
  - Spare containers you can fill with water for drinking/washing/hygiene
  - Food that doesn't require cooking and a hand-held can opener
  - Extra prescription medicines
  - Special items for infant, elderly or disabled family members
  - A first aid kit
2. If you have a standby generator, make sure you operate it safely and have a transfer safety switch. Install a transfer safety switch now, before your generator is needed. The switch will prevent

electricity from traveling back through the electric lines, making the lines very dangerous for crews working to restore your power. 5310A7-260A

3. Switch off lights and appliances so you don't overload your circuits when power is restored. Leave on one lamp to signal when your power is back on.
4. Close off any unused rooms.
5. If you fear your water pipes will freeze and you don't have a well, turn the taps on slightly so water slowly drips. If you are on a well you can shut off the main water supply to your home and then turn all the taps on all the way to drain any remaining water (pour this water into containers so you can use it for drinking, washing, etc.)
6. If using grills to heat food, use them outside only, away from the house, to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.



7. Don't open the refrigerator or freezer. Food can stay fresh in a full refrigerator for 24 hours, and in a full deep freezer for 48 hours (24 hours if only half full).
8. Stay inside when possible and dress in layered clothing.

**Warning:** Never go near downed electrical lines. Even if your power is out, the lines could be energized. Call your cooperative immediately and inform them of any dangerous lines.

# BE SAFE

## Annual tradition causes life-changing injury

For millions of people every year, the holiday season comes with traditions of festive lights and decorations, extraordinary foods and lavish parties. Unfortunately, time-honored traditions can easily end in tragedy if precautions are not taken. Five years ago, Shawn Miller was one of these people.

His mother, Maria Worth, found her son on the ground with wisps of smoke coming from his body. Miller was unconscious and badly burned. He had been hanging holiday lights in the trees that lined her yard. As he tossed the lights up into the trees, 7200 volts of electricity entered his body, traveling from the overhead power lines through his strand of lights.

"Power lines were the last thing on my mind that day," said Miller. "I was just hanging Christmas lights at my Mom's house like I do every year, only this time, I was decorating a new area, the trees that lined the front of the yard."

Although Miller suffered 27 exit wounds, the loss of his left hand and a finger on his right hand, Miller considers his survival to be miraculous and urges others to use caution this holiday season. He has joined forces with Safe Electricity's Teach Learn Care TLC campaign to spread awareness about the importance of electrical safety.

"Shawn Miller has a lot to teach us about electrical safety and we are grateful he is sharing his story through our Teach Learn Care TLC campaign," says Molly Hall, Executive Director of Safe Electricity. "We want people to learn from his tragic experience and care enough to share it with those they love."

Miller also wants others to learn from his experience.

"I'm lucky to be alive," Miller said. "I want everyone to be careful, be aware of power lines."

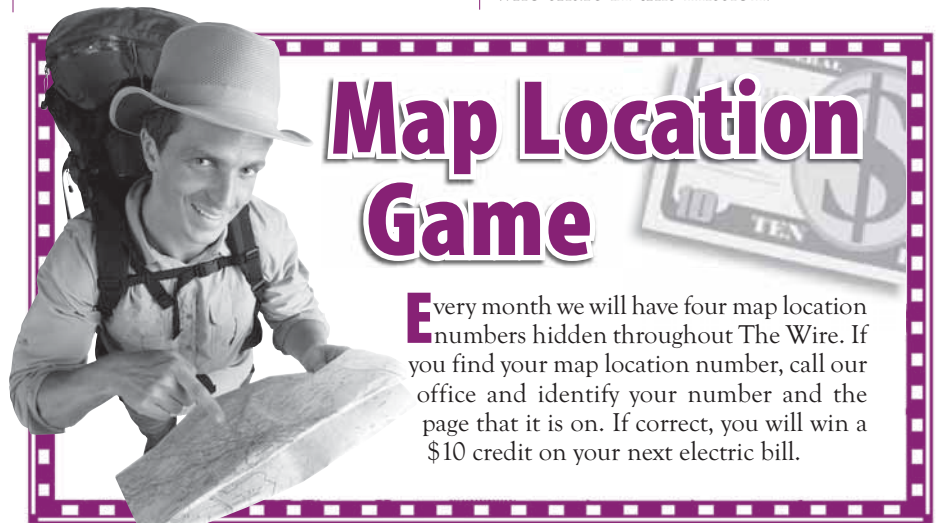
Safe Electricity and Miller urge everyone to follow these guidelines as you prepare for the holiday season:

- Never throw holiday lights or other decorations into trees near power lines.
- Use only lights that have been safety tested and have the UL label.
- Before use, check each light string for broken sockets, frayed cords, or faulty plugs. Replace damaged strings. Always unplug light strings while replacing bulbs.
- Don't string together more than three standard-size sets of lights.
- Make sure extension cords are in good condition, are UL-approved and rated to carry the electrical load you will connect to them.
- Match plugs with outlets. Don't force a 3-pronged plug into a 2-pronged outlet or extension cord.
- Do not overload outlets. Use surge protector strips if multiple outlets are needed. 539JN2-266B
- Keep electric cords away from high-traffic areas, and don't run them through doorways, or hide them under rugs or carpets.
- Outdoors, use only lights, cords, animated displays and decorations rated for outdoor use. Cords should be plugged into outlets equipped with GFCIs. Use a portable GFCI if your outdoor outlets are not equipped with them.
- Do not staple or nail through light strings or electrical cords, or attach cords to utility poles
- Don't let children or pets play with light strings or electrical decorations.
- Place fresh-cut trees away from heat sources, such as heat registers, fireplaces, radiators and televisions; and water frequently.
- Always unplug lights before going to bed or leaving your home.

"After something life-changing happens, you become more interested and learn much more," Miller said. "Had I known more before this happened, I might still have two hands and the job I loved. I have to find ways to move on with my life and help people learn from what has happened to me. Safe Electricity is helping me help others."

For more information on electrical safety and to learn more about Shawn's compelling story visit [www.SafeElectricity.org](http://www.SafeElectricity.org).

Safe Electricity is a public awareness program of the Energy Education Council ([www.EnergyEdCouncil.org](http://www.EnergyEdCouncil.org)), a registered 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization dedicated to promoting electrical safety and energy efficiency. Since 1952, the Council has provided a forum for diverse interests to come together on the mutually vital issues of electrical safety, efficiency, renewable energy and power quality. Headquartered at the University of Illinois, Council members include electric utilities, energy-related organizations, educators and others who share in this mission.



### Map Location Game

Every month we will have four map location numbers hidden throughout The Wire. If you find your map location number, call our office and identify your number and the page that it is on. If correct, you will win a \$10 credit on your next electric bill.