

How the Cooperative Difference Affects Your Rates



At McDonough Power Cooperative the people who receive electricity are not just customers, they are members of our cooperative. Members enjoy certain rights that customers don't have with other electric providers. For instance, as a member of McDonough Power, you can choose to run for a board seat. Because you can vote in the annual election for the board candidates of your choice, our board is composed of people who live and work in the very territory that McDonough Power serves.

Many people, however, don't understand the various ways their membership in a cooperative affects their rates. At McDonough Power, our rates are based on two main components – the actual cost of the wholesale power we buy from the company that generates electricity, and the cost for us to get that power to you.

Our power provider, Prairie Power Inc., which also is a cooperative, sets wholesale power costs. McDonough Power has a seat on Prairie Power's board of directors. As a cooperative, Prairie Power works hard to keep rates low, while guaranteeing a stable supply of electricity.

The second component – the cost for us to get power to you – is all other operational costs, including the cost for poles and lines, the cost and maintenance of trucks and buildings, actual employee costs like wages and benefits, and the costs associated with maintaining records, like the printing and mailing of bills.

One of the biggest advantages of being served by a cooperative is that we work only for you; we don't have stockholders expecting a big quarterly dividend. We are a not-for-profit enterprise, which means we're working only to provide you with economical, reliable service.

We do collect some money, which is figured into your rates, that is used for capital improvements. It helps us to build many of the expensive improvements we are required to provide. Any money collected in excess of those required funds is allocated to each customer account as patronage capital.

Patronage capital, or capital credits as they are often called, represents your investment in the cooperative and all its assets. 5219C9A-570A

While capital credits are not returned every year, the board of directors that you elect considers at least once a year whether or not we can return some of these investment dollars to our members.

So, when figuring our overall rates, customers need to consider patronage capital in the quotient. Returning capital credits to members is a practice unique to the cooperative form of business and represents one of the cooperative principles – members' economic participation. And perhaps best of all, the benefits of this economic participation accrues to our community.

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.



McDonough Power Cooperative

1210 West Jackson Street
P.O. Box 352
Macomb, Illinois
61455-0352

309-833-2101

www.mcdonoughpower.com

Office hours:
8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

**DISCONNECT DATE:
April 28th**

DIRECTORS

Michael Cox, Chairman

Steve Lynn, Vice Chairman

Steve Youngquist, Secretary

Stan Prox, Treasurer

Robert J. Dwyer

Steve Hall

Walter Lewis

Jeffrey Moore

Jerry Riggins

John D. McMillan, Attorney

**All Co-op Electric
Outages 837-1400**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative
The power of human connections



Conservation and Efficiency – Kissing Cousins “We Need Your Help”

Turn on the lights and TV, boot up the computer, and head to the kitchen to start dinner. Arriving home after a full day at work, most of us walk through a familiar routine.

We hardly take a step that does not involve the reliable flow of electricity. And every light switch or appliance we turn on sends the electric meter outside spinning a little faster and the monthly bill a little higher.

Meanwhile, it’s hard to escape the media coverage surrounding climate change as evening news reporters drone on about global warming.

We watch with concern and ask, “Is there anything one person can do to make a difference?” The answer is an emphatic, “Yes.” It starts with learning all we can about energy conservation and efficiency. While they are not the same thing, they are close relatives.

Conservation occurs when we reduce total consumption of electricity, often achieved by simply turning off anything that consumes electricity when not needed.

Energy efficiency occurs when we replace or upgrade the essentials in our lives (e.g., appliances, lighting, insulation), allowing us to realize the same benefit with less electricity.

If you want to help, log on to www.touchstoneenergysavers.com to perform an online energy audit to assess how much energy your home consumes and evaluate what measures you can take to make your residence more energy efficient. **611A6-168A**

Then, with audit results in hand, take action. The cumulative effect of such small steps in homes and businesses will have a direct impact on our nation’s entire electric grid—reducing demand during peak periods, cutting emissions of greenhouse gases, and lowering overall costs to co-ops and consumer-members. Not to mention energy efficiency helps manage load growth and delays the need to build new electric generation facilities.

America’s electric co-ops are working with public officials at all levels to identify and adopt achievable and balanced solutions to climate change. One of quickest remedies involves embracing those “kissing cousins”—conservation and efficiency—and making them part of our daily routine. Although energy consumption will continue to increase, by using electricity more efficiently, we can slow the overall growth for more power.

ATTENTION • ATTENTION • ATTENTION • ATTENTION • ATTENTION • ATTENTION •

ATTENTION

Please Help Us to Help You!

Current telephone numbers and 911 addresses are vital for our automated outage reporting system to work properly and for the efficient dispatching of our crews. To make sure our records are current, we are enclosing in the April bills a form for you to complete and return with your payment. You may also phone or e-mail your information to us. If you have more than one account, please include all information. Thank you. We appreciate your assistance.

ATTENTION • ATTENTION • ATTENTION • ATTENTION • ATTENTION • ATTENTION •



Position Your Plantings Perfectly

Trees too close to power lines can cause outages, shock and fire hazards.

Before beginning yard landscaping projects this spring, McDonough Power and Safe Electricity want to remind you of the importance of planting tall-growing trees safely away from power lines, and to seek help in choosing and planting trees and bushes that won't grow to interfere with your electric supply.

"We want to encourage all of our members to call JULIE before planting any trees this spring," says Mike Smith of McDonough Power. "Members also need to consider how large the tree will grow and if it will affect power lines, as well as proper positioning for the best energy efficiency benefits."

Trees conduct electricity and can create a safety hazard if limbs grow too close to electric lines. Power outages or momentary interruptions can occur when trees and branches come into contact with overhead lines. Electrical arcing and sparking from a wire to a nearby branch can cause fires. But a greater concern is the safety risk when children

climb trees near power lines. Accidental contact of electric wires with a tree limb or person playing or trimming around the tree could be fatal.

Trees growing near power lines must be pruned to maintain a safe distance from the wires. If you have trees that appear to be growing into power lines, contact your electric provider. Never try to prune them yourself. Utilities have skilled professionals trained to safely prune and trim trees for electric line clearances. **8120SL129-832A**

To avoid future electrical hazards, safe planting tips to remember include:

- Consider mature height of trees. Do not plant near overhead power lines any tree that can grow to 25 feet tall. A mature height of less than 15 feet is recommended.
- Do not plant near underground utility services. Tree roots can grow and interfere with underground pipes, cables and wires. Future repairs to these facilities also could damage the health and beauty of nearby plants and trees.

- Keep areas around electric meters, transformers or other electrical equipment free of any vegetation that could limit utility service access.
- Before digging, call the local underground utility locator service to mark location of underground utilities so that accidental contact, damage and injuries can be avoided.

Before beginning any outdoor excavating or landscaping project, call your electric provider and underground utility locator service to identify and locate all possible utility hazards. Your utility also can provide helpful planting information, or refer you to nursery and landscaping experts for assistance in designing a beautiful, shade-filled yard with trees appropriate to plant near power lines.

"There are many beautiful varieties of low-growing trees and shrubs that provide color, screening and shade," says Mike Smith. "These types of trees co-exist well with power lines and avoid the need for trimming for line clearance."

RECIPES

Zippy Cranberry Appetizer

Ingredients:

- ½ c. sugar
- ½ c. packed brown sugar
- 1 c. water
- 1 pkg. (12 ounces) fresh or frozen cranberries
- 3 T. prepared horseradish
- 1 T. Dijon mustard
- 1 pkg. (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened

Directions:

In a large saucepan, bring sugars and water to a boil over medium heat. Stir in cranberries; return to a boil. Cook for 10 minutes or until thickened, stirring occasionally. Cool. Stir in horseradish and mustard. Transfer to a bowl; refrigerate until chilled. Spread cream cheese on a platter and top with cranberry mixture. Serve with crackers. **12236A7-1058B**

Fresh Asparagus with Balsamic Butter Sauce

Ingredients:

- 1 bunch asparagus (tough ends removed)
- 2 T. butter
- Cooking Spray
- 1 T. Soy Sauce
- Salt & Pepper to Taste
- 1 tsp. Balsamic Vinegar

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Arrange the asparagus on a baking sheet. Coat with cooking spray and season with salt and pepper. Bake asparagus 12 minutes in the preheated oven, or until tender. Melt the butter in a saucepan over medium heat. Remove from heat, and stir in soy sauce and balsamic vinegar. Pour over the baked asparagus to serve.



McDonough Power Cooperative

APPLICATION AUTOMATIC PAYMENT PLAN

If you would like to sign-up for the automatic payment plan, please fill out the following form. Send form and a VOIDED CHECK to McDonough Power Cooperative, PO Box 352, Macomb IL 61455.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone Number: _____

McDonough Power Account Number: _____

Bank Name: _____

Bank Account Number: _____

I, _____, authorize McDonough Power Cooperative to draw monthly bank drafts through the automatic plan (ACH) on the account shown above for the payment of my electric bill in full and any other services I authorize. I understand that I may discontinue my participation at any time by notifying McDonough Power Cooperative in writing. Both McDonough Power Cooperative and the bank may terminate this agreement with 10 days written notice. I understand that McDonough Power Cooperative reserves the right to limit participation in this program to customers whose accounts are in good standing. I understand that the amount of my bill each month will be drafted on the 10th or next business day thereafter. I understand that if funds are not available in my account for the draft to clear, there will be a charge posted to my McDonough Power Cooperative account, for NSF, and I will still be required to make full payment before the due date of the bill.

Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____

****PLEASE STAPLE VOIDED CHECK TO THIS FORM****