

Connect to MEC

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



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Words on the wire

Favorite summer delights



Alisha Anker
General Manager

Let me begin by stating how much of an honor and privilege it was to meet so many of you at the annual meeting a few weeks ago. Thank you for attending the event, sharing your introductions and providing me with the perspective of a Menard Electric Co-op member. I'm very excited to be leading the team at Menard and look forward to joining you all as a member of this history-packed cooperative. Further

coverage and highlights from the 80th annual meeting will be included in next month's issue.

For now, as we approach the dog days of summer, I'm reminded of the seasonal favorites that win my heart over again and again each year.

Tops on the list has to be the sweet corn. The Menard Electric territory is fortunately located right in the heart of specialty crop country where an abundant supply of this delicacy, in my opinion, is grown. Whether boiled in sugar water on the stove top, grilled in the husk on the Weber, or included in any number of relish dishes, this is the one staple no one should go without across the season. A lot of hard work and effort goes in nurturing not only sweet corn, but all the other scrumptious crops grown throughout our co-op's territory, and for that I must shout out a huge **thanks** to all the farmers for pleasing our taste buds this time of the year.

A close second on my seasonal top favorites hit parade are fairs and festivals. No summer calendar is complete without a lineup of carnivals, cruises, craft markets, music, theater and fun. In and around Central Illinois, there

are plenty of options from which to choose. Many of the county fairs held throughout the Menard Electric territory are yet to spring into action. So, whether you're into food, 4-H or the flying scooters, pack up the family this summer and enjoy your favorites. Hope to see you out there... I'll be the one navigating something on a stick with a monster-sized lemonade shake-up!

Finally, I couldn't end a summer favorites article without paying homage to the respect and reverence due the grand ole red, white and blue. This year our country pays tribute for the 241st time to the independence of this great land. The summer midterm Independence Day holiday marks the observance of the freedoms we enjoy, as a nation and as a people. Join me in feeling all sappy, most likely while watching the fireworks or singing "The Star-Spangled Banner," as together we realize how fortunate we are to live in the U.S. of A.

Until next time, may you all have a safe and happy July. Enjoy the memories, enjoy the remembrances, and most of all, enjoy your favorite summer delights!





New Forester/ Field Technician

Ross Cloninger was recently hired as our Forester/Field Technician. He grew up on his family's farm in Chandlerville and says he is pleased to find a job close to home. He knew Menard Electric would be a good fit - he completed an internship with us recently while earning his Bachelor's Degree in Electronics Systems Technology at SIU Carbondale. *Welcome back Ross!*

SAFETY

Electric yard tools

Always use GFCI outlets and outdoor-rated extension cords in good repair. Don't use tools when the ground is wet.

Blood Drive

Menard Electric Cooperative Blood Drive Monday, July 17

12:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Central Illinois Community Blood Center Bloodmobile

Parked at Menard Electric Cooperative's office

14300 IL State HWY 97

(just south of New Salem State Park)

**Please eat before donation
& bring photo ID.**

**The Central Illinois Community Blood Center is
currently running the following promotion:**

All donors will receive a voucher to redeem a \$10 gift card
and will be entered to win a \$2,500 vacation package.

Visit bloodcenter.org for more information



CENTRAL ILLINOIS COMMUNITY BLOOD CENTER

Budget Billing

Our new budget billing cycle starts this month. But it's not too late to sign up! Call now for details. With our budget billing program, you pay the same amount for 11 months, then receive either an amount due or a credit during the 12th month.

Please make room for roadside crews

When the power goes out, so do Menard Electric's line crews. Lineworkers are the first to respond after an outage occurs, and they work tirelessly to restore power to the communities we serve.

If you're traveling and see one of our crews on the side of the road, we kindly ask that you move over if possible and give them a little extra space to work. We deeply care about the safety of all, and this extra precaution ensures just that.

If you approach a crew while traveling on a two-lane road, moving over to the next lane might not be an option. In this case, we simply ask that you slow down when approaching roadside crews. If you approach a crew while traveling on a four-lane road, and safety and traffic conditions allow, we ask that you move over into the far lane.

Utility crews aren't the only ones who could use the extra space. Emergency responders, such as police officers,

PLEASE MOVE OVER FOR EMERGENCY AND UTILITY CREWS

If you see police, firefighters, utility crews or other emergency personnel on the side of the road, please slow down and move over when possible.

Together, we can keep our crews safe.



firefighters and emergency medical technicians, often find themselves responding to emergency situations near busy roadways. We ask that you follow the same procedures mentioned

above to help keep these crews safe.

There's plenty of room for all. Let's work together to keep everyone safe on our local roadways.

The cooperative difference – it matters!

In this series we'll explore all the reasons we are proud to be a cooperative

Cooperative Guiding Principle #4: Autonomy & Independence

Our fourth guiding principle aligns so well with the Fourth of July, it seems the perfect occasion to remind you what the Autonomy and Independence of your co-op means to you, our members.

A group of members like you came together 80 years ago to work cooperatively and form Menard Electric Cooperative. They founded the co-op on seven principles highlighting democracy, fairness and ownership—and through those traits, our independence.

The fourth principle states that

co-ops are autonomous, self-help organizations owned by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their cooperative autonomy.

What does that mean? It means we rely solely upon our own efforts. That you, our members, own this co-op and participate in it by electing our directors and sharing in profits through capital credits. And it means

that we won't ever be controlled by outside stockholders or agencies.

It doesn't mean we never work with other organizations. It says that when we do, we do so in a way that we remain independent and controlled by you, our members.

We hope you celebrate Independence Day with gusto. And that you remember that we celebrate every day being an electric cooperative, because our guiding principles ensure that everything we do is for the benefit of, and under the guidance of, our member-owners.



14300 State Hwy 97
P.O. Box 200, Petersburg, IL 62675

1-800-872-1203 • 217-632-7746
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Board highlights

April 25, 2017 For full minutes visit www.menard.com or contact the office.

- Present: Directors Jay Frye, Warren Goetsch, Gary Martin, Michael Patrick, Roy Seaney, Manager of Accounting & Information Systems Chris Hinton, Manager Alisha Anker & Attorney Charles Smith. Absent: Directors Donald McMillan, Dennis Ryan, Jodine Tate & Steven Worner.
- Area Serviceman Troy Shafer discussed trip to Bolivia with NRECA International.
- Approved Auditor Kevin Kelso's review of 2016 financial audit.
- Anker: Reviewed balance sheet, budget, outage summary, safety report, irrigation report, MISO capacity auction results & CoBank refinancing trend.
- Anker: Discussed investigation of real estate tax assessment of headquarters. Smith to discuss assessment with Menard County Assessor & report back.
- Anker: Gave March financial report. Year to date margins \$118,743 compared to \$314,344 last year. End of March equity 38.26%. Served 10,867 member accounts. Net utility plant \$46,120,964 compared to \$43,989,809 last year. Co-op meets requirements of RUS, FFB, NRUCFC & CoBank.
- Directors signed 2017 Board Conflict of Interest Certification & Disclosure Form.
- Martin certified as Prairie Power, Inc. Director, Worner as Alternate, for annual meeting & board meetings.
- Anker: Reviewed capital credit estate report.
- Board entered into executive session; reconvened.

2017 Annual Meeting held June 15th

This newsletter went to print before our Annual Meeting on June 15, so we'll have coverage of the meeting in the August issue. To see photos and news about the meeting now, visit our website at www.menard.com or Facebook at www.facebook.com/MenardElectric.



EFFICIENCY

Thermostats

Set at 78° or ↑

Keep Food Safe Before, During and After a Power Outage

Unfortunately, power outages do occur from time to time. It's important to know how to keep your food safe during an outage. Use these tips from USDA to help minimize food loss and reduce your risk of illness.

Before power outage



Keep refrigerator at **40° or below**. Freeze items like fresh meat and poultry that you won't use immediately. Keep freezer set to **0° or below**. Group frozen foods to help items stay colder longer.



If you anticipate an extended power outage, buy dry or block ice to keep the fridge and/or freezer cold.

During power outage

Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed!

If the doors stay closed during the length of the outage:



A full freezer will hold its temperature for **48 hours**.



A refrigerator will keep food safe for **four hours**.

After power outage

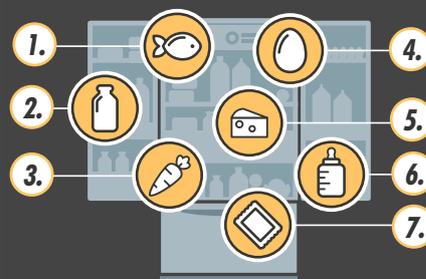


Check the temperature inside your refrigerator and/or freezer.



If the temperatures are safe, the food should be safe to eat.

Foods that should be thrown out after an extended power outage:



1. Meat, poultry or seafood products
2. Milk, yogurt and other dairy products
3. Cooked or sliced produce
4. Eggs and egg products
5. Soft and shredded cheese
6. Opened baby formula
7. Dough and cooked pasta

Source: USDA