

MJM

Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

along the lines

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Students meet with legislators at Youth Day

Pictured in the first row from the left are: Kyle McIndoe of Palmyra, Breanna Hobimer of Palmyra, Catie Witt of Carlinville, David Skipton of Nokomis, Meghan Allen of Carlinville, Macy Murray of Hillsboro, Allison McElroy of Bunker Hill, Kelly McLaughlin of Bunker Hill, Lois Stewart of Nokomis and M.J.M. Electric Cooperative Member Services Director Bronson Borowiak. In the second row from the left are: Sen. Sam McCann, Hannah Sievers of Mt. Olive, Haley Titsworth of Litchfield, M.J.M. Electric Cooperative Office Manager Laura Cutler, Kevin Morrow of Brighton, Will Ward of Brighton, Andrew Niemann of Hillsboro, Austin Scarsdale of Livingston, Rep. Wayne Rosenthal and Rep. Jim Watson.

MJM Electric Cooperative sponsored fifteen area high school juniors on the April 6 Illinois Electric and Telephone Cooperatives Youth Day. Youth Day is an annual educational field trip to Springfield, Ill., sponsored by the state's electric and telephone cooperatives. More than 300 students representing 26 cooperatives attended.

The group sponsored by MJM Electric Cooperative visited the State Capitol and met with Senator Sam McCann, Representative Wayne Rosenthal, and Representative Jim Watson. They also sat in on a session of the House of Representatives, viewing the legislative process in action.

Lieutenant Governor Sheila Simon met with the students as well as Secretary of State Jesse White. White climbed on top of the desk in his office to speak to the large group of students. He spoke of the importance of hard work, answered questions, and afterward took the time to speak with students one-on-one and pose for pictures.

Students also visited the Old State

Capitol and the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum. At the end of the day, they were interviewed by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives for a chance to attend Youth Tour – a weeklong, all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C.

“Each year we sponsor two students on Youth Tour,” MJM member services director Bronson Borowiak said. “We would have been well represented by any of the students who attended Youth Day. They showed an interest in learning more about their government and conducted themselves in a professional manner.”

The two students selected to represent MJM Electric Cooperative at Youth Tour were Andrew Niemann of Hillsboro and Meghan Allen of Carlinville. Alternates are Haley Titsworth of Litchfield and Catie Witt of Carlinville.

MJM Electric Cooperative is a member of Touchstone Energy® – an alliance of more than 720 local, consumer-owned electric utilities around the country. MJM Electric is committed to providing superior service based on



Representative Wayne Rosenthal (left) and Senator Sam McCann describe the legislative process on the Senate floor.

four core principles: integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community. The co-op serves more than 9,233 meters over 1,722 miles of line in Macoupin, Jersey, Montgomery, Bond, Fayette, Greene and Madison counties. For more information visit www.mjmec.coop.

**M.J.M Electric
Cooperative, Inc.**

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative



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Phone: 800-648-4729

Office Hours

Monday - Friday: 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

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Holidays observed

New Year's Day, Good Friday,
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Thanksgiving Day, day following
Thanksgiving and Christmas Day.

How to report an outage

Call 800-648-4729. Do not call the local lineman. Collect calls will be accepted to report outages. When you report an outage, give your name and location number. Before calling, check your fuses or circuit breakers. Check with your neighbors. Call to report hazardous conditions.

M.J.M. Along The Lines

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The truth about heat pumps

There is a great deal of misunderstanding about heat pumps. I know this for a fact because I regularly receive calls about heat pumps. Those calls are either about comfort or high utility bills. Write this down. A properly sized and properly installed heat pump system, including ductwork, will provide total affordable comfort.



Doug Rye

I have performed energy analyses on hundreds of house plans and have recommended that heat pumps be used for every single one of them. I have not recommended a gas furnace for a new house in more than 20 years. And, to the best of my knowledge, I do not have a single dissatisfied customer. My mother would say that the proof is in the pudding. And yes, before you even ask, many of them are in northern states. So why would some folks be unhappy with their heat pumps?

There are two types of heat pumps: 1) The air-to-air heat pump that has an outdoor unit and 2) the water-to-air geothermal heat pump that has no outdoor unit. While both types are excellent systems, the geothermal is my No. 1 choice for most houses. Be aware that a heat pump is special only in the heating mode. In the cooling mode it is just electric cooling like other air conditioning units. It is special in the heating mode because it provides heat at a high efficiency. An air-to-air heat pump uses one unit of electricity but gives 2.5 units of heat. That's why we say that it is 250 percent efficient.

A geothermal system can provide heat at 400 percent efficiency. Most gas furnaces are rated at 80 percent efficiency. I always ask you folks if you want 80 percent or 400 percent efficiency. It's your choice. It's none of my business. But my wife and I chose 400 percent more than 18 years ago and she will tell

you that I am careful with our money. In either case, a heat pump can nearly always provide heat for less money than a gas furnace. Well, if this is true, why would anyone choose not to use a heat pump? It is very simple. It is called "Horror Stories of the Past." In the last 30 years, I have heard them all. Let me see if I can teach this two-week course in two

paragraphs.

1. If the ductwork design and installation are correct, the air-to-air heat pump can provide air that is about 20 degrees warmer than the room temperature. If cool 67-degree air goes into the heat pump, 87-degree air will come out. If a room is 87 degrees, it would be plenty warm; but 87-degree air blowing across your skin feels cool. Blow real hard on your hand. That is about 93-degree air, but even that feels cold. However, if you could blow enough 93-degree air into the room, the room would soon be too hot to enjoy. So 93-degree air is hot but it can feel cool if it is quickly moved across your skin.

Now, let's simply turn the thermostat up to 73 degrees. Now it is 73-degree air into the heat pump and 93-degree air into the room. Now say "aaahhh" very slowly on your hand. Wow, it is nice and warm. The supply air temperature supplied by a geothermal heat pump will be about 30 degrees warmer than the air going into the unit. If the thermostat is set on 73 degrees, the air going into the room will be about 103 degrees. Well hot diggity dog. That's even better ... and cheaper too.

2. You are already thinking that it will cost you more if you turn the

thermostat to a higher setting and you are right. But it probably isn't nearly as much as you might think. It is estimated by some that it will cost about 2.5 percent more for each degree that you raise the thermostat setting. Let's just say that it takes \$75 average per month to heat a particular house. If you raise the thermostat from 68 degrees to 78 degrees, which is cool to warm, you might increase the heating cost by \$9.38 per month. For the cost of

a pizza, you can now be warm and comfortable for the whole month.

REMEMBER, IF YOU TURN THE THERMOSTAT UP 3 DEGREES OR MORE AT ONCE, THE HEAT STRIPS MAY COME ON AND THE UTILITY BILL WILL BE HIGHER.

By next month you will have totally forgotten about the winter but you will have the same concerns about comfort and utility bills. Therefore, I know that you will jump for joy to know that I have

one more article to write on the subject and it will include cooling.

Column reprinted with permission of the Association of Arkansas Electric Cooperatives. Doug Rye is a licensed architect living in Saline County and the popular host of the "Home Remedies" radio show. He works as a consultant for the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas to promote energy efficiency to cooperative members statewide. To ask energy efficiency-related questions, call Doug at 1-501-653-7931. More energy-efficiency tips, as well as Doug's columns, can also be found at www.ecark.org.

Area lineman recognized for completion of training program, promoted to journeyman

Lineman Jared Stanton (left) is congratulated by Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC) Manager of Lineworker and Apprentice Development Roger Larkin for completion of the Power Delivery Program through the Northwest Lineman's College in conjunction with the AIEC's Lineworker/Apprentice Development Program.

The conference is sponsored annually by the AIEC. Attendees learned seven principles to help their organizations work toward a common vision for world-class safety performance. They also heard about the dangers of distracted driving and how new technology and social media can help them do their jobs more efficiently.

Stanton was also recently promoted to Journeyman Lineman at the cooperative. He has worked at MJM for five years.



Safe Electricity site unveils new content for Electric Safety Month this May

Accidents and fires involving electricity result in more than a thousand deaths and tens of thousands of injuries each year. The majority of those tragedies could be prevented with greater awareness of how to stay safe. Safe Electricity's "Teach Learn Care TLC" stories are focused on just that.

"We are honored to be working with accident survivors and the families of those whose lives were cut short by electrical tragedies, all in an effort to educate the public about the importance of safety knowledge and precautions," says Molly Hall, program executive director. "The video stories on SafeElectricity.org help people of all ages to understand why it's important to teach what you know, learn what you need to, and care enough to share it with others."

New this year is the story of farmer Jim Flach, who was fatally injured in an accident involving power line contact with his equipment. Told by his family, the story helps large equipment operators understand how to avoid contact with over head lines and equally important, how to survive such an accident if equipment does contact lines.

Another story features two teenagers that survived their auto accident involving power lines because they had learned the right steps to take to stay safe. The safety principles apply to all vehicles - whether the auto involved is a car or large piece of construction equipment.



The life changing impacts of power line accidents are detailed in another video featuring accident survivor Shawn Miller and his family, whose lives were changed forever due to his severe injuries.

The importance of using ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) and avoiding contact with electrical appliances while wet or damp is highlighted in the tragic story of a 12 year old girl who was killed by household current through a faulty outdoor lamp.

To involve your children in the observance of Electrical Safety Month, invite them to visit SafeElectricity.org to watch videos, play games, and do science experiments. Interactive elements include the new E-Smart Kids site, with cool video segments in which kids teach other kids about electricity basics and several safety topics

"We know that information and awareness create life-saving attitudes and actions," Hall says. "Helping educate people to avoid tragic accidents, injuries and death is what Safe Electricity and Electrical Safety Month are all about."



Jim Flach's story is one of the real world examples used by Safe Electricity to educate the public on the potential dangers of electricity.

March Outage Summary

3/19 – 11:19 a.m.

Hillyard, member dropped tree on line, off 1 hour.

3/23 – 2:05 p.m.

Brighton, OCR opened, off 1 hour.

3/23 – 2:53 p.m.

Fidelity, pole top on fire, off 1 hour.

3/28 – 2:34 p.m.

North Palmyra, Scottville, South Palmyra, Barr, tree on line, off 1 hour.

Adjustments to energy efficiency rebates effective May 1

The intent of a rebate today is to incentivize or encourage members to install more efficient equipment and/or appliances. For a number of years, MJM Electric Cooperative has offered rebates for heating and cooling equipment and water heaters. In 2010 Wabash Valley Power Association (WVPA), the power supplier for the Cooperative, also began to offer rebates to MJM members. The program has been successful and the WVPA rebates will continue to be made available. However, it is difficult for the Cooperative to justify the offering of its own rebates and the rebates available to MJM members from WVPA. Therefore, effective May 1st, the Cooperative will no longer offer its own rebates in addition to those made available by WVPA.

The WVPA rebates are targeted to those individual who are replacing less efficient electric heating and cooling equipment in existing homes. Last year close to 60% of the Geothermal rebates were for existing homes and close to 80% of the rebates were for Air Source Heat Pumps. Consequently, it is believed that the majority of MJM members will still realize significant benefits from the WVPA rebates. It should be noted that the federal government is still offering a 30% tax credit for the installation of a Geothermal heating and cooling system. Other federal tax credits are available for energy efficiency improvements but they have been reduced.

MJM Electric Cooperative, through its partnership with Wabash Valley Power

Association, will be offering the following rebates to MJM members that replace less efficient electric heating and cooling systems in existing homes:

Geothermal Heat pump - \$150 per ton, up to 10 tons for residential applications.
Air Source heat Pump - \$125 per ton, up to 10 tons for residential applications.

*Some restrictions apply and there are minimum efficiency criteria to be eligible.

Rebates in the amount of \$50 are also available for energy efficient clothes washers if the member is utilizing an electric water heater. Additionally, members can have an old refrigerator hauled away at no cost and receive a check for \$35.

For additional information, please contact the Member Services Department.

Not much time left to take advantage of Home incentives

MJM Electric Cooperative is entering the final stages of its Home program.

The federally-funded program offers existing homeowners incentives to upgrade heating and cooling equipment to more efficient models. Incentives of \$1,500 are available for geothermal systems, \$1,000 for air source heat pumps, and \$350 for gas furnaces or central air conditioners. Geothermal systems must be 3.3 COP or higher, air source heat pumps must be 16 SEER or higher, gas furnaces must be 95% AFUE or higher, and central air conditioners must be 16 SEER higher. Incentives are also available for insulation

and heat pump water heaters.

Members first need to have an energy assessment provided by MJM, and there is a \$25 charge for that service.

Since the program began in the spring of 2010, MJM has provided or set aside \$73,226 for members upgrading to more efficient systems. There is approximately \$10,000 remaining to be allocated. The money for the program comes from a grant through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act that was obtained by the State of Illinois and the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives.



Farmers should look up for power lines

The tragic electrocution death of two teens, one of them a high school class president, is drawing national attention to the need for safety precautions when working with long and tall equipment near overhead power lines. The young men were working on a southern Illinois farm attempting to free a raccoon, which had crawled inside an aluminum pipe used for irrigation. As the teens hoisted the 31 foot pipe into the air, it made contact with the power line. They became the path to ground for the electricity and both were fatally injured from the deadly voltage.

“The death of these two young men is a tug on everyone,” says Molly Hall, Safe Electricity Executive Director. “We urge farm operators to store aluminum irrigation pipe away from power lines and make sure everyone knows not to raise them in windy conditions when working near lines.”

Illinois farmer Jim Flach suffered fatal electric burns when his crop sprayer touched an overhead power line. Flach and his surviving family members are the focus of the 2011 Safe Electricity “Teach Learn Care TLC” campaign.

Jim’s widow, Marilyn, and sons are sharing their tragic experience in hopes that people will learn how to stay safe, and to share that information with those they care about. This campaign is aimed at raising operator awareness on avoiding equipment contact with overhead power lines, and knowing the proper actions to survive if accidental contact with lines is made. The video of the story can be seen at www.SafeElectricity.org.



The increasing size of farm equipment raises the risk of contact at field entries and along end rows, where overhead electric wires may be present. The taller equipment may not always allow the recommended 10 foot separation when passing beneath or near the power lines. In agricultural areas the vertical clearance required is less than the clearance over roadways and streets. Never assume that because the machinery passed under the lines in one area means it will adequately clear another area.

“We urge farmers and all operators of large equipment to use a spotter or someone with a broader view when moving equipment near power lines,” says Robert Aherin, University of Il-

linois Farm Safety Expert. “It can be difficult to accurately gauge distance from the cab of equipment, especially when moving on uneven ground.”

Any deep tiling operation outside of normal field boundaries can become perilous if a ripping knife hooks onto a buried power line. Before enlarging a field, installing a foundation for a new building, or digging in an area served by a power line, alert your local utility to have buried cables marked.

The Flach family encourages all farmers to use caution for a safe spring planting season and to avoid equipment contact with power lines. See their story at www.SafeElectricity.org.

Member Trading Post

PRICE LOWERED - \$1,000! 2004 Coleman Bayside Elite pop-up camper. 2 queens; 1 double. 2 stoves. A/C. 16K new - \$3,500 OBO. 618-786-3655

For Sale: 42x34 gas/wood fireplace, gas logs, gas doors, 18" pipe and cap - \$200 for all. Call 217-556-3555.

For Sale: 1 year old male black and tan German Sheppard puppy, AKC, neutered, needs home with large yard or in the country. Call 618-467-2004 or 618-792-5173.

For Sale: House and 2.8 acres - \$200,000. Thirty-six acres with two ponds - \$216,000. Both tracts in Brighton at corner of Seminary Rd. and Terpening Rd., Macoupin County. Call 618-372-3746.

For Sale: Antique double bed with dresser with attached mirror, 1930-

1940 period - \$200. Antique tin can collection - \$100. Call 618-692-7264.

For Sale: New Holland 45 horsepower diesel front end loader, used approximately 100 hours - \$19,500. Over 600 board feet of rough cut cherry, different sizes - \$950. Heavy duty auger, 12", runs off PTO - \$300. Call 217-899-2903 or 217-414-9901.

For Sale: 2002 Dodge Dakota, quad cab, excellent shape. Call 618-635-2675.

For Sale: 8' bed for 1998 full size Chevy truck. With liner/tailgate. No lights - \$850. Great condition. Litchfield. Call 217-313-1079.

For Sale: Heminray green/clear insulators. Approx. 40 - \$4 each, all \$150. Call 217-324-3869.

Wanted: good used semi-box trailer (for storage), open outdoors preferred. Reasonable. Call 217-324-3869.

Wanted: 15 square feet of 8 inch vinyl siding. Call 618-376-3143.

For Sale: Antique cherry three-quarter bed with matching dresser with marble top. Twelve seven-piece place settings and serving pieces, Gorham stainless. 100-year-old child's white China tea set. 75-year-old high chair with white enamel tray. Call 618-372-3603.

Wanted: Gazebo, non-wood. Call 618-753-3311.

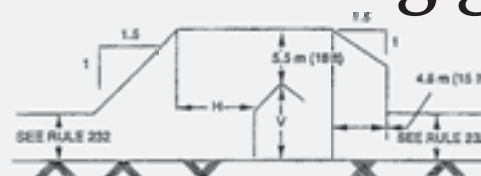
For Sale: John Deere riding mower with 12 horsepower Kohler motor and 42" deck. Call 217-532-3444.

Members building grain bins need to contact MJM before breaking ground

Members building grain bins should contact MJM before moving forward with their plans. This is to ensure that they are constructing the bins according to the National Electric Code. According to the National Electric Code, bins are required to have 18 feet of clearance from the top of the bin and roughly (18 ft + Height of the Bin) x 2 clearance to the side before the lines reach their "normal" height.

The exact formula is pictured next to this article.

Failing to comply with this code can result in costly changes to your plans. Again, if you are planning on constructing a grain bin, contact MJM's office at 217-854-3137 before you start building. It's the safe and economically sound thing to do.



V = HEIGHT OF HIGHEST FILLING OR PROBING POINT ON GRAIN BIN
H = V + 5.5 m (18 ft)

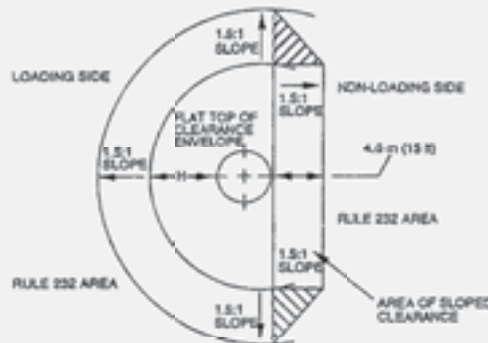


Fig 234-4(b)
Clearance Envelope for Grain Bins Filled by Portable Augers, Conveyors, or Elevators

Keep safety in mind when storms pass through

With storms comes the possibility of outages. And with outages comes the need to stay safe.

If you use a standby generator, make sure a transfer safety switch is used, or connect appliances directly to the generator output through an extension cord. This prevents electricity from traveling back through the power lines, what's known as "back feed." Back feed creates danger for anyone near lines, particularly crews working to restore power.

After the storm, there may be a mess in your yard and your home has been damaged, but safety remains the top priority in the wake of a severe storm. Make sure you and your family are aware that hazards could be hidden by tree limbs and debris, dangers such as downed power lines or electrical equipment in contact with the wet ground.

Stay away from and report any downed or sagging lines. They should be considered energized and dangerous,

until utility linemen can assure they are de-energized and the area is safe.

A downed power line that's energized can cause other things around it to become potentially hazardous. A fence or guardrail touching a downed line can be energized for several thousand yards, and poses a threat to anyone coming into contact with these structures.

Do not attempt to drive over a downed power line, and if a storm causes your vehicle to be draped in power lines, do not attempt to drive away or get out. Call for help and stay inside until utility crews say it's safe to do so.

Learn more about operating generators safely and safety in the wake of storms at www.SafeElectricity.org.



Ameren-owned poles south of Carlinville lean over after a storm passed through the area the night of April 19. MJM had several poles down as well with around 2,000 members without electricity. MJM linemen worked through the night to restore power by the morning of April 20.