

ALONG THE LINES



DEDICATED TO PROVIDING RELIABLE SERVICE FOR OUR MEMBERS.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

MARCH 2025

VOL.18, NO. 3

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PREPAREDNESS**

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MARCH CALENDAR



March is National Ladder Safety Month

Mar 9th: Daylight Saving - Spring Forward

Mar 18th: National Ag Day

Mar 20th: First Day of Spring

Mar 21st: Coffee with the Co-op - Carlinville

SAVE THE DATE! JUNE 12, 2025 MJM'S ANNUAL MEETING

HOLIDAYS OBSERVED:

New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day following Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and New Year's Eve.



OFFICE: 217-707-6156
FAX: 217-854-3918

18300 SHIPMAN ROAD (PO BOX 80)
CARLINVILLE, IL 62626

WWW.MJMEC.COOP



BE READY FOR STORM SEASON

PREPAREDNESS IS THE BEST DEFENSE

BY MJM PRESIDENT/CEO, JOE HEYEN



Spring is on our doorstep and like many of you, I'm looking forward to more opportunities to be outdoors and enjoy warmer weather.

Unfortunately, spring and summer can also create the perfect conditions for severe storms.

MJM crews are always prepared and standing by to respond should power outages occur in our area. When severe storms cause power disruptions, our line crews take all necessary precautions before they get to work on any downed lines.

I would encourage you to also practice safety and preparedness to protect your family during storms and outages.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency recommends the items below as a starting point for storm and disaster preparedness, but you can visit www.ready.gov for additional resources.

- Stock your pantry with a three-day supply of non-perishable food, including canned goods, energy bars, peanut butter, powdered milk, instant coffee, water and other essentials (i.e., diapers and toiletries).
- Confirm that you have adequate sanitation and hygiene supplies including towelettes, soap and hand sanitizer.
- Ensure your First Aid kit is stocked with pain relievers, bandages and other medical essentials, and make sure your prescriptions are current.
- Set aside basic household items you will need, including flashlights, batteries, a manual can opener and portable, battery-powered radio or TV.
- Organize emergency supplies so they are easily accessible in one location.



In the event of a prolonged power outage, turn off major appliances, TVs, computers and other sensitive electronics. This will help avert damage from potential power surges and will also help prevent overloading circuits during power restoration. That said, do leave one light on so you will know when power is restored.

If you plan to use a portable generator, make sure it's rated to handle the amount of power you will need, and always review the manufacturer's instructions to operate it safely.

Listen to local news or a NOAA Weather Radio for storm and emergency information, and check MJM's website outage center and Facebook page for restoration updates. Severe storms can occasionally bring down power lines. If you see a downed line, always assume it's energized and never approach it. If flooding occurs, never walk through areas where power lines could be submerged.

Advance planning for severe storms or other emergencies can reduce stress and anxiety caused by the weather event and lessen the impact of the storm's effects.

Sign up for NOAA emergency alerts and warnings and follow us on Facebook for the latest power restoration updates. If you experience an outage, please don't report it on Facebook, we cannot process outages in our system with Facebook. Call our outage reporting number at 217-707-6156--this is the fastest way to let us know if your power is out.

I hope we don't experience severe storms over the spring and summer months, but we can never predict Mother Nature's plans. At MJM, we recommend that you make a plan today--because storm preparedness is always our best defense.



ALONGTHELINES

by MJM Electric Cooperative
www.mjmec.coop

**18300 SHIPMAN ROAD, PO Box 80
CARLINVILLE, IL 62626**

OFFICE: 1-217-707-6156

OFFICE HOURS:
Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

HOW TO REPORT AN OUTAGE:

Call **217-707-6156** or use your **SmartHub app**.

- 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.

Please do not report outages on Facebook/Social Media.

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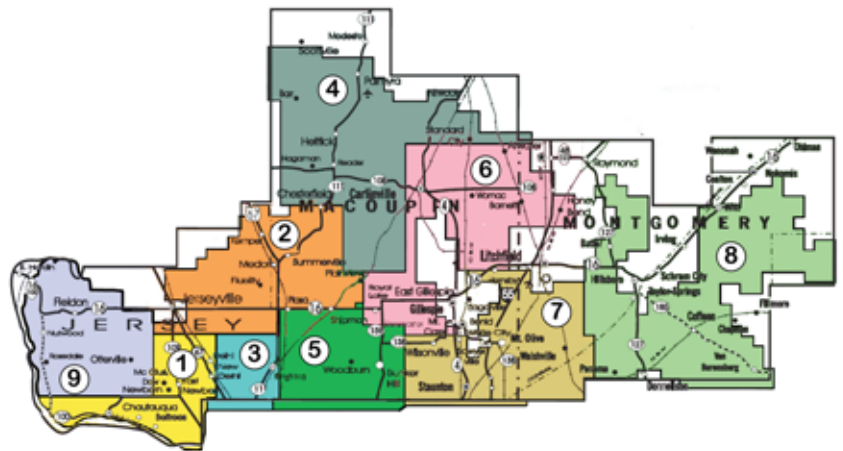
6 Capital Credits

Information on early retirement options.

7 Power Supplier Demand

More information on Demand.

MJM Service Territory Districts Map:



MEMBER TRADING POST

FOR SALE: Split Seasoned Fire Wood, pickup truck bed loads \$120 or call for delivery price: Call Leroy @ 618-972-4658

FOR SALE: John Deere 1010 tractor, totally refurbished. Call for details 618-535-5828

WANTED: Someone to help repair Pole Barn. Call 618-372-8411.

FOR SALE: A STIHL MS 250 chain saw with 2 extra chains and extra bar. Reserved. \$140. Phone or message- 618-946-8481

To list your free ad, email info@mjmec.coop, call 217-707-6156, or mail the ad to MJM Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 80, Carlinville, IL 62626.

Each ad will run for one month. Some restriction may apply.

THE IMPORTANCE OF TREE TRIMMING

BY MJM ROW MANAGER, BOB BRANDON

At MJM, we strive to balance maintaining beautiful surroundings and ensuring a reliable power supply by keeping power lines clear in rights of way (ROW).

While we recognize and appreciate the beauty of trees, there are three main benefits to tree trimming in ROW areas. However, before touching on the main reasons, let me explain what a “right of way” is and how it may impact you. A right of way is the land we use to construct, maintain, replace or repair underground and overhead power lines. Rights of way enable the co-op to provide clearance from trees and other obstructions that could hinder the power line installation, maintenance or operation. ROW areas are typically on public lands or located near a business or home. Regardless, MJM must be able to maintain the power lines above and below the ROW. The overall goal of our vegetation management program is to provide reliable power to our members while maintaining the beauty of our community. Proactive vegetation management benefits co-op members in three tangible ways.

SAFETY

First and foremost, we care about our members and put their safety and that of our lineworkers above all else. Overgrown vegetation and trees pose a risk to power lines. For example, if trees are touching power lines in our members’ yards, they can pose grave danger to families. If children can access those trees, they can potentially climb into a danger zone. Electricity can arc, or jump, from a power line to a nearby conductor like a tree. A proactive approach also diminishes the chances of fallen branches or trees during severe weather events that make it more complicated and dangerous for lineworkers to restore power.

RELIABILITY

Of course, one of the biggest benefits of a smart vegetation management program is reliability. Strategic tree trimming reduces the frequency of downed lines causing power outages. Generally speaking, healthy trees don’t fall on power lines, and clear lines don’t cause problems. Proactive trimming and pruning keeps lines clear to promote reliability. Keeping power lines clear of overgrown vegetation improves service reliability. While many factors can impact power disruptions, about half of all outages can be attributed to overgrown vegetation. This is why you sometimes see MJM crews or contractors out in the



community trimming trees near power lines. Our trimming crews have been trained and certified based on the latest industry standards.

In fact, all U.S. electric utilities are required to trim trees that grow too close to power lines. Scheduled trimming throughout the year keeps lines clear from overgrown or dead limbs that are likely to fall, and we are better able to prepare for severe weather events.

Plus, we all know it’s more cost-effective to undertake preventative maintenance than it is to make repairs after the fact. Drone inspections of power lines and vegetation allow us to reduce labor and equipment costs while bolstering reliability. We also use data and the technology to maximize the efficiency of our operation. This includes our vegetation management plan.

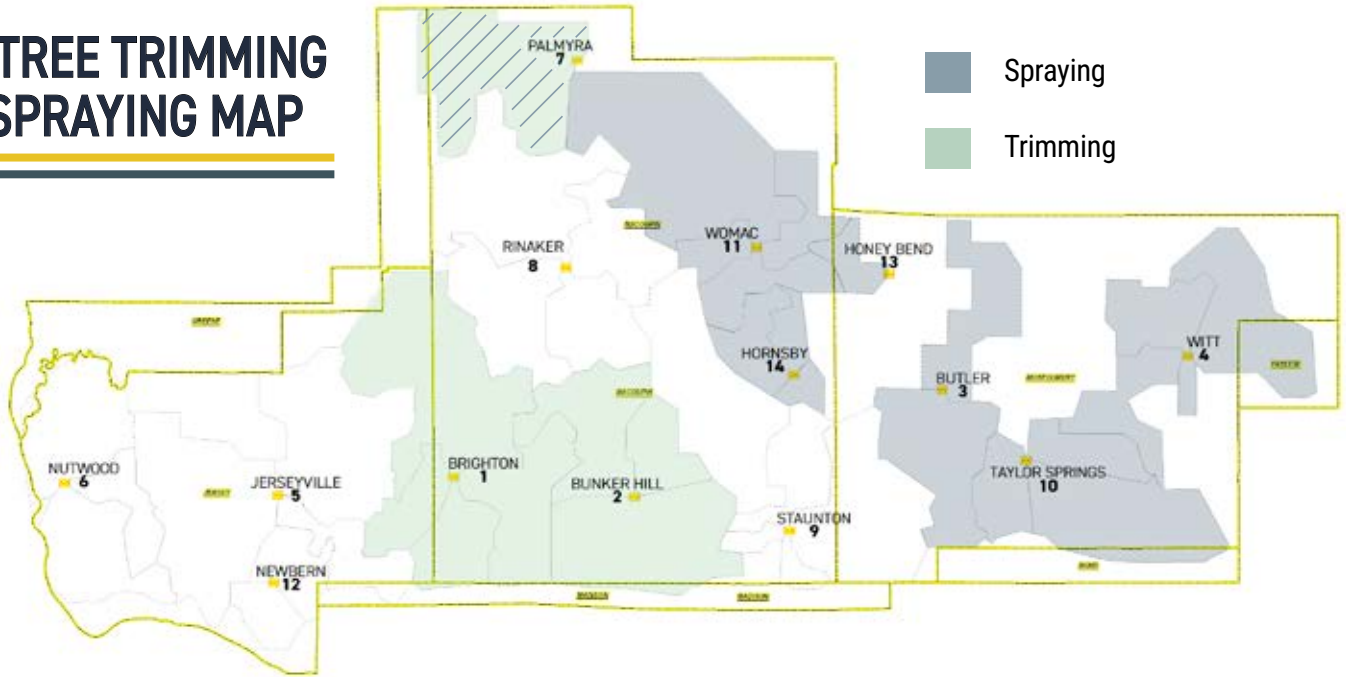
AFFORDABILITY

As you know, MJM is a not-for-profit cooperative, and that means we strive to keep our costs in check in order to keep our rates affordable. This extends to our approach to vegetation management. If trees grow too close to power lines, the potential for expensive repairs also increases. Effective tree trimming and other vegetation management efforts keep costs down for everyone.

Our community is a special place. We appreciate the beauty trees afford, but we also know our community depends on us to provide reliable energy. Through vegetation management, we are better able to keep the power lines clear, prepare for future weather events and secure the reliability of the grid.



2025 TREE TRIMMING AND SPRAYING MAP



2025 TRIMMING:

- Brighton East & South
- Bunker Hill North
- Palmyra *

* Spraying and Trimming

2025 SPRAYING:

- Butler North & South
- Honey Bend West
- Hornsby North, South, & West
- Nutwood North, South, & East
- Palmyra *
- Taylor Springs North, South, & West
- Witt North, South, East, & West
- Womac North, South, East, & West

3 Ways to Help Limit Tree Trimming

Did you know electric utilities are required to trim trees and other types of vegetation that grow too close to overhead power lines? We know you love your trees, and we will do everything we can to avoid trimming them. Here's how you can help:

1. Plant trees in the right place. Trees that will be <40 ft. should be planted at least 25 ft. away from power lines (>40ft. should be at least 50 ft. away).



2. Don't block pad-mounted transformers. Plant shrubs at least 10 ft. away from transformer doors and 4 ft. from transformer sides.



3. Report dangerous branches. If you spot a tree or branch that is dangerously close to power lines, please let us know.



Trimming improves safety for all. Let's work together to enjoy the beauty of trees and reliable electricity.

CAPITAL CREDITS: EARLY RETIREMENT OPTION

MJM is offering a new opportunity to request an early retirement of capital credits at a discounted rate to all members (former and current). Requests for a discounted early retirement will be accepted between March and August of this year and paid on a first-come, first-serve basis until reaching the board approved budgeted amount. A co-op provided form must be completed, notarized, and submitted to the office acknowledging the terms of this payout. Once paid out, capital credits previously allocated will be forfeited, and the capital credit accumulation will start over at \$0.

This early payout opportunity is optional and not required. It is a choice in which each member must weigh the benefits of waiting for regular capital credit retirements to occur or accepting a discounted amount now. For example, because capital credits are reinvested into the co-op and eventually paid out, a member who started their co-op membership in 2020 will likely wait 30+ years to receive a payout of any kind. Someone who started service in 2008, may have to wait nearly 10 years from now.

The early payout amount must be calculated and quoted to each member individually. The main factors that will affect the payout amount is related to the age of the capital credit and the number of kilowatts consumed in each related year. When considering this early discount option, please note that newer/younger capital credits (i.e. 2022, 2023, etc.) will be discounted more heavily.

For additional information or to be added to the early payout request que, submit your information using the google form link on our website or call 217-707-6156 and press option 2 during normal business hours.



M.J.M. ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE RECOGNIZED FOR OUTSTANDING WORKPLACE SAFETY PRACTICES

Safety is paramount in the electric industry. To advance safety education and practices, lineworkers, supervisors and warehouse personnel from electric cooperatives across Illinois gathered in Springfield for the annual Safety and Energy Conference held January 29-30, 2024. The event was hosted by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC). The conference emphasized the importance of safety and leadership in the energy industry, providing participants with training and resources to ensure their well-being on the job. Sessions included discussions on active leadership, staying focused and safe practices in the workplace.

During the conference, safety awards were presented to honor both individual and cooperative-wide commitments to fostering a safe work environment. M.J.M. Electric Cooperative was recognized for its outstanding safety performance over the past year, receiving 2024 awards for Best Loss Time Rate and Best Incident Rate. These awards underscore a cooperative's dedication to maintaining a safe working environment, exceeding industry safety expectations, and cultivating a proactive safety culture.

The Best Loss Time Rate Award is given to the cooperatives with the lowest number of lost work time due to workplace injuries, relative to the number of hours worked. It reflects a cooperative's effectiveness in preventing serious incidents that could keep employees off the job.

The Best Incident Rate Award recognizes the cooperatives with the lowest overall number of recordable workplace incidents, including minor injuries. It highlights a commitment to maintaining a consistently safe work environment for all employees.

As the electric industry continues to evolve, safety remains a top priority. It ensures that the workforce can continue to serve communities efficiently and without harm. The AIEC celebrates the electric cooperatives and individuals that prioritize safety, consistently demonstrate leadership in safe practices, and foster a strong safety culture.

POWER SUPPLIER DEMAND



Demand is a complex topic because it can refer to your individual usage, the cooperative's system, or even the entire electric grid.

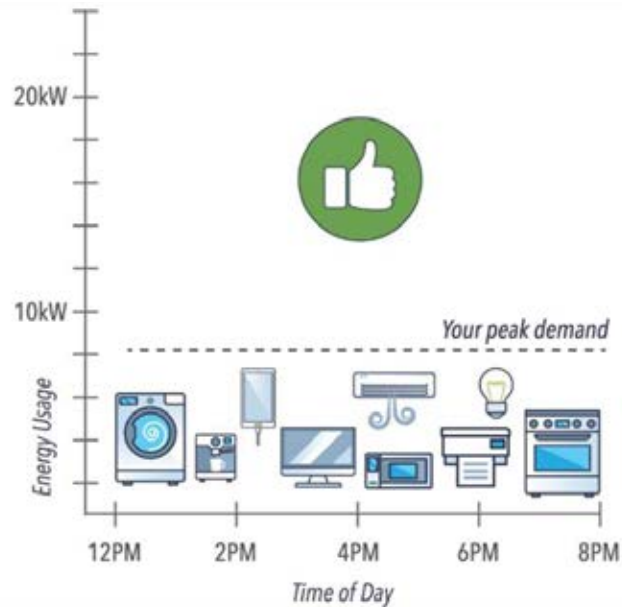
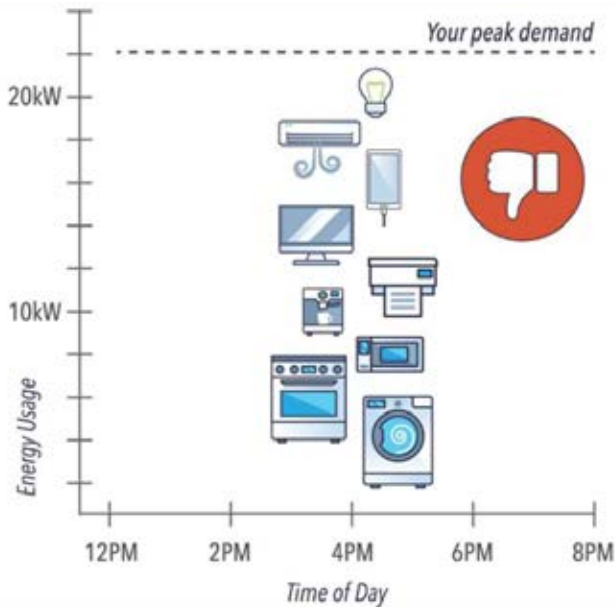
For you as a member, peak demand ("Power Supplier Demand" on monthly bills) is the highest amount of power your meter requires during a short time frame within your billing period. For example, coming home and using multiple appliances at the same time—turning on the oven, starting laundry, and switching on lights or an electric fireplace—can cause your personal demand to spike.

At the cooperative level, peak demand occurs when our substation hits its highest power usage within a calendar month. These peaks typically happen on the hottest or

coldest days of the month when energy consumption is at its highest.

Imagine this happening on a regional or national scale. When many people use a lot of energy simultaneously, the entire electric grid experiences a peak demand. This tends to occur during extreme weather events—such as heat waves or bitter cold—that can stretch across multiple states.

By spreading out your energy use or avoiding running many appliances at once, especially during extreme weather, you can help lower or level out your personal demand, reduce strain on the grid, and keep costs stable for you and MJM!



RATE 1 EXAMPLE:

"Where is this item on my current electric bill?"

Current Bill Information		
Balance Remaining Prior to This Billing		\$0.00
Power Supplier Energy	1,159 kWh @ 0.08663	\$100.40
Distribution Energy	1,159 kWh @ 0.02497	\$28.94
Service Delivery Charge		\$54.00
Power Supplier Demand	6.33 kW @ 0.00	\$0.00
IL Public Utility Tax		\$3.71
Operation Round Up Donation		\$0.95
New Bill Amount		\$188.00

Electric usage varies among members, depending on household size, appliances and seasons. Seasonal changes are the most common reason members notice a change in their electric bills.

Watch your energy use patterns as the seasons change so you won't be surprised by larger electric bills. Your highest "demand season" may be different from other members depending on your home and appliances.

2025 Rates: mjmec.coop/mjm-electric-rates

Coffee with the Co-op



Come join us at a location near you. Regular coffee will be provided, along with cookies, and a presentation on the upcoming residential Demand Rate/2025 Rates.

MARCH 2025 DATES:

Friday, March 21 @ 9:00am

MJM Headquarters Community Room
18300 Shipman Road, Carlinville, IL

More dates coming in April!

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

March is an ideal time to service your home cooling system, ensuring it runs efficiently when the heat of summer arrives. Routine maintenance, like cleaning or replacing filters, checking refrigerant levels and inspecting parts, can improve your system's energy efficiency and lower your energy bills. By addressing potential issues early, you can avoid costly emergency repairs and extend the lifespan of your unit. Scheduling service in the spring helps you beat the peak-season rush, giving you faster access to qualified technicians. A well-maintained cooling system can save energy and keep your home comfortable all summer long.

