

HI-LINES

A newsletter for members of JCE Co-op

AUGUST 2026

 Elizabeth, IL

 800-858-5522

 jcecoop.com



CEO'S REPORT by Mike Casper

Powering growth, keeping members first

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

AUGUST TOPIC— SENIOR PLANET

Staying in touch as landlines change.

Learn what the transition from copper phone lines means for you, what your options are and how to stay connected with family, friends and emergency services.

AUGUST 6

Senior Planet—Mount Carroll
District Library 1:00–2:00 p.m.

AUGUST 25

Senior Planet—JCE Co-op
Elizabeth West Campus
10:00–11:00 a.m.

JOIN JCE CO-OP AT THESE COMMUNITY EVENTS!

AUGUST 4

Carroll County Fairgrounds
Live Hotline Demo
Starts at 2:00 p.m.

AUGUST 25

Scales Mound
Resource Fair Night
5:30–7:30 p.m.


JCE CO-OP
Electric • Gas • Fiber

Across the country, data centers are getting a lot of attention. Some of that attention is fair, and some of it is based on misunderstanding. Data centers use a large amount of energy, and members are right to ask what that means for reliability, rates and the long-term strength of our utility systems.

At JCE Co-op, we believe those questions deserve straight answers.

Data centers are the physical backbone of many services we use every day: online banking, medical records, school systems, farm technology, local business software, weather tools, emergency communications, streaming and artificial intelligence. Behind many of those services is a data center keeping information moving.

They are also part of a larger infrastructure conversation. Modern communities depend on reliable electricity, natural gas and strong fiber connectivity. Homes, farms, schools, healthcare providers, local businesses and public safety services all rely on systems that must be powered, connected and dependable. As technology changes, JCE Co-op's role is to plan carefully for the electric, natural gas and communication infrastructure our members and communities will need.

The first truth is simple: data centers require significant power. They run around the clock and need reliable service, cooling systems and backup equipment. That kind of electric load must be studied carefully. JCE Co-op will not treat it like an ordinary service request. Our teams review system capacity,

substation needs, transmission impacts, construction timing, power supply and cost responsibility before any major project moves forward.

One common concern is that data centers automatically raise bills for everyone else. That does not have to be true. The key is making sure large-load projects pay their fair share. Existing members should not subsidize private development. If upgrades are needed to serve a data center, those costs must be identified up front and assigned fairly through engineering studies, rate review, contracts and construction agreements.

Handled properly, a large energy user can also help strengthen the cooperative. For example, electric systems have many fixed costs: poles, wires, substations, trucks, technology, maintenance, dispatching and right-of-way work. Those costs exist whether the system is growing or not. When a large member pays the proper rates and covers the cost of needed upgrades, it can help spread fixed costs over more energy sales, support long-term system investment and help stabilize future rates for all members.

Another concern is that data centers bring no local value. While they may not employ as many people as a large factory, they can still benefit communities. They can increase the local tax base, support construction jobs, create technical positions, attract related businesses and help justify stronger electric, natural gas and fiber infrastructure. For rural areas, modern infrastructure matters. It helps communities compete for investment that might otherwise go somewhere else.

**CEO'S REPORT**
by Mike Casper

Powering growth, keeping members first

(Continued)

JCE Co-op also understands the concern about reliability. No member wants growth if it means weaker service. That is why our planning includes the real work behind the scenes: staking, material lead times, crew schedules, capacity, outage planning and storm response needs. Growth cannot get ahead of the system.

To lessen the impact on members, JCE Co-op is taking a member-first approach. That includes requiring engineering studies, reviewing rates, using contracts and deposits when appropriate,

coordinating with energy suppliers, phasing projects when needed and making sure large users pay their fair share.

Data centers should not be accepted blindly. They also should not be feared automatically. With careful planning, fair cost recovery and honest communication, data center growth can be positive for JCE Co-op members.

Our commitment is simple: growth should benefit the membership, not burden it.

Mark your calendars for the 2026 JCE Annual Meeting and Member Appreciation Days!

JCE Co-op members are invited to attend our annual meeting and appreciation day on Tuesday, September 29. Plan to attend this event where you can meet with co-op board members and employees and take part in the democratic process of your co-op.

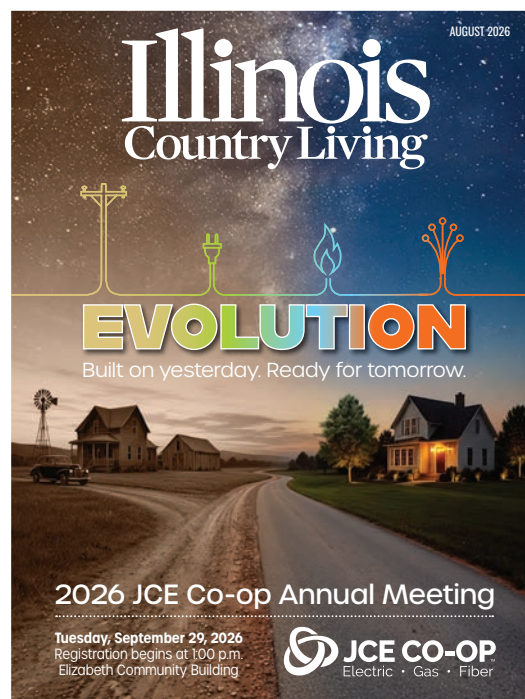
This year, we are combining these two events! The 2026 Annual Meeting of Members and Member Appreciation Days will be held in Elizabeth at the Community Building, 402 West St, Elizabeth, IL. It's our favorite time of year to gather, catch up and say thank you to the folks who power our co-op. Please come for the appreciation and stay for the meeting.

The event will feature co-op displays and a member appreciation luncheon. The business meeting will include announcement of director elections, and the awarding of door prizes.

2026 Annual Report

The JCE Co-op 2026 Annual Report will be included in the September issue of Illinois Country Living magazine—so be sure to keep an eye out for it!

This year, the report will not be mailed as a separate document like in years past. Everything you need to stay informed about your co-op will be right inside your magazine.



Keep an eye out for your September issue of *Illinois Country Living*, that's where you'll find the 2026 JCE Co-op Annual Report!

PEAK ALERTS

Small changes that help power our community!

Think of a Peak Alert like rush hour for electricity.

On hot summer afternoons, many of us get home around the same time, lower the thermostat, cook supper, run laundry and plug in devices. Across the JCE Co-op system, that creates a spike in electricity use called peak demand.

A Peak Alert is JCE Co-op's way of asking members to help ease that "traffic jam." It's not about running out of power—it's about working together for a few hours to keep the grid reliable and help control power costs.

Why peak demand matters

Electricity must be generated the moment it's used. When demand rises sharply, the system must respond immediately, and those are often the

most expensive hours to provide power. Even small reductions in electricity use help reduce strain on the grid and can lower costs over time.

What happens during a Peak Alert?

During a Peak Alert, JCE Co-op asks members to temporarily reduce electricity use, typically on hot afternoons and early evenings. Most alerts last just a few hours. The goal isn't to make anyone uncomfortable—it's simply to shift energy-intensive tasks to a later time. When enough members make small changes, the combined impact is significant.

PEAK ALERT!

Due to high demand on the regional grid, please shift flexible electricity use until after 7 p.m.



What you can do to help



Raise your thermostat

Set your thermostat to 78 degrees or higher if you can do so safely and comfortably.



Shift laundry and dishes

Wait until later in the evening to run the dishwasher, washing machine or dryer. These appliances use a lot of energy.



Close blinds and curtains

Blocking direct sunlight helps keep your home cooler.



Unplug unused electronics

Chargers, televisions, gaming systems and other electronics can use small amounts of power even when they are not actively being used.



Skip the oven

Ovens add heat to your home, which makes your air conditioner work harder. Try using a microwave, toaster oven, slow cooker or outdoor grill instead.



Turn off lights in empty rooms

This is one of the easiest steps. If no one is using the room, flip the switch.

Small changes add up

No one member has to do everything. Raising the thermostat a few degrees, waiting to run laundry or closing the blinds before leaving for work may seem small, but together those actions make a real difference across the system.

That's the power of a cooperative. When JCE Co-op issues a Peak Alert, it's not an emergency—it's a request to work together for a few hours to help keep power reliable and costs under control.

Small changes. Big impact. Thanks for helping power our community.



From left to right Back Row: Larry Carroll (Director-District 7), Tom Lundy (Director-District 5), Mike Casper (CEO), David Senn (Chairman- District 6), Dan Tindell (Secretary-District 2), Jerry Meyer (Vice Chairman- District 1), Ted James (Director- District 8) **Front Row:** Devin Bradt (Elizabeth), Sawyer Fry (Elizabeth), Gracie Schnitzler (Elizabeth), Stella Ashdown (Fenton), Samantha Soat (East Dubuque), Jessica Soat (East Dubuque). Not pictured: Jalyn Walker (Galena) and Leah Spahn (Hanover).

JCE Co-op celebrates Director’s Scholarship recipients

JCE Co-op is proud to recognize this year’s Director’s Scholarship recipients. Scholarships in the amount of \$500 were awarded to attending students.

This year’s recipients are: Devin Bradt (Elizabeth), Sawyer Fry (Elizabeth), Gracie Schnitzler (Elizabeth), Stella Ashdown (Fenton), Samantha Soat (East Dubuque), Jessica Soat (East Dubuque)

Traditionally, Director’s Scholarship recipients are recognized during JCE Co-op’s Annual Meeting. Since this year’s Annual Meeting will be held in September, the students were instead invited to enjoy lunch with the JCE Co-op Board of Directors. The gathering gave board members a chance to congratulate the students personally and learn more about their future plans. Congratulations to this year’s recipients. JCE Co-op is proud to support local students as they take the next step in their education.

Funding for all JCE Co-op scholarships comes from unclaimed and donated capital credits.

BE PART OF
SOMETHING
BIGGER



To book appointment,
scan QR code, visit
bloodcenter.org or
call ImpactLife at
800-747-5401.

JCE Co-op Blood Drive

Thursday, August 20 | Elizabeth Headquarters

2:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. | 793 U.S. Route 20 West



ImpactLife

HOW WILL YOU MAKE YOUR **MARK?**



“It was amazing! I was able to learn so much more information about the government and make meaningful connections”

Natalie Reisner, Geneseo



Youth to Washington Tour: A life-changing leadership experience

Every June, electric cooperatives across the country provide high school students with the opportunity of a lifetime through the Youth to Washington Tour. Sponsored by JCE Co-op, this all-expenses-paid leadership experience gives local students the chance to explore our nation's capital while learning about government, history, leadership and the cooperative difference.

During the week-long trip, Natalie Reisner of Geneseo visited iconic landmarks and memorials, tour museums, meet with elected officials and connect with more than 1,500 students from across the United States. Along the way, they develop leadership skills, build lifelong friendships, and

gain a deeper understanding of civic engagement and the cooperative principles that help power our communities. Natalie said, "It was amazing! I was able to learn so much more information about the government and make meaningful connections!"

At JCE Co-op, we believe investing in young people means investing in the future of the communities we serve. The Youth to Washington Tour is more than a trip—it's an opportunity to inspire the next generation of leaders.

Applications for next year's Youth Tour will open this fall. Watch our website, social media pages and member communications for details on how local high school students can apply.





Recent construction progress – Phase changes by area/fiber neighborhoods



Under construction

- **Chadwick (CDW1, 2, 4, 5)**
Village and Rural areas Mainline and drop placement; splicing to follow
- **Lena (LNA4)**
Fiber drop placement; splicing to follow
- **Jo Daviess, Carroll & Whiteside Counties**
MOR2, J8, J9A-D, J10A-B, J12A-B, J13A-B, J14A-E, COL1-3, STK7 (Rural Areas)
Mainline and drop placement; splicing to follow



Scheduling installations

- **East Dubuque (ED8)**
MOR1 & SPV1
Rural Morrison and Spring Valley Areas



Fiber in-service

- **Council Hill (CHL1)**
Rural Area
- **Fenton (FTN2)**
Rural Areas
- **Hanover (HAN1, 2)**
Rural Areas
- **Lena (LNA3)**
- **Lake Carroll Campground (LCA2)**
- **Savanna (SAV10)**

Fiber construction is heating up this summer

Summer is bringing more than sunshine, it's bringing high-speed fiber internet to more homes and businesses across Northwest Illinois. Our construction crews are making strong progress throughout the Connect Illinois Round 3 Broadband Grant project in rural Whiteside, Carroll and Jo Daviess counties, while village and city neighborhoods continue advancing through each phase of construction.

Throughout the summer, you may see our crews marking utilities, preparing overhead and underground infrastructure, installing fiber lines and fusion splicing the network to prepare neighborhoods for service.

Have you signed up yet? Now's the time!

If you're in an active buildout area, now is the perfect time to sign up and take advantage of **FREE installation** while construction is underway. Members who have already submitted a fiber signup will be contacted by our broadband team to schedule installation as soon as construction and network testing are complete.

Follow your community's progress on JCE Co-op website's fiber communities map jcecoop.com/fiber.

Sign up today!

\$129.95
Value

**Do not miss out on
this opportunity and
sign up on our website now to have
FREE INSTALLATION!**

- ☒ **NO DATA CAPS**
- ☒ **NO HIDDEN FEES**
- ☒ **NO CONTRACTS**

Free basic installation (\$129.95 value) covers on-premise wiring in one facility completed during one installation trip.

YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jerry Meyer
Vice Chairman
District 1

Dan Tindell
Secretary
District 2

Joseph W. Mattingley
District 3

Allen Hendren
District 4

Thomas Lundy
District 5

David Senn
Chairman
District 6

Larry Carroll
District 7

Ted James
District 8

Robert Kuhns
Treasurer
District 9

Office Hours:
Monday-Friday

Elizabeth
793 U.S. Route 20 West
7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Savanna
103 Chicago Ave.
7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
1:30 to 4 p.m.

Geneseo
1004 S. Chicago St.
7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
1:30 to 4 p.m.

**Services and
billing questions:**
(800) 858-5522
jcecoop.com

**For emergencies
and outages call:**
(800) 858-5522

Resume of Minutes

May 27, 2026

Board Meeting Minutes Summary

The regular board meeting of Jo-Carroll Energy, Inc. (NFP) was held on Wednesday, May 27, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.

Safety Moment – Director Hendren shared important seasonal safety information regarding hazardous plants and invasive species. He highlighted common toxic plants such as poison ivy, poison sumac, and poison hemlock, and explained what to look for to avoid exposure.

Approval of Agenda – A motion was made, seconded and carried unanimously to approve the meeting agenda.

Consent Agenda – A motion was made, seconded and carried unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda, which included the April 30th Minutes/Summary, Board Expense Summary, Discounted Estate Summary and written reports from staff and the CEO.

Presentation – A safety presentation was provided by Alex Peebles, who updated the Board and senior staff on current OSHA metrics, key safety updates, and upcoming safety training sessions scheduled for staff development.

Governance Topics and Board Policy Review

Wholesale Power Contract Video – A video was presented on the Dairyland Wholesale Power Contract, which helps JCE Co-op secure a reliable, long-term power supply for our member-consumers while reducing exposure to short-term market swings. It also supports stronger planning for system growth, rate stability and resource needs.

Review and Discuss the Dairyland Power Cooperative 2026 Proposed bylaw Amendments and Resolutions

– After reviewing the materials before the meeting, the Board discussed the proposed 2026 bylaw amendments and resolutions in preparation for Dairyland's annual meeting.

CEO | CFO Report

President & CEO Report – President and CEO Mike Casper discussed the importance of JCE's ongoing review of its governance policies and bylaws, noting that it helps ensure consistency throughout the organization, creates alignment, and strengthens the cooperative's value to its members. Casper also provided an update on the new Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) upgrades and the implementation of the NISC software system. These investments support long-term stability, improve operational efficiency, and help ensure consistent and equitable treatment of all members.

Financial Operating Report – Emily Doland, Chief Financial Officer, noted that April Revenue is approximately \$26 million. Total operations and maintenance expenses are approximately \$20 million. Margins are approximately \$1 million. By general consent, the board moved to file the financial operating report with the auditor.

Operations and Regulatory/Legislative Update

Operations Update – Kyle Buros, Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, provided an update on the continued expansion of JCE's fiber network, highlighting the recent milestone of connecting our 10,000th subscriber. Buros also shared that JCE received an extension on its Illinois Connect Round 3 grant, allowing additional time to complete the grant-funded project.

Cooperative Services Update

– Jennifer Meyer, Vice President of Cooperative Services, provided information on administrative billing policies, including the use of estimated bills. She explained that JCE Co-op's billing practices are intended to provide

Resume of minutes *(Continued)*

uniform and equitable treatment of members. When an estimated bill is necessary, usage is calculated by considering prior usage history, including the previous month's usage and usage during similar periods in prior years.

Human Resources and Marketing Update – Merri Sevey, Executive Vice President of Human Resources, provided an update on fiber subscriber metrics from the Sales and Scheduling team, highlighting an average of 10.4 new subscriber sign-ups per day. Sevey also noted an increase in phone service sales, attributed in part to another telecommunications provider discontinuing its phone service offerings, creating an opportunity for JCE to provide additional services needed for our members.

IT Technology Report – Dan Marcure, Vice President and Chief Technology Officer, shared details on a new fiber ring being installed. A fiber ring is a network design where fiber routes form a loop rather than a single line. The main benefit is redundancy – if the fiber is cut or equipment fails at one point, data can travel the opposite direction around the ring, helping maintain service and reducing outages. Similar to our electric service, this project will improve the reliability of JCE's fiber network by providing a backup route for internet and communication services, helping keep members connected even if part of the network experiences an outage.

External Affairs | Legislative Update - Terry Kurt, General Counsel, discussed with the Board of Directors the proposed bylaw amendments that will be presented and considered at the upcoming annual meeting of Dairyland Power Cooperative on June 2. Kurt reviewed the proposed changes and their potential implications to help prepare directors for discussion and voting during the meeting.

Board Issues and Action Items

Select NRECA Course Attendees for BLC Course 928 Artificial Intelligence for Cooperatives – Attendees were selected to attend BLC Course 928.

Select Attendees for the AIEC Annual Meeting – Attendees were selected to attend the AIEC Annual Meeting.

Select AIEC Voting Delegate & Alternate Voting Delegate – A motion was made to select Director Jerry Meyer as the Voting Delegate, and Joe Mattingley as the Alternate Voting Delegate for the AIEC Annual Meeting, which was seconded and carried unanimously.

Executive Session

Into Executive Session – A motion was made, seconded and carried unanimously to go into Executive Session at 11:09 AM.

Out of Executive Session – A motion was made, seconded and carried unanimously to come out of Executive Session at 11:45 AM.

Action Resulting from Executive Session – A motion was made, seconded and carried unanimously to follow existing billing policies 403 and 405.

Reports | Updates

Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives

(AIEC) Report – Chairman Senn provided an update on the latest AIEC board meeting and topics of Illinois legislation that affect cooperatives.

American Public Gas Association (APGA) Report

– Director Carroll reported on APGA's recent meetings and provided an update on the latest activities within the natural gas industry.

Dairyland Power Cooperative (DPC Report)

– Director Tindell provided highlights from the most recent Dairyland board meeting.

Prairie Power (PPI) Report

– Director Kuhns provided generation data from PPI's units. The board did not meet in April.

Other Business – None

Adjournment – Chairman Senn adjourned the meeting at 12:15 p.m.

Maureen March



Reader prize!

Each month, a JCE Co-op member is named for a chance to win a \$25 readership prize. If your name appears in this issue (and not in an article), contact JCE Co-op.