

# IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

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## GRANT BENEFITS YOUTH IN NEED

Ameren Illinois is proud to partner with nonprofits across Illinois to improve quality of life in the communities we call home. A recent \$5,000 donation will help Midwest Youth Services provide emergency shelter to youth in need. The funds will benefit young people living in the counties served by Midwest Youth Services: Brown, Morgan, Schuyler, Cass and Scott.

The Jacksonville-based nonprofit was established in 1978 to help strengthen and restore families, and divert young people from the juvenile justice and child welfare systems.



## Ameren Illinois Has an Affordable Solution for Clean Energy

As Illinois considers policies to address climate issues and move the state toward a cleaner energy future, the unique needs of central and southern Illinois families must be factored into the discussions.

Ameren Illinois has a solution to help the state achieve its clean energy goals while maintaining the smart, consumer-friendly, affordable infrastructure investments that have led to improvements in service reliability and created good paying jobs in Downstate Illinois.

Our solution would enable Ameren Illinois to construct and operate new solar energy and battery storage facilities, and connect the power produced by those facilities to nearby Ameren Illinois energy infrastructure. It also provides consumer rebates for the purchase of electric vehicles and the installation of in-home charging, and expands the availability of publicly accessible electric vehicle charging stations. In addition to the environmental benefits, our solution keeps electric rates affordable by crediting the value of energy produced by the solar and battery facilities back to Ameren Illinois customers.

We look forward to advocating for policy that works for all of Illinois.



## PLANNING A HOME IMPROVEMENT PROJECT? CONSIDER CLEARANCES

As temperatures start to warm, many homeowners are gearing up for home improvement projects. Whether you dream of diving into a new swimming pool this summer — or sipping lemonade from a new deck — make safety part of your planning process.

All structures on your property must be located a safe distance from overhead and underground utility equipment. Specific requirements are outlined in property easement documents and the National Electric Safety Code (NESC).

Ask your contractor to check for any utility easements and clearance requirements affecting your property — *before* you break ground. A little time spent planning ahead can help you avoid rework down the road.



*Strategically placed composite fiberglass power poles along the 3.4-mile route stabilize the power lines and prevent poles from falling in high winds.*

## \$2.2 Million Grid Upgrade Project Supports Growth in Metro East

Ameren Illinois is preparing for future commercial growth in the Gateway Commerce Center along Interstate 255 by expanding and enhancing its electric distribution service.

Along a 3.4-mile route, crews constructed a 34-kilovolt power line and a three-circuit, 12-kilovolt power line. We installed more than 100 power poles and storm-hardened the grid by strategically placing 20 composite poles along the project route. Every fifth pole is made of composite fiberglass, which is able to better withstand high winds during storms.

In addition, new distribution ties were created to allow us to re-route power between substations if an outage occurs. The \$2.2 million project will support commercial development in the Metro East area.

These upgrades are part of our overall statewide plan to build a cleaner, greener, more resilient grid. Since 2012, Ameren Illinois has completed hundreds of projects, added new technology and strengthened poles, wires and distribution equipment. As a result, reliability has improved by an average of 17 percent and the duration of an outage has been reduced by an average of 19 percent.





## RIDE THE STORM OUT WITH A STANDBY GENERATOR

When severe weather knocks out power in your neighborhood, a standby natural gas generator can help you ride the storm out in comfort. Unlike portable units, natural gas generators operate automatically within seconds of a service interruption.

Thanks to a special offer from Generac, Ameren Illinois customers will receive a free assessment, free seven-year extended warranty, and free first year of maintenance and dealer monitoring with their purchase of a natural gas standby generator. The vendor's authorized dealer will work with Ameren Illinois to ensure safe installation. Visit **[AmerenIllinois.com/StandbyGen](https://www.amerenillinois.com/StandbyGen)** to take advantage of this special offer.



## Natural Gas Modernization Plan Approved by Illinois Commerce Commission

In January, following a transparent, 11-month review process, the Illinois Commerce Commission approved Ameren Illinois' plan to strengthen natural gas delivery infrastructure and ensure pipeline safety and service reliability for downstate customers.

Beginning in February, the delivery service portion of the monthly bill for the typical residential natural gas customer increased by about \$2.30. Ameren Illinois' natural gas bills remain lower than the national average.

Under our natural gas modernization program, Ameren Illinois has replaced more than 200 miles of mechanically coupled steel pipeline, 100 miles of vintage steel pipes, and more than 70 natural gas regulator stations. Along with implementation of new technology to monitor and adjust pipeline pressurization, these projects have delivered increased safety and reliability, supported downstate growth, and created hundreds of jobs in central and southern Illinois.

*We are mindful of the economic challenges that some of our customers and communities are facing due to COVID-19. We remain focused on providing safe and reliable services at rates that are fair and as low as possible.*





## COVID-19 RECOVERY CONTINUES

Ameren Illinois has provided more than \$9 million in bill payment assistance to customers impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Additional relief measures for residential customers include:

- Flexible repayment plans to retire a past due balance.
- Grants for customers who meet income qualification guidelines. Visit **WarmNeighborsCoolFriends.org** for a list of partner agencies, **AmerenIllinois.com/Recovery**, or call Ameren Illinois at **1.800.755.5000**.
- Financial assistance from the Illinois Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Visit **HelpIllinoisFamilies.com** or call **1.877.411.9276** for qualifications and guidelines.

**If you need help getting back on track with your account, please call us at **1.800.755.5000** to discuss your options.**



## Take Steps to Save Energy in 2021

Ameren Illinois is committed to bringing the benefits of energy efficiency to all customers. Our efforts to help you improve comfort and reduce energy costs took on new meaning in 2020, as more people spent time at home and struggled to make ends meet.

In spite of the uncertainty of the past year, thousands of customers took steps to reduce energy usage in 2020 — including a record number of smart thermostats installed in homes and businesses. Ameren Illinois provided \$63 million in cash incentives to help make your energy-saving upgrades possible. As a result of those upgrades, customers will save more than \$44 million every year on their power bills.

When you spend less on energy, you can spend more on other essentials. And every dollar saved by a business helps to boost the bottom line.

In 2021, we will empower customers even more with new programs and partnerships and more ways to save. Whether you're new to energy efficiency or a seasoned pro, we're here every step of the way.

Visit **AmerenIllinoisSavings.com** to take steps to improve comfort, manage usage and reduce costs.