

# IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

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## SUMMER FUN FOR MILITARY FAMILIES

Ameren Illinois salutes those who serve our country. And this summer, we've made it easier for military families to play together, too. For the fourth summer in a row, a grant from Ameren Illinois has made it possible for military families to visit the Peoria PlayHouse Children's Museum free of charge.

This initiative is part of the Blue Star Museums program, which offers free admission to the nation's active duty military personnel at more than 2,000 museums across America during the summer months.



## AC donations make summer safer

To help our most vulnerable customers start the summer off right, Ameren Illinois donated 500 window air conditioner units in June.

We worked with 11 energy assistance agencies across our territory to provide cooling units for those most at risk from summer's sweltering heat. Recipients include income-qualified families with young children, veterans, senior citizens, and customers with disabilities. Ameren Illinois volunteers were on hand to help load the air conditioners into customer vehicles.

The high-efficiency, ENERGY STAR® rated units meet strict federal energy efficiency guidelines. That means they keep homes cool at less cost.

Since 2013 when the program began, Ameren Illinois has donated a total of 3,000 air conditioners to make summer safer and more comfortable for customers.



## ELECTRICAL SAFETY 101

Before diving back into dorm life, college students should study up on electrical safety. The following tips will help reduce the risk of electrical fires in student housing:

- Only use safety-tested electrical products.
- Do not overload extension cords, power strips, or outlets.
- Use power strips with over-current protectors.
- Never tack or nail an electrical cord to any surface or run cords where they can be trampled or damaged.
- Use the correct wattage light bulbs for lamps and fixtures.
- Keep electrical appliances and cords safely away from flammable material.
- Make sure outlets around sinks are equipped with ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs).
- Unplug small appliances when not in use.
- Look for automatic shut-off features on cooking appliances.

Learn more at [SafeElectricity.org](https://www.safeelectricity.org).



## Midwest industry group rallies for storm recovery

Storm restoration brings out the best in Ameren Illinois, as our team works tirelessly in tough conditions to restore power to customers.

For the majority of weather-related outages in our service territory, our 650 linemen and support teams get the lights back on quickly and safely. However, when faced with catastrophic weather events — such as tornadoes — recovery may require a helping hand. Fortunately, Ameren Illinois can rally a talented team from across the Midwest at a moment's notice.

As a member of the Edison Electric Institute's Midwest Mutual Assistance Group, we can call upon additional linemen, trucks and equipment from utilities in other states when faced with a large-scale outage. In roughly 24 to 36 hours after the storm, 1,000 to 2,000 additional boots can be on the ground, in our service territory, working together to restore our customers in a safe and efficient manner. As always, Ameren Illinois crews stand ready to return the favor.

***The Midwest Mutual Assistance Group includes Illinois, Missouri, Wisconsin, Iowa, Indiana, Minnesota, Colorado, New Mexico, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee.***

## CULTIVATE SAFETY ON THE FARM

Power lines pose a major hazard for farmers. The following tips will help make harvest a season of safety:

- Always know where overhead power lines are when you're working, and keep equipment at least 10 feet away from them.
- Use a spotter when operating large machinery. A spotter can see sagging wires that would not be visible on a GPS.
- Use caution when handling long items such as irrigation pipe, ladders and rods.
- If your farming equipment comes into contact with power lines, stay in the cab and call Ameren Illinois for help. Warn others to stay away, and wait until utility crews have arrived to de-energize the lines.

Learn more at [SafeElectricity.org](https://www.safeelectricity.org).



## Summer brings more natural gas upgrades to Champaign

For the second summer in a row, Ameren Illinois is working to modernize the energy delivery system in Champaign.

Crews are upgrading natural gas distribution pipeline and service connections to enhance natural gas service for customers. The existing pipeline was placed into service in the late 1950s to early 1960s. The new pipeline is primarily two-inch polyethylene material, which is durable and less-prone to leakage.

By September, crews will complete upgrades of seven miles of pipeline and service connections for nearly 560 customers. In addition, nearly 8,000 feet of six-inch natural gas distribution pipeline is being added to the delivery system to meet future growth and demand in southern Champaign and Savoy.

In Saint Joseph, work is underway to enhance the equipment and pipeline inside the regulator station that serves as the main natural gas feed into town. In other areas, crews are removing above-ground farm taps near the road and upgrading to new distribution services.

The \$5.2 million improvement projects in Champaign are part of Ameren Illinois' plan to replace nearly 250 miles of mechanically coupled steel distribution pipelines across its Illinois territory.

*Photo: Ameren Illinois contract crews tie in a new natural gas service to the newly installed main distribution pipeline in Champaign.*





## BIG DREAMS FOR PEORIA NON-PROFIT

When Ameren Illinois learned that the Dream Center Peoria had big dreams for its homeless shelter, we stepped up to help. Between May 30 and June 12, the Ameren Illinois Two-Week Challenge provided matching funds — up to \$35,000 — to help the shelter expand its bed count and double floor space.

Including matching funds, the challenge raised more than \$80,000 in two weeks, allowing construction to begin this summer. That means the center will be able to serve more people by the time winter arrives, when need is greatest.

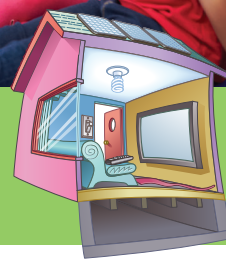


### DID YOU KNOW?

***The average age for a homeless guest at Dream Center Peoria is just nine years old.***



## Free resources empower educators



Ameren Illinois is committed to teaching kids how to stay safe around electricity and natural gas. For the teachers who help us do that, we are pleased to offer free K-8 resources that bring energy lessons to life.

Our free classroom materials consistently earn high marks from teachers, with comments like these:

- » *“Materials are colorful and attractive. They are easy to use in my classroom.”*
- » *“Love using the materials in addition to my curriculum. Helps make the information more relevant for the students. Love the pictures and information presented!”*
- » *“The students and I really enjoyed the booklets. I learned some valuable information along with my two science classes. Much of the information covered in the sections worked perfectly with the new NGSS [Next Generation Science Standards] requirements.”*
- » *“Several of the children would want to work ahead in the lessons ... [it's] always a plus when students are actively engaged in the exercise.”*

We invite teachers to explore curriculum-based games, order free informational booklets, and download energy safety guides and study sheets at [AmerenIllinois.com/EnergySmartKids](http://AmerenIllinois.com/EnergySmartKids).